

Some remarks from A. A. Berger

This issue of Media, Communication and Conflict appears at a time when conflicts have become more and more common and terrible. After many years of peace in Europe, thanks to a decision made by one man it would seem, Vladimir Putin, Russia invaded Ukraine and a terrible war has broken out which involves, directly and indirectly, many other countries namely with some countries supporting Russia and many supporting Ukraine. And in November, Hamas terrorists invaded Israel and killed 1400 people there and took more than 200 hostages back to Gaza. In return, Israel has declared war on Hamas and has attacked Gaza with terrible consequences for Gaza and Israel.

All of these conflicts and wars are, of course, covered in detail by the media, which explains why the subject of this issue is relevant now, and given the human propensity for conflict, will continue to be important.

Freud wrote “Homo Homini Lupus” which means “man is a wolf to man.” Suggesting that aggression lies within the human as a part of his nature. History can be written as a series of discussions of wars and other forms of conflict, and these wars and conflicts are now shown, in graphic detail, in the media and communicated to millions of people. Conflicts and wars are now mass mediated events, which make them more present in the lives of the millions of people who ‘follow’ the events in the wars.

We can understand better why there is so much conflict by considering the set of binary oppositions that shape much of our behavior:

Oppositional Binaries and Conflicts

Us	Them
We	They
Right	Wrong
Innocent	Guilty
Deserving Love	Deserving Hate
Rightfully Attack Enemies	Correctly Chosen for Being Attacked

The poet W.H.Auden wrote a poem, “In Memory of W.B.Yeats” that reads, in part, as follows:

In the nightmare of the dark
All the dogs of Europe bark
And the living nations wait
Each sequestered in its hate;
Intellectual disgrace
Stares from every human face,
And the seas of pity lie
Locked and frozen in each eye.

His poem dealt with a different war, but unfortunately, his comments are still relevant. Many nations seem to be full of hate and with large numbers of people also ‘sequestered’ in their hate, and while that situation exists, editions of journals such as this which focus on conflicts, communication and the media will continue to be relevant.

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