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*The London Bombings*

In the recent past, the world has witnessed many terrorist attacks throughout the globe. This trend of the spread of terrorism has deeply affected the way people live their lives and how cities and countries are maintained and governed. The United States, for example, saw many changes after the attack on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. People were afraid to use public transportation, especially air travel, security was heightened by employing more police officers, there was more thorough investigation of travelers and their belongings, and many programs were instituted to come at terrorist attacks in the future. When the London bombings occurred on July 7, 2005, terrorists wreaked havoc on the city, but from this tragedy law makers and government officials banded together similar to the United States effort almost four years prior. The bombings had a significant impact on the social, economic and political systems in Great Britain and the world was basically forced to universally accept terrorism, where London and many other countries found themselves striving to figure out ways to put an end to such tragic occurrences.

**Social:** In looking at the London bombings and how it has affected the social qualities of the country, the main idea that stands out is that people have become more aware of what is out there and what can happen. Many changes have occurred as a result of this tragedy; however it is clearly evident that security has become a crucial issue within the society. Specifically there were three major instances of social change.

The first change focused on the Muslim mosques and those who ran them. The

government of Great Britain, as a result of the bombings, instituted a proposal to target the Muslim extremist youths within London.  It is believed that many of Britain's mosques tend to separate themselves too much from the British society therefore only causing suspicion among many London citizens.  In fact, there have been many cases that these mosques are being run by Muslims who are illiterate and have some type of criminal record.  In order to rid the mosques of such impressions, Charles Clarke (Home Secretary) has been striving to set up various social groups that will try to organize ways of communicating to the Muslim youth population "what it means to be both British and Muslim" (Travis).  By reaching out to the Muslim youth community and connecting them to their British heritage, it is hopeful that the "Islamophobia" that has developed among the general public (which has been caused by terrorist attacks) will eventually fade out.

Another social aspect that the London bombings took a toll on concerns businesses and their employees.   Since terrorism has become more common in recent years, it has forced many societies to adapt and overcome any kind of attack.  As a result, it is necessary for businesses, or any place that attracts large numbers of people, to organize plans that will ensure public safety. "The chronic lack of preparedness on the part of small and medium sized companies is the greatest avoidable threat to the capital today," said Michael Cassidy, President of the *London Chamber of Commerce* (Moules).  The problem that remains, however, is the fact that many businesses believe that all security systems cost a lot of money; money that they do not want to spend.  What they do not realize is that any kind of plan that involves some kind of response in case of an attack is all that is really needed.  Peter Brown, senior risk auditor at *Group 4 Securicor* says that "if you have a security policy document and you have sat and thought about your strategic process…you have probably solved 65 percent of your problems (Moules)."  All

in all, what it comes down to is the fact that nearly 50 London citizens had been killed because of a terrorist attack, a number that could have possibly been lower if such working plans had been more defined. People's lives are at stake and it is too much of a risk to just sit back and worry about it later.

The last social effect differs from the other two mainly because it treats the London bombings as almost a beneficial occurrence for the society. After the bombings had taken place, thousands of police officers dispersed throughout the stricken cities in hope to guard any potential targets that would interest terrorists. "The show of force did not just scare off terrorists," but it also decreased the criminal activity that occurred before the bombings as well. In the main cities that had been targeted by terrorists, crime fell nearly 12 percent and in London, crime had dropped almost 6 percent. Even more dramatic, on the days of the attack crime went down severely partly because "even criminals were watching their televisions (The Economist Newspaper)." Overall, any decrease in crime at all will benefit the society in the long run. While it is unfortunate that it takes a tragedy like this to make such a change, the reduction of crime will only strengthen the society and therefore assist London in bouncing back from these attacks.

