**The 9/11 Attack - Media**

Media is a very powerful tool in the human environment. In the current world of technology, media is used to define any particular medium that is used in delivering a message to large and anonymous audience. Television is one of the major tools of media that delivers information through audio and visual forms to many people through signals. The high rate of consumption of television content may transform the general behaviors and cultures of the particular viewers. A single event may affect the culture of an entire society. The 9/11 event is one of the memorable tragic event which was aired live on different television channels. The devastating event involved an attack by terrorists on the twin towers in the World Trade Center that led to death of thousands of people and destruction of property worth billions of dollars. The attack involved two planes that were directed into the two towers simultaneously by the terrorist, before the third one hitting the pentagon house. The fourth plane targeted to hit the White House was crashed in the fields in Pennsylvania by the passengers who overpowered the hijackers. America is a multicultural and multi-religious country and by linking the attack with some nationalities and religions created a cultural impact. The viewing of the event as it unfolded created fear and anger that transformed the American culture. This paper will analyze the cultural effects of covering the 9/11 attack by the media through the television channels.

The September 11, 2001 attack in the United States of America is one of the most memorable tragedies in the country’s history. According to Ferrari (pg. 158), the event was accompanied with trauma, anger and fear that contributed to a changed America with many cultures and religions. The media broadcasted the entire event, analyzing and commenting about the attack.

In the National Geographic Television, [*When the Towers Fell | National Geographic*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieIFtjnBfJU)*,* the television broadcasted the two towers crumbling as the people ran for their dear lives. According to Mitnik (pg. 173), the live broadcasting of the event as the planes hit the towers and people ran out of the smoky center instilled fear and insecurity to the Americans. The video shows a huge and thick cloud of dust and debris approaching another building a people run away from it. Rives-East (pg.28) notes that the Americans had for long believed that terror was not part of the country and were witnessing from other countries, but at that time it was on their soil. The Americans felt attacked and became phobic to plane, tall buildings and overcrowded areas. According to Hameed (pg. 13), air travel in the United States went down by 48% with most of the passengers opting for train or private transport. The CNN broadcasting through [*9/11: Second plane hits South Tower*](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBciZFE8lAw)shows the tower burning down and at the same time while the reporter is reporting, another plane hits the second tower. For the Americans who had not got the initial picture of the plane crashing through the first tower, they had a chance to see for the second and thus led to development of plane-phobia among the Americans.

The broadcasting of the event also impacted on the multinational sense of integration that the Americans embraced all along. According to Kellner (pg.46) most of the television channels clearly stated that it was an outside attack from a terror group in Iraq and that caused a big tension in the society. People started expressing fear against the people from the Middle East while others despising and attacking them (Ferrari 159). This was a social crisis that lasted long. Kampf (23) in explaining about the situation of hatred after the attack speaks about an interview with a Muslim girl who claimed to have been called a terrorist and threatened to be killed by another woman. The author also notes about a girl whose parents are of nationals Afghanistan and who was asked “How can you be here if you just dropped the twin towers” (pg.23). The cultural diversity of the United States was in tatters across the country due to the association of a certain group of national and religion to the attack.

The review on literature indicates how media plays a key role in building or destroying the existing societal cultures. The 9/11 was an attack that wasn’t expected by the Americans, and happened only in New York, Washington D.C and Pennsylvania. The information about the spread globally, reaching every corner of the United States. The broadcasting developed a feeling of unity among all Americans against the terror groups. Many youths from California and other states in the country came out in large numbers to fight against the terror and for their country. The young Islamic girls reported by Kampf (pg.23) being attacked by Americans were from different regions of the country. If the televisions would have ignored or not televised the agonizing event, the Americans would not have been in fear of another possible attack. The social integration and respect to the diversification of the country could not have been moved and more youths could not have been pushed by their patriotism to join the army. Live broadcasting of the event led to the numerous changes in the cultural structure of the country.

In conclusion, media plays a very vital role in the society’s culture. It influences the culture through words, pictures and videos and by covering a single event, the society can completely change the former beliefs or culture. Depending on the way media presents an issue, the society is likely to move towards direction of the presentation. The media houses in the U.S showed mercy and agony in presenting the attack. By repeatedly showing the bombings, the media houses filled the Americans with fear, rage and hate against terrorists. That is why the Americans looked delighted when the media houses were presenting attacks on Iraq and against Saddam Hussein on the same; the presented with a winning attitude. The media is thus a powerful organ in the society that informs masses at once, creating a cultural shift.

**Work Cited**

Ferrari, Chiara. "Spectacle, Trauma, Patriotism: Media and Media Studies in the Aftermath of 9/11." *9/11 and the Academy*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019. 155-183.

Hameed, Ass Lecturer Fahmi Salem. "FALLING MAN AND AMERICAN MEDIA: COVERING THE 9/11 TERROR ATTACKS."

Kampf, Lena, and Indra Sen. "History does not repeat itself, but ignorance does: Post-9/11 treatment of Muslims and the liberty-security dilemma." *Humanity in Action* (2007).

Kellner, Douglas. "9/11, spectacles of terror, and media manipulation: A critique of Jihadist and Bush media politics." *Critical Discourse Studies* 1.1 (2004): 41-64.

Mitnik, Zachary S., Joshua D. Freilich, and Steven M. Chermak. "Post-9/11 coverage of terrorism in the New York Times." *Justice Quarterly* 37.1 (2020): 161-185.

Rives-East, Darcie. "Introduction: Surveillance and Terror in Post-9/11 British and American Television." *Surveillance and Terror in Post-9/11 British and American Television*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, 2019. 1-53.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ieIFtjnBfJU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBciZFE8lAw>