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What Parenti means in his title “Patriotic Fear” is that the American Patriots are run through fear and propaganda. Presidential officials used the fear of Communism and the Middle Eastern terrorists after the Vietnam War and the September 11th Attack to control the masses of the Americans. American public officials scared the American citizens to get away with whatever they desire. For example, justification towards sending troops to Vietnam was to prevent Communism, which is not a terrible thing. American officials made it seem like Communism was a terrible thing, by instilling the idea that if communism was implemented, the rich would lose all of their money, their greatest fear. This fear became justification for going into Vietnam to fend off Communism for the Vietnamese people. American officials also used the fear of the September 11th terrorist attack to get an acceptance of getting involved in the illegal war in Iraq. They used the fear of more terrorist attacks to get involved in the Iraqi War in the essence of preventing any more terrorist attacks. However, there are two major flaws in this. The involvement in this external war actually resulted in the deaths of many American troops, and an increase of terrorists attacks. They didn’t even have evidence stating whether the attacks from September 11th were even correlated to the Iraq war. Evidence did not seem to back up the claim that the Al Queda was linked to the Iraqi nation. They were simply Middle Eastern, specifically Saudi Arabia, yet we fought in a war in Iraq, a completely separate country. The term patriotic fear is fear that is used to control. Parenti says “once fear takes hold, evidence becomes largely irrelevant.”

The Menace Within refers to the greatest problem leaking in America now. The menace lurking within is the culture of fear that is controlling Americans today. Americans fear “unamericanism” which is anything that goes against the social norms. Americans fear upsetting other Americans and not fitting in with what everyone else believes in. This fear that is embedded into American lives is what drives society and lets American officials and the upper class control the majority of the country and its way of life. For example, with the increase in immigrant migration, the cultures of these immigrants were being discriminated against and led to a fear of showing ones true culture beliefs and ways. The discrimination of the French originated in the debate against military support in the Iraqi war. America asked for Military support from the United Nations, but to no avail, and the French was the major opposition. This hatred and animosity of the French by the public officials led to a direct result in the public society interaction chain. Because the higher American officials didn’t agree with the French, the public directly reacted with their own form of discrimination and animosity towards the French people. This is a direct example of how public officials control the thinking of society. With Parenti’s friend questioning whether he should be scared or not is a direct example of how fear is controlling the lives of Americans. It truly is the menace within the country because it disrupts a way of living and makes it worse. A menace is someone who does things that upsets society and ruins others around them. That is what fear does to the American people, and this is how American higher ups are using it to control them. This fear controls the way they act, the way they think, and even controls their ways of life, as many have had to let go of their own cultures in this fear.