**Economic:** The economy of London, as a result of the bombings, seemed to have been affected more on a short-term basis. In fact, while it had cost the United Kingdom nearly 3 billion euro to recover from these attacks, the impact it had on the economy is said to have been similar to that of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane or earthquake. The reason for this is because it is the immediate cost in terms of physical damage to the infrastructure that becomes the biggest obstacle to overcome. After that came a series of minor hurdles such as a decline in tourism, entertainment and retail, which the economy could generally overcome in a short

amount of time. For example, after the attacks of London, tourism decreased quite significantly mainly because of the fear of another attack (Sheerin). The hospitality industry, such as hotels, became slightly vulnerable because people were very conscious about leaving their own homes. Though the numbers were not overly threatening, it still evoked some economic concern (Sangster). This was also reflected in many entertainment activities that usually gather a large amount of people. People were generally less willing to go out to theaters, restaurants, sporting events and so on. Online shopping became a popular alternative because consumers began to question, "why risk going out doors when I can just order my hi-fi or groceries or whatever over the Internet (Sheerin)?" While the targeted cities, such as London suffered the most in terms of consumerism, the "fear factor" grew in many other popular shopping cities throughout the United Kingdom. "Any kind of terrorist threat or attack, particularly a repeated attack, is bound to have an adverse effect on trading patterns and peoples behavior." In turn, if consumers do not spend money, retailers fail to sell off their stock, which therefore can lead to a series of economic problems (The Irish News Limited). Overall, while London experienced its economic glitches, it was relatively successful in bouncing back.

A large part of the reason why London did not suffer from an economic standpoint has a lot to do with previous events. One of the most significant would be the terrorist attack on the United States on September 11, 2001. The attack on the United States acted as an event that basically shook the world into protection mode. Needless to say, London is claimed to have been more prepared, economically, for their attack. Technically, it is unfair to compare the London attack to the United States mainly for the reason that the London bombings were not as catastrophic in terms of damaged infrastructure, which played a key role in London's economic stability. Other than that, London did prove to set up a secure system to handle any market

disruptions.  As a result many banks, financial services and even the London Stock Exchange did not have any serious problems during and after their attacks (Reilly).  Even though September 11th provided London with some insight to terrorism, it was not the only factor in their preparation.

Another issue that assisted in London's stability throughout their attack stemmed from the United Kingdom's contingency planning, which was established in the business community at the time of the IRA attacks in London during the 1970's and 1980's.  After this, many large corporations were advised by the Metropolitan police to develop plans for any form of an attack and they have continued this development over recent years.  One corporation, which has several offices across London, stated that even "if London were hit by a major incident, we could operate from regional offices and our people could operate from home (Reynolds)."  From this we begin to see that large corporations are taking notice to what is happening in the world and responding by developing ways to support their country's stability in the case of an attack.  If a country is not affected by terrorism, terrorists will most likely not want to attack.

**Political:** From a political standpoint, the main ideas that have come out of the London bombings are developing new anti-terror laws, as well as trying to figure out ways in which the government can act when terrorism becomes a critical issue.  After the July bombings, Britain started to develop ways to introduce new laws that would help fight terrorism.  For example, one area of concern was trying to establish a way to prevent suicide bombers and those who praise it through religion.  If preachers are telling people that suicide bombing is dignified and is an acceptable part of their faith, people are going to be more willing to participate in this action.  Therefore, something needs to be done to prevent such teaching methods.  Interior Minister, Charles Clarke stated "the right course at the moment is to focus on what further steps need to be

taken in relation to the law, but also getting to the root of that evil ideology that is driving this terrorism (Agence France Presse)." Because the government cannot create laws that single out the Muslim community, they are faced with an extreme challenge.

Another major problem that the government has found itself faced with is the act of ensuring public awareness about terrorism, while at the same time denying the terrorist the publicity that they strive to gain. Because of the recent attacks, the British government is also struggling with maintaining a sense of equality among its citizens. Since a majority of terrorist attacks have involved individuals of Muslim faith it becomes difficult to protect one's country from future attacks without stepping into issues such as racial profiling, which would break the system of equality among the people (Norman). As a result, the government cannot issue any orders or laws that will separate the Muslim community from everyone else. This will only make problems worse, something that the British government is aiming to avoid.

