Case Study #2: Free Will and the Making of an Terrorist

Read the sections on d'Holbach and Sartre in the chapter on Freedom in our text and the attached piece from MSN News/AP. The completed assignment should be three pages long, (approximately 2200 words) using 12 pt. fonts and single spacing with one inch margins. Please follow the assigned format as shown in the example provided with the first case study. Each answer should be separated, numbered and proportionate to the number of points possible. Supporting quotes should be no longer than one or two short sentences. Quotes must be properly cited. Please refer to Case Study #1 for detailed instructions, rubrics and sample completed assignment. This study is worth a total of 100 points.

Your completed assignment is due on the 11th (MW)/ 12th (TTh) of May. No late case studies will be accepted!

Questions:

1. Paraphrase the argument presented in Stephen Fidler's article (see attached) from The Wall Street Journal criticizing the secularist model in France and concluding that, “the appropriate response to the attack on Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris should be an effort toward building a pluralistic democracy.” (10 points)

2. Asking the Right Questions: What facts would you need to know about his case to make a reasonably informed judgment? In this section, note that you should be raising questions such as statistical data relating demographics to incidences of terrorism, how issues of race and religion are treated in various countries, specific recruitment and training methods used by extremist groups, etc. but not questions about d'Holbach or Sartre. Focus principally on whether a secularist model of government might be causally linked to increased terrorism. Provide as a bulleted list and pose in question form. For this assignment, you do not have to do the research but you need to raise the kind of questions that would drive such a project. These should be research questions and as such should be concrete and answerable. (20 points)

3. Would d'Holbach argue that France's secularist model of government could be causally linked to someone becoming a terrorist? Defend your answer including specific details from d'Holbach's hard determinism & provide citations from d'Holbach (primary source = d'Holbach's writings and does not include secondary commentary from Solomon or from me) to support your answer. Include d'Holbach's notion of what it would take for someone to be called free and be very specific regarding the causes which d'Holbach would regard as causally relevant. (30 points)

4. Would Sartre argue that France's secularist model of government could be causally linked to someone becoming a terrorist? Defend your answer using specific details

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1 This policy may be waived if extraordinarily strong justification can be presented and documentation is provided.
from Sartre’s existentialism & provide citations from Sartre (primary source = Sartre’s writings and does not include secondary commentary from Solomon or from me) to support your answer. Be sure to include a discussion of Sartre’s point that we are still free even if our choices are determined by prior causes and might even at some point become utterly predictable if those causes are known. (30 points)

5. Conclusion: Where do you stand on this issue? Having considered the relevant facts and the arguments you have gleaned using d’Holbach and Sartre, do you think that someone freely chooses to become a terrorist or that someone probably needs to have some kind of a profound or trigger experience of injustice which functions causally to their becoming a terrorist? Briefly defend your answer without resorting to a repetition of points made in previous sections. (10 points)

Background²: Case Study #2

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

BRUSSELS BEAT

France’s Secularist Model Is Challenged by Attack³

Analysis: Critics Bemoan a Refusal to Confront Ideas of Race and Religion

Duke University’s Omid Safi discusses how he thinks the appropriate response to the attack on Charlie Hebdo magazine in Paris should be an effort toward building a pluralistic democracy. Photo: AP

By STEPHEN FIDLER

² Please note that you are not limited to the background offered – you may feel free to use any credible/reliable source as evidence for your arguments. Please provide full citation for all research.
From Scandinavia to Italy, European societies are, to a greater or lesser degree, struggling with the integration of their Muslim populations. The terrorist attack on the offices of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo by assailants claiming to be avenging the Prophet Muhammad has raised questions once again about whether France, the European country with the largest Muslim minority, has a particular problem.

While it isn’t possible to draw a line of causation between the actions of three gunmen and a society’s failures over time to absorb its immigrants, such tragedies have in the past led to soul-searching that changed policy.

That happened in the U.K. after four homegrown suicide bombers struck in central London on July 7, 2005, killing 52. The attacks were seen as exposing the flaws in Britain’s “live and let live” approach to its minorities, dubbed multiculturalism. The government determined that its neglect of Muslim communities had been anything but benign.

