

# Brainwashed

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In my work as a cult-buster I saw first hand how people can be indoctrinated and brainwashed to do things against their very nature. Over these last few months I looked into the culture of a suicide bomber. According to the stories I read, many people are forced into the heinous act against their will. Recently, there has been a rash of suicide bombers, leaving me wondering if it's possible for a whole generation, a whole country, to be brainwashed to commit suicide/murder. An incident at the beginning of this month gave me my answer.

On November 5, 2005, Sajida Mubarak Atrous al-Rishawi accompanied her husband to Jordan on a forged passport with the intention of blowing herself up together with him in a Jordanian Hotel.

Husband and wife went to opposite sides of a ballroom in the hotel, where a wedding was taking place, so they could maximize the damage. Since Muslim weddings are split by gender, Sajida al-Rishawi had to go to the women's side of the ballroom. She sat between the women and children with the intention of killing as many people as possible. Had the bomb exploded, she would have succeeded in murdering many of the women and children she was sitting with.

Historically, freedom fighters and those willing to die for their cause are men. By nature a man is territorial and will fiercely protect his own territory, which has led to many men

declaring themselves freedom fighters, as well as to many wars.

By nature a woman is a nurturer and wants to take care of her family – and others if necessary. Why, then, would a woman blow herself up? And more so, why would a woman, the nurturer of the home, try to kill as many woman and children as possible?

The Muslim culture, teaches their children that the greatest achievement is being a parent and creating life. I wondered about this would-be suicide bomber who wanted to kill children. Did she have children of her own? Even if Sajida Mubarak Atrous al-Rishawi has no children she had to have yearned to be a mother. How can someone who gave birth to her own children – or spent many years yearning for them – callously kill other people's children? How can a woman raised in a culture that promotes creating life, commit an act with the intention to destroy life?

This 'holy war' has not only changed the face of the warriors, turning them into terrorists, and the face of terrorists by brainwashing women and children to commit acts against their very nature, it has changed the face of the victim too. Male freedom-fighters have traditionally stayed away from killing women and children. Other than in this 'Muslim holy-war', killing defenseless citizens especially women and children, was always considered a weak and pathetic act. Civilian casualties were an unfortunate by product of war, not the target, yet in this war it seems that no one can feel safe that they won't be targeted and their attacker may be an innocent looking woman or child, maybe even a mother holding a baby.

The only explanation that comes to my mind is that, Sajida Mubarak Atrous al-Rishawi, like many other men, women and children of the Muslim faith, was simply brainwashed and indoctrinated for so long and from such a young age that

killing for the 'right reason' is sanctified, that she wouldn't consider the deaths of innocent women and children murder. Brainwashing those who would otherwise be unwilling to commit heinous acts of terror which are totally against their nature, has sunk this war to a despicable level.

Jihadic terrorism has no justification or rationalization and must be condemned by all G-d fearing people as an evil that must be eradicated.

B"H

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