

PSCI 3510
 Terrorism and Political Violence
 September 26, 2018

Jim Butterfield
 Quynh Mai
 jimbutterfield.org/3510



Possible Causes of Terrorism

- Poverty (correlated somewhat with education).
- Religious identity.
- Other forms of identity (e.g., nationalism, religion, ethnicity).
- Psychological maladies or propensities.



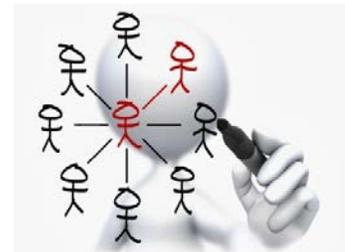
Returning to identity...

- Last time:
 - Sources of identity.
 - The layered, multiple and conflicting nature of personal identity.
 - The three I's.

Returning to identity...

What is the social significance of identity?

That is, when identity is not only personal but collective?



The Positives

- What Sen calls the "creative" or "constructive" aspects of identity.

Late August 2017...





Religious Activism

- The secularization thesis notwithstanding, there is some evidence that religious activism is on the rise.
- Arguments:
 - Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis ("Islam's borders are bloody and so are its innards.")
 - Modernization begets activism (communications, democracy, technology, globalization).
 - Rapoport's fourth wave of terrorism: organize the state around religion.



Observance → Activism → Violence?

- Social movement activism:
 - Challenge certain social practices.
 - Change policies.
 - Means: mobilize, utilize political opportunities, frame messages.
 - Examples:
 - The Moral Majority (US 1980s)
 - Catholic human rights activism in Latin America (1970s-1980s)

Observance → Activism → Violence?

- Fundamentalism
 - A contested concept.
 - Generally:
 - Belief in religious text as the literal word of the deity (deities).
 - Unambiguous beliefs and practices.
 - Must return to uncorrupted faith and practices.
 - Intolerant of different beliefs (including within the faith).



Observance → Activism → Violence?

- Fundamentalism
 - Defenders of the "pure faith".
 - Not necessarily violent, but can be.
 - Moral virtue in breaking laws (church/mosque/etc above state).

