

A New Kind of War

Cold War influences on American culture
after September 11th, 2001

by Victoria Penrose

Unprecedented

“This will be a different kind of conflict against a different kind of enemy. This is a conflict without battlefields or beachheads, a conflict with opponents who believe they are invisible.”

-President George W. Bush, Radio

Address of the President to the Nation,
September 15, 2001.



1993 World Trade Center Bombing

- Same location, same goal
- Terrorist training connections
- Perpetrators quickly apprehended
- Did not match same level of national trauma as September 11th



Oklahoma City Bombing

- Previously the worst terrorist attack on American soil- 168 dead, 650+ injured
- Committed by militia extremist Timothy McVeigh
- Attacks did not spark major policy changes



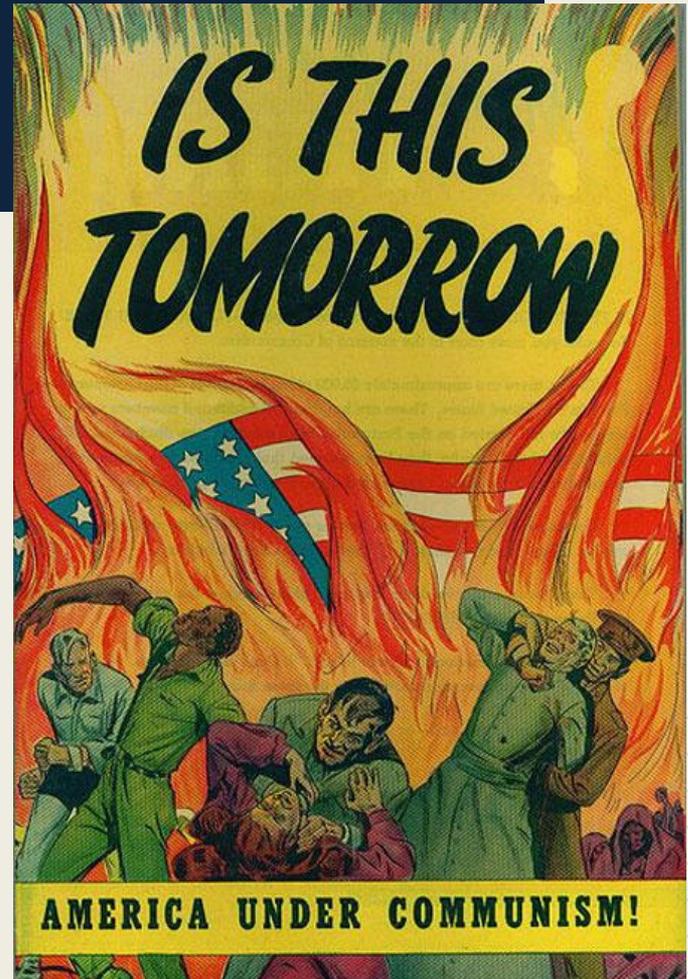
Pearl Harbor

- Aerial attack- presence of jet fuel
- Pearl Harbor Attack death toll: 2,402
- Attack on military rather than civilian area
- Source of the attack easily determined - tied to a specific state
- America joined an ongoing war
- Full shift into wartime production

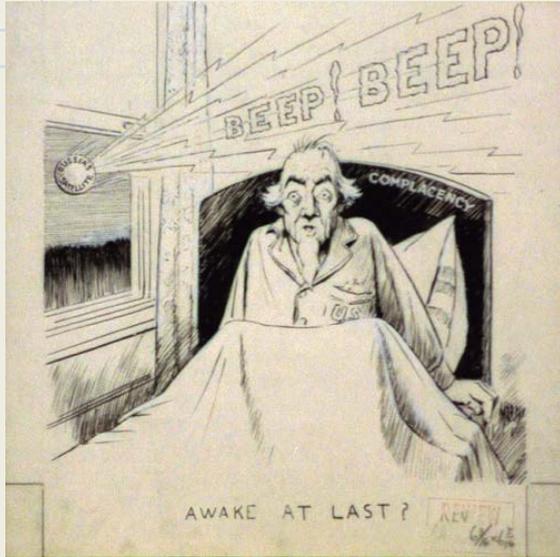


Early Cold War

- Period of intense national anxiety
- Idea of a new form of warfare
- Threat of enemy infiltration
- Emphasis on family and the home life as a way to find security



