

in World War II and terrorist suicide bombers in the current war against terrorism.

In practice, every society and organization must honor both the group and the individual in the sense that neither makes sense without the other. Where cultures differ dramatically, however, is in the degree to which the espoused behavioral norms and values do or do not reflect the deeper assumption. On the surface, both the United States and Australia appear to be individualistic cultures, yet in Australia (and New Zealand), you hear many references to the "tall poppy syndrome" (that is, it is the tall poppy that gets cut off). For example, an American teenager whose parents had relocated in Australia reported that after a brilliant ride on his surfboard, he had to say to his buddies, "Gee, that was a lucky one." A person does not take personal credit in an individualistic culture that has strong espoused collectivist values. In contrast, though the United States espouses teamwork, it is evident in sports that it is the superstar who is admired and that building teams is seen as pragmatically necessary, not intrinsically desirable.

In terms of the four fundamental questions, individualistic societies define roles in terms of personal accomplishment, license aggression through personal competition, put a high premium on ambition, and define intimacy and love in very personal terms. The more collectivist society defines identity and role more in terms of group membership, licenses aggression primarily toward other groups, puts less value on personal ambition, and funnels love primarily within the group.