**Lessons Learned:** While the London bombings were an extreme tragedy that shook the world, much like September 11th, it has also been somewhat of a useful tool in enabling London and much of the world to learn from what has happened. Even though it is sad to say it, terrorism is becoming a way of life and with each attack we are beginning to learn more about terrorism as a whole. One significant thing that London has learned from this experience is that it is necessary to be cautions about jumping to conclusions. "After all, the police first thought the July 7th bombs were triggered by timers, then it transpired it was suicide bombers, followed by speculation they weren't suicides (Borgu)." By jumping to conclusions, it only confuses the situation making it look like no one has any control. Also, since the bombings many European governments have started developing newer and tougher security and counter terrorism measures. If there are no signs of weakness towards terrorism, there is less of a chance of an

attack.  Another lesson that has been learned is the fact that not all terrorists' attacks originate from other countries.  As for the London bombings, the attack came from deep within their own society, therefore showing the world that we need to be cautious of everyone (Wertheimer).  One interesting lesson that deals more with the general public is that the recent attacks have even affected how people do their jobs, such as firefighting.  Deputy fire chief Lyle Quan said, "we are more hesitant when responding to unknown situations.  It has put us on the alert (Healey)." Terrorism is not just something that is left up to the governments and the officials. Instead it affects all of us and we all need to be aware of it.

One of the most significant lessons focuses on more of a global aspect.  Because terrorism has affected both the United States and London in such a short time frame, other countries are beginning to realize that they might be at risk as well.  For example, Australia has always considered itself almost immune to terrorism because of its "non-activist foreign policy on the global stage" and because of its "relative geographic isolation."  However since international travel has improved significantly over the years, they are beginning to realize that they cannot rule themselves out completely (Risk Management Magazine).  As for other countries, "France suspended the *European Unions Shengen Open-Borders Treaty*…Germany announced plans for a centralized nation wide counter terrorism database and Spain began considering a bill that would allow the expulsion of even potential terrorists (Wertheimer)." Basically what it comes down to is that many countries have started to realize what could potentially happen and whether or not they are prepared to handle such an attack.  Therefore plans to fight terrorism have become universal, where countries have realized that it is much too risky to just sit back and wait for these things to happen.  Terrorism needs to end and the world is scrambling to find out how.

Just like everything else in life, the more experience we have, the better equipped we will be to handle terrorism.  In the years to come, as we undoubtedly experience more terrorism, we will get better at understanding it and reacting to it.  While we cannot know for certain when and where terrorist attacks will occur, we can have policies and procedures in place to counteract the destruction this causes.  An act of terrorism is meant to surprise its victims, but if governments around the world are prepared all the time, terrorist attacks may lose their novelty, as shock value (one of the goals of a premeditated terrorist attack) is diminished by preparedness.  This may be our only hope of eradicating or at least reducing terrorist schemes.

Now that we know the social, economic and political conditions behind the London bombings, we can begin to look at terrorist attacks more in terms of specific industries or professional fields.  In this case, we will be concentrating on the role of the graphic designer and how terrorist attacks, much like the London bombings and September 11th, has launched the industry into a new process of thinking and designing.  Like previously stated, terrorism has become a part of our life and it is going to affect every aspect of it.  Therefore, many jobs and businesses have basically been forced to develop and create new ideas on how to respond to these critical situations.  As for graphic designers, we are faced with a number of issues that we, like many other people, have overlooked throughout the years.  Now, designers worldwide need to unite and develop a complete terrorism campaign in order to make this a part of the design process.  Terrorism needs to be worked into our life, and there is no one better to express this than us.  For graphic designers, where there is any print that deals with some form of security: it needs to be updated.  People must be aware of what actions they have to take during an attack and how to do them.  At the same time, we need to maintain a sense of confidence throughout the public by developing media that is informative and inspiring at the same time.  The world is

going to have to deal with these issues sooner or later, and there is nothing wrong with jumping in now and getting a head start.