“Multiculturalism—allowing separate development—led to fundamental schisms in society,” said Phillip Blond, director of ResPublica, a center-right British think tank.

France’s model to deal with its minority communities has often been depicted as the polar opposite: secularism. That is in the French republican tradition of emphasizing national unity, in effect ignoring religion and race and relegating them to the personal sphere. In that tradition, in 2010, France banned the wearing of full-face veils in public.

The secularist approach “sees race and religion as disruptive of unity,” according to Barbara Lebrun, a
French woman who is a senior lecturer in French politics and culture at the University of Manchester.

The response of President François Hollande to the attacks was, she said, firmly in that tradition. The best weapon to deal with the ordeal was “our unity, the unity of all our fellow citizens,” Mr. Hollande said. He didn’t mention religion but emphasized the values that had been under attack: freedom of expression, culture, creativity, pluralism and democracy.

François Heisbourg, a prominent French security expert and special adviser to the Paris-based Foundation for Strategic Research, said the French saw the terrorists as “killing Voltaire.”

“This was an attack on enlightenment values,” he said. “There are not many things that unite the French, but this happens to be one.”

For others, however, a refusal to confront the issues of race and religion has prevented the French political class from dealing adequately with them.

It isn’t easy anyway for the state to find effective intermediaries with communities practicing a religion where there is no established church and where everyone is free to develop his or her own version of Islam. Islam is a religion of networks, not institutions, Mr. Blond of ResPublica says.

The combination has allowed the development in many French cities of predominantly Muslim areas of severe deprivation and high crime rates where the writ of the state hardly runs. There, technology including satellite television and the Internet allows people to segregate themselves from the rest of French society, says Mr. Blond.
If France has difficulties with assimilation, it may be in part because it has the largest population of Muslims in Europe: 4.7 million in 2010, according to Pew Research’s most recent estimate.

Yet, French public opinion of Muslims is less negative than many other Europeans’. A Pew survey last year of global attitudes showed 27% of French people had a negative attitude toward Muslims, well below the 63% of Italians and 46% of Spaniards and compared with 26% of Britons.

Ms. Lebrun argues that the problem for France’s Arab minority is “not a question of faith but what they look like.” It’s their race, not their religion, she says, that means, for example, that Arabs are much more likely to be stopped and searched than white people.

Mr. Heisbourg also points out that the French problem with integration of citizens from its former colonies “is not new.” After terror attacks in the 1980s and the 1990s, the same discussion about integration ensued, he said.

### Complicated Relationship

Europeans’ views toward Muslims don’t always correlate with the size of their countries’ Islamic populations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIEW OF MUSLIMS</th>
<th>Favorable</th>
<th>Unfavorable</th>
<th>MUSLIM SHARE OF POPULATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.K.</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>33%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>4.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Note: Population data for 2010. Sources: Pew Research Center polls conducted March–April 2014; sample sizes: 1,000–1,010 people; margins of error: +/- 3.2–4.3 percentage points. The Wall Street Journal.
What’s different now is that French politics is, many analysts agree, more fragile and fragmented than it has been since the start of the Fifth Republic in 1958.

One reason is France’s weak economy, which has boosted the popularity of the right-wing anti-immigration National Front, whose leader Marine Le Pen led many opinion polls last year.

Ms. Lebrun says the established right-wing parties, such as Nicolas Sarkozy’s UMP, will have to confront the issue of race to “prevent the National Front from hijacking the response.” Meanwhile, the problem for the left, including Mr. Hollande’s Socialist party, is that ignoring race as an issue “doesn’t help confront real-life racial prejudice.”

To some observers then, the French establishment has a blind spot in its failure to address head-on concerns about race and religion, a weakness that has allowed the National Front to prosper.

But it isn’t clear whether it will do anything about it. Asked if he believed whether France would reconsider its secularism, Mr. Heisbourg said: “If anything after this, secularism is going to be reinforced.”