Period of National Anxiety



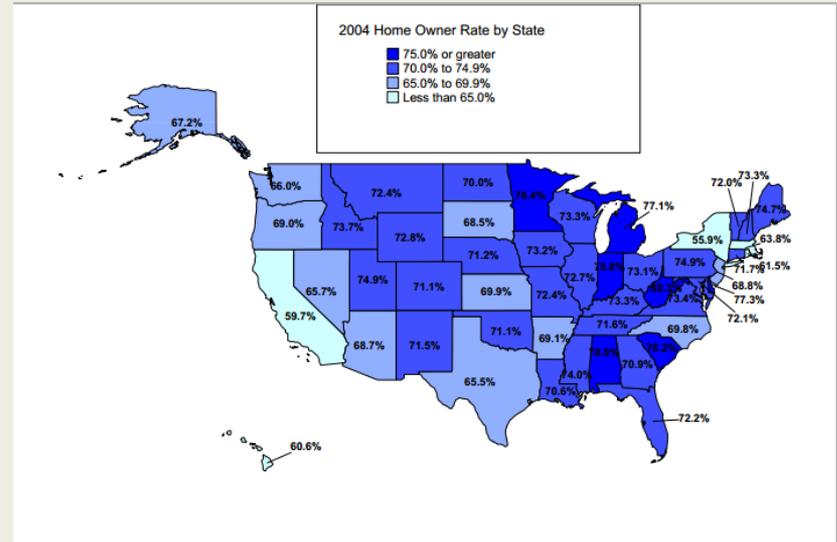
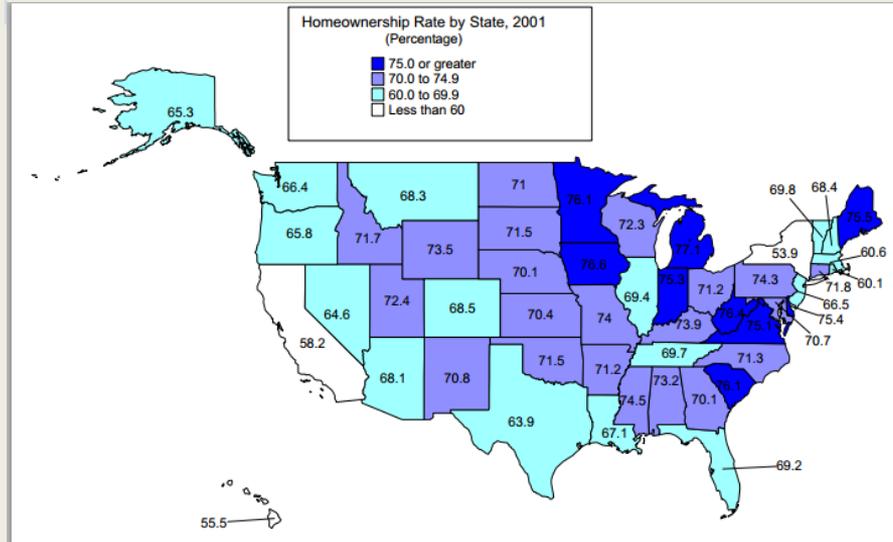
- The Cold War was the best parallel for the level of anxiety felt by Americans after September 11th.
- Played on nuclear fears
- Ground Zero - the point directly above, below, or at which a nuclear explosion occurs. ([Merriam Webster Online](#)), also used to refer to World Trade Center rubble
- Anxiety leads to major policy changes, such as the creation of NASA and Department of Defense during Cold War and the Department of Homeland Security after September 11th