**What's happening now?**  Even though a majority of the world is in a state of denial when it comes to terrorism, there are a few designers who are striving to force this concept into the world that we live in.  In one case, a group of graduate students who attend Carnegie Mellon University have embraced the idea of terrorism and took action in creating ways to make our world more prepared.  The students limited their focus to firefighters, people who risk their lives every day to save others.  As a result, they have been developing a video game to simulate various emergency incidents that they hope will be incorporated into the firefighter's training procedures.  "The game, called Hazmat Hotzone, combines detailed graphic design and realistic scenarios to allow firefighters to safely learn how to handle a real incident involving hazardous materials released into a public area."  The software will let instructors control various aspects of the game to create different situations for their players.  For example, they will be able to choose the environment, what chemicals have been released, how many victims are involved and what the weather is like; all of which play significant roles in a real life situation.  The graphics are being highly concentrated on mainly because they will act as clues for the players in determining what they are dealing with.  For example, the color of the gas as well as the symptoms that the victims are presenting will help players determine specific chemicals and the actions they will have to take.  Even though it is well known that firefighters spend a lot of time learning about these situations, much of it is taught in a classroom.  While live drills are also a part of these teachings, in the long run they do not get a lot of hands on time.  Therefore, Hazmat Hotzone acts as a perfect supplement for putting firefighters in some form of realistic environment

(Carnevale).  This idea is very creative and acts as a perfect example of how designers can help society in fighting back against terrorism.

Unfortunately, this game is not yet finished however a few departments have had the privilege of testing it out.  Tony Mussorfiti, a lieutenant in the New York department's hazardous-materials division said, "the game is already improving the live drills that the fire department runs.  This works on cognitive skills.  Now at least they've had time to practice their tactics."  Currently, the game still remains at the prototype stage, mainly because of funding problems.  The students have received money from their school as well as a $10,000.00 donation from Microsoft, however Shanna Tellerman (Producer of Hazmat Hotzone) is hoping to raise somewhere between $2-$5 million dollars to reach the best potential of this project. "In its current point, there are only two and a half settings so far including a subway and a factory.  The goal is to create five or six," says Shanna.  She is also hoping that the federal government will also chip in on this project, so the video game could be distributed to fire departments across the country for free (Carnevale).  Overall, Hazmat Hotzone has proven itself to be a well thought out design that acts out against terrorism.  Hopefully Ms. Tellerman and her students will receive the funding that is needed so that maybe this game can break through United States borders and eventually spread throughout the globe.

Another example of graphic designers inspired by a similar motive can be seen throughout the world on our very own computers.  The website, www.WereNotAfraid.com, has been developed as a way of responding to the terrorist attacks on the United States, London and Egypt where many designers and citizens are joining together to express the fact that they are tired of being afraid.  The website started when Alfie Dennen, a 29 year old web designer, received a photo through his cell phone from a friend who was evacuating an underground tunnel

after the July 7th bombings in London, who wanted to inform his friends and family that he was safe.  Deenan put this image, as well as others that he received onto a website to provide a closer look into these attacks.  Once these images had been seen by the public, many people started to share their own photographs, which depicted attacks on places like New York, London and many other parts of the world.  Amanda Timpson, a Los Angeles-based employee for WereNotAfraid.com said, "about three hours after Alfie put up the first photo, it was already about the rest of the world, and about a much larger message."  Now, rather than just posting pictures, the website has developed a message that basically states, "We are Not Afraid." Graphic artists and everyday people are designing small poster like images of their own, which incorporate this phrase in some way or form, therefore adding to the collection.  "With 7,500 posted and more than 20,000 being processed, the site has become a sensation:  Last week it topped 5 million visitors, and it now sells T-shirts whose earnings will help fund the site (a nonprofit company) and assist Red Cross and other charitable efforts."  Volunteers from around the world including Europe, the United States, Australia, Korea, Africa and even Norway, are aiming to promote global awareness and unite a community that stands up for their world and does not give into terrorism.  "Everybody has their own way to say, "I'm not afraid and here's how I'm going to tell the world," says Timpson (Timberg).  The web site is very inspirational and has truly brought a massive audience, from various parts of the world, together as one.  One designer captured the heart of thousands of people and inspired them to be designers as well. From this, it is clearly evident that design has a great impact on the world and it is necessary that we use this to our advantage.

The last example of how graphic design is being used as a reaction to terrorism was actually developed well before September 11th.  It was in March of 2001 that Paola Antonelli, a

design curator at the Museum of Modern Art, proposed a concept for an innovative art show that would be primarily based on safety and rescue: "those laminated cards depicting emergency escape routes that you find in the seat-back pockets of airplanes, for example," said Antonelli. She planned on calling the show "Emergency," however while she was in process of putting everything together, the September 11th attack quickly ceased this project. When her friends insisted that she continued with her vision, she quickly shot them down because she felt that the general public was not quite ready. However, in the summer of 2003 with a great deal of encouragement, Antonelli restarted on her mission to show the world her ideas of design based on safety. In fact, she even renamed the show, "Safe: Design takes on Risk (Hawthorne)." "I want to show the public in some visceral way the importance of design in the real world," she said (Iovine). Antonelli began to explore the idea that designers in the modern world are starting to have to deal more and more with not only just risk, but fear as well. Some of the things that were mentioned include a new parachute for people who work in tall buildings, a smartly minimal designed lifeguard station, a pill bottle designed for Target stores, a steel bench that doubles as a security barrier and a bracelet that allows doctors to quickly tell when children are suffering from malnutrition (Hawthorne). As for graphic designs, Antonelli stressed the fact that there is absolutely no room for anything excessive, but yet designs should be simple, to the point and easily understood (Iovine). According to the website, the exhibit is now open and will remain open until January of 2006. Also, at www.moma.org/exhibitions/2005/safe/safe.html they feature a well-designed, interactive menu that provides information on all of the latest products that have been designed specifically for safety purposes. Overall the entire exhibit, or the idea in general, was very creative and there could not have been a better time than now for it to be in production.

**What more can be done?**  All of these examples have served as significant steps in the right direction in terms of design, however there is still a great deal that could be done.  Being a graphic designer, I see a great opportunity for improvement in our safety awareness however, not much is being done about it.  For example, after September 11<sup>th</sup> and the London bombings, all types of public transportation should be properly equipped with updated, more obvious safety pamphlets and instructions.  Rather than just showing what to do incase of a crash, these guides should also depict what to do during a terrorist attack.  Part of the reason why terrorism is so successful is because the general public is not aware of any safety precautions that should occur in these types of situations.  Therefore, this only results in complete terror where everyone basically loses control of the situation.  If there were well-designed and descriptive guidelines on what to do, a sense of order just might evolve.  Also it might be significantly beneficial if we remove these brochures from the pouch on the back of the seat, hidden by all the magazines, and find a more permanent place for them where they can be seen at all times.  While newly designed pamphlets are not going to stop terrorists from attacking, the general public will be more aware and somewhat conscious on what to do if something like this happens again.

While staying on the idea of better instructions or safety procedures, I believe the same principals apply to many large buildings, businesses and places that attract large numbers of crowds like stadiums and theaters.  Proper escape routes and evacuation plans should be conveniently placed so that visitors and employees can see them at all times.  If people begin to see something over and over again, eventually they just might subconsciously understand the information that is being presented.  These signs should be big enough and situated high enough so that large groups can view them at one time.  Also, it would be very convenient if the signage systems included some kind of glow in the dark feature, just incase the lights happen to go out

during an attack.  The signs that we have currently are obviously not much help in the dark, a serious issue that has not really been looked at.