Freedom to Spend

- American consumerism was a show of superiority as well as a way to fend off recession
- Consumerism and capitalism represented important American freedoms
- “Take your families and enjoy life, the way we want it to be enjoyed.” -President George W. Bush, O’Hare Airport, Sept 27, 2001

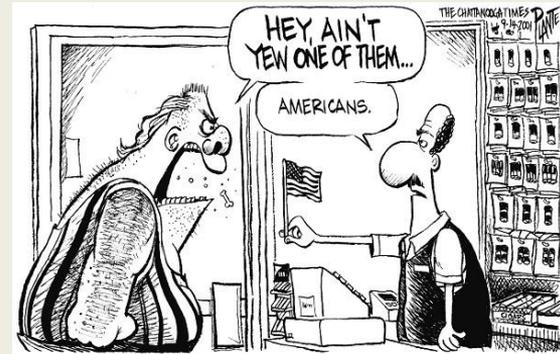


Home Ownership Rates in 2001 and 2004



Fear of Infiltration

- McCarthyism and the Red Scare
- “Since September 11th, the American people have been an important set of eyes and ears in our investigations.” -FBI Director Bob Mueller
- Terrorism Information and Prevention System (TIPS)
- Anti-Muslim sentiment
- Rise of hate crimes towards those of Arab and Middle Eastern descent



Protectors and Caregivers

- Rising emphasis on complementarian gender roles of a male breadwinner and female caregiver
- Male confidence tied to national confidence
- Rose as a contrast to Soviet gender roles

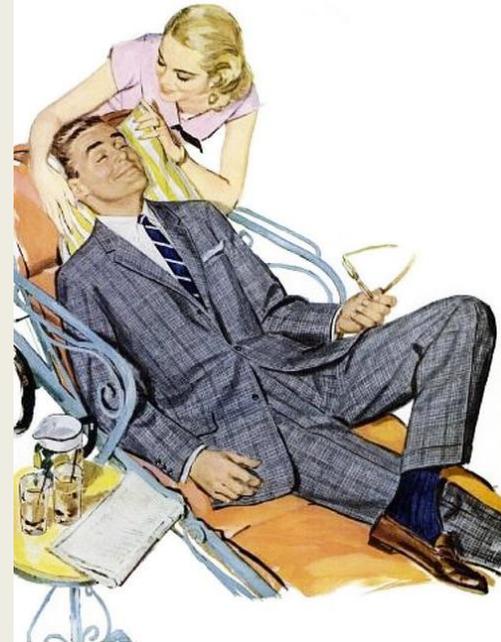
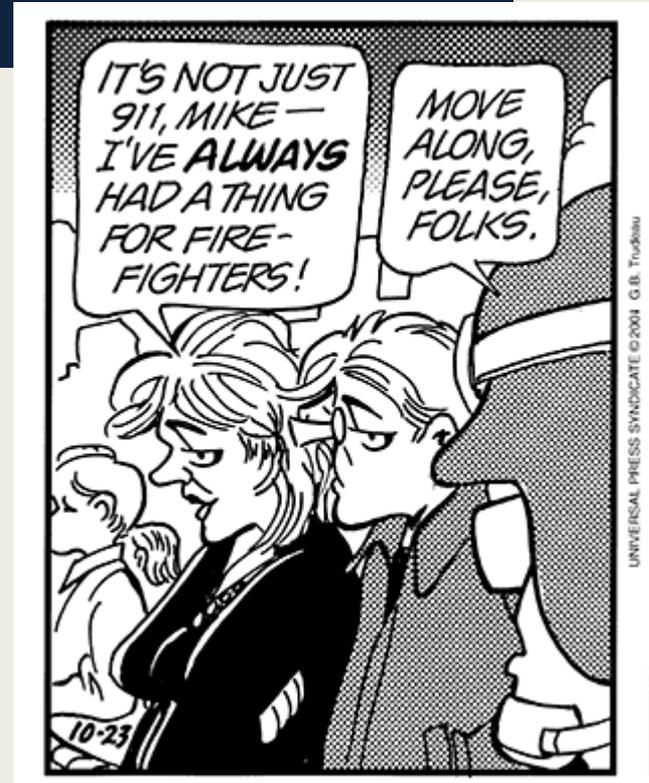


Image Source: <http://www.economist.com/news/britain/21573548-forget-traditional-family-there-are-now-three-distinct-models-associated> , <http://www.ivy-style.com/x-marx-the-spot-the-treasure-of-the-hsm-archives.html>

Hunks and Heroes

- “After a few iffy decades in which manliness was not the most highly prized cultural attribute, men -- stoic, muscle-bound and exuding competence from every pore -- are back.” - Patricia Leigh Brown, “Heavy Lifting Required: The Return of Manly Men,” New York Times, 28 Oct. 2001.
- “In three decades, feminism has done a back flip. Once men in uniform were the oppressors. Now they’re trophy mates.”
- Maureen Dowd, “Hunks and Brutes,” New York Times, 28 Nov. 2001.



Female Heroes of September 11th



Female first responders on September 11th as featured in Women at Ground Zero by Susan Hagen and Mary Carouba



Kathy Mazza- Port Authority Police Captain, Died in WTC



Terri Tobin- New York City Police Department



Moirra Smith- NYC Police, Died in WTC



Sandra Bradshaw - Attendant on Flight 93



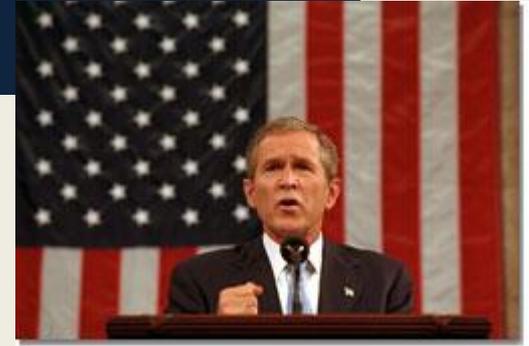
Honor Elizabeth Wainio - Attendant on Flight 93

Vulnerable Victims

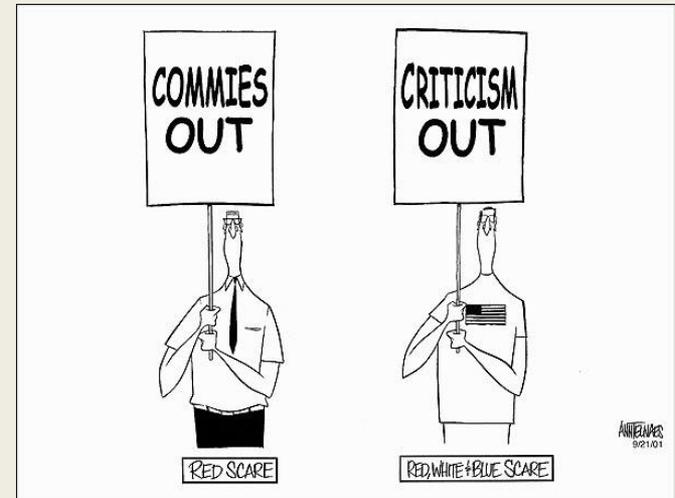
- ‘It’s hard to imagine a more poignant description of vulnerability” -People Magazine on Lisa Beamer
- Emphasis on motherhood
- Expected to be politically neutral
- Return to clearly defined roles was comforting



Constructing Security



- Focus on home and family life
- Refrain from government criticism
- Strictly enforced stereotypes sort friend from foe
- Surge in American patriotism



Embracing Diversity after September 11th

- “Ultimately, America’s answer to the intolerant man is diversity...” -Robert Kennedy
- We must reexamine how we portray concepts of heroism and patriotism.
- We are a country made great by it’s freedom and diversity. Let us celebrate those concepts when we remember September 11th.



Photographer: Fiona Abound,
Captain America: Vishavjit Singh of Sikhtoons.com





Thank You for Listening

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