Another idea, in terms of signage touches into the scientific department as well as graphic design.  The issue of hazardous gasses being released into public areas has been a topic of concern for the last few years now, however how will the general public be aware of what is going on if something like this actually does happen?  Personally, if a hazardous gas were to be released somewhere that I happened to be, I know for a fact that I would not be aware of it and probably just assume that something in that building might just smell funny.  As a result, I think it would be extremely useful if there would be a way to incorporate a gas detector into the new signage systems.  For example if high levels of Carbon Dioxide are present, the signs within the building could turn from white to a bright red.  Also, if these signs are developed to be very sensitive all types of gases, it may enable the people within the building to get out without reaching a state of panic or chaos.

The next idea developed from looking at the website, WeAreNotAfraid.com.  As a result, it has become very obvious that any form of print media can serve as a great tool in promoting public awareness.  Whether it be a website, a magazine spread or even a billboard, they are all useful methods of design that can inform the public about the effects of terrorism.  If a design is successful it will most likely get people talking to each other and discussing topics of concern, such as terrorism.  When people share this kind of connection, it generally reduces fears and reassures people that they are not alone in how they are feeling.  As for the website, it truly has acted as a way of bringing people together where they share this bond of expressing things within the world that they are not afraid of anymore.  Because of the events of September 11th and the London bombings, there has been fear of public transportation and traveling.  Because of

the Anthrax crisis, people were afraid to open their mail.  However by participating in this website, people have begun to vent their fears to the world in hope of attaining comfort that they are not the only one.  This website could be the start of something even greater and if more people continue to get involved, more money can be raised to fight back against terrorism.  Therefore if we use this website as a foundation to all forms of public awareness, there is a good chance that the anti terrorist community may grow to an even larger scale than it is now.

Finally, one of the most significant ways that graphic designers can make a difference lies in the ideas and principals behind expressive posters.  Posters, for many years have acted as a media source that not only informs the public, but instills a sense of emotion into its viewers as well.  For example, throughout World War II, the propaganda poster became a popular method for many countries to bring confidence and pride to their people during a hard time.  Citizens looked at these posters and wanted to support their country the best that they could because of the emotional power these images provided them.  Even though propaganda posters have not been common in recent years, the ideas behind them could still remain useful in situations like terrorism.  If graphic designers grouped together to create various posters with the same concept, I truly believe it would act as a great method of teaching the public about terrorism and what can be done to prevent it.  Images are a powerful source of communication, and graphic designers study and work with the use of images to express opinions and make statements.  Therefore, if we look to the past and use our knowledge to our advantage, it can only help us in the long run.  While there may have been some "anti-terror" posters that have been created, I personally think they have been designed with the wrong intent.  Most of what I have seen has been directed to George W. Bush or the Middle East, which is not what we should be focusing our attention on.  Our biggest concern is our own personal countries and the people within it.  Therefore, as

graphic designers our attention should be dedicated to our fellow citizens and informing them about terrorism, what to do during an attack and how we can join together to be prepared for future situations.

Design, throughout the years, has been completely underestimated in what it can do for a society.  Throughout the years, we have basically fell into the ideas of mass media and steered away from expressionism and using design as a method of communication.  When looking at issues like terrorism, this becomes very unfortunate.  Though some designers, like the ones we have previously discussed, have made an effort to break away from the societal norms, it is moving at a rather slow pace.  We as designers need to use our visual methods to our advantage and dedicate our time to what has to be done.  The world needs to know what is going on around them, and it is our responsibility to show it to them.  Design today is a privilege and once people begin to realize this, maybe the world will begin to take it more seriously.  There is a great opportunity staring each and every one of us in the face, and many of us push it to the side.  We have the chance to teach, to inform and to prepare the world about the issues that surround us, and it is exactly this that makes our profession and essential part of our world.

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