Abstracts

Democracy vs. Opportunity: Revealing the Nature of Conflict Communication following the "Arab Spring"

By Thomas B. Christie

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The period following the "Arab Spring" movement revealed new ways people receive their news and information about major international conflicts—news often communicated by new media and used to form public opinion about the movements. This study examines how leading Western newspapers framed issues in the Arab Spring and contrasts them to issues found in regional public opinion polling. Framing, agenda-setting and agenda-building theories of mass communication research are used as a foundation for understanding the possible influence of both new media and traditional news coverage of these conflicts on public opinion. Key objectives are:

1. To identify the major issues of the Arab Spring movement that received coverage by three major Western newspapers during this timeframe.

2. To examine how the ranking of these issues compares with the ranking of issues noted by public opinion polling in the region—a region using social media and other new media sources.

3. To examine the differences in communication of the issues of the Arab Spring movement among the international mass media sources.

The methodology of the study employs a computer-assisted content analysis beginning with the coverage of the violent Tunisian incident in December 2010. It examines media coverage throughout 2011/2012 and identifies key issues. The study then compares the key issues in media coverage to those revealed by public opinion polling throughout Tunisia, Egypt, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Iran. The study concludes by summarizing the stark contrast between the communication of traditional media issues defining the Arab Spring (based largely on Western democratic

themes) and issues defined by public opinion polling in the region (expanding economic opportunity and ending political corruption).

Press Narratives on War against Terror in Sri Lanka

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A pride of place and function has been assigned to mass media in the social, economic, political and cultural life of the contemporary world. Hence the mass media, though existent within society itself can deviate and spread its powerful authority over the society. The impact of the shock waves of thought sent by mass media through society, on the consciousness, mind, feelings and behavior of individuals has been argued. The ethnic conflict has been given first priority in the national agenda of Sri Lanka for the last few decades. The division in the island state of Sri Lanka between the Sinhala majority and Tamil minority has already taken a heavy toll. The role of the mass media within the ethnic conflict is something which has not been identified. Some media theorists and practitioners have argued that an answer to this can be found by the analysis of news paper narratives on the ethnic conflict. The study was seeking to identify how the narratology has been used by the newspapers on the war during the last months of the war against terror. Every society inherits a technique of narration and it performs the function of either providing entertainment or religious purpose. It is a method of providing understanding of the society and it is of prime importance in human communication and its effect on building up of ideologies. This paper also examines the extent to which the news paper narratives influence the minds of the reading public. For this purpose Cultural Media Theory, Structuralism Media Theory and Media Effect Model were employed. The findings were obtained from Sinhala newspapers through interviews and analyzing narratives on the last months of the war against terror. A survey was conducted to examine the extent to which narrations of newspapers affected the ideology and the behavior of the reading public. The finding indicates that the Sinhala newspapers followed a double standard of language in reporting the loss of lives in the Sri Lankan army and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Ealam(LTTE).Thus, it is found the facts embodied in the newspaper narratives of the ethnic conflict are not properly verified in creating heroes and villains to justify the journalist's purposes. In

such reporting, the characters and incidents created by newspapers fall into binary oppositions like righteous or unrighteous, black and white, moral or immoral. The paper argues that the influence exercised upon the mentality of readers by narratives built by the newspapers in a society facing an armed conflict based on ethnic differences obstruct the ability to look at the ethnic conflict critically.

The intersection between communication competence and alcoholism recovery

by Frances Spellman

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The purpose of this literature review is to assess addiction and communication behaviors. Relevant research suggests that the central features of addiction behaviors and experiences consist of decision-making, ambivalence, and conflict. More specifically, this review considers how addiction often leads to negative communicative behaviors in contexts characterized by conflict. It reviews the applicability of several cognitive-behavioral components of the Relapse Prevention (RP) model (Marlatt & Gordon, 1980; 1985) and conceptualizes the ongoing process of excessive alcohol use and anger dyscontrol. Appraisal of a high-risk situation, coping responses, self-efficacy and outcome expectancy are also considered for individuals seeking treatment. In addition, Bandura's Social Cognitive Learning Theory is assessed within the context of alcohol abuse. This is an interesting consideration as the central tenet holds that cognitively mediated experience engenders learned efficacy expectations. These are reinforced for good or ill by success or failure to respond adequately to high-risk situations involving interpersonal conflict. Also, behaviorally-oriented social skill instruction a greater degree of enhancement of self-efficacy for sobriety compared with the cognitively-oriented instruction on interpersonal conflict is considered.

Predictors of Cyber Aggression

by Kumi Ishii

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Verbal aggressiveness is well known as a personality trait that predisposes persons to attack the self-concepts of other people instead of, or in addition to, their positions on topics of communication (Infante & Wigley, 1986). Past studies identified the predictors of verbal aggressiveness including the lack of argumentative skills (Infante, Trebing, Shephard, & Seeds, 1984) and social learning (Schrodt & Carr, 2012). In addition, some personal traits such as psychoticism and extraversion are related to verbal aggressiveness (Heisel, La France, & Beatty, 2003). While verbal aggressiveness has been well studied, the diffusion of online communication has also brought our attention to aggressive behavior online. Cyber (or online) aggression refers to the transmission of aggressive behavior by communication technology (Dempsey, Sulkowski, Dempsey, & Storch, 2012). It is distinct from cyberbullying, which is considered as aggressive behavior to the target over time (Law, Shapka, Domene, & Gagne, 2012) due to an imbalance of power (Schoffstall & Cohen, 2011). According to Law, Shapka, Hymel, Olson, and Waterhouse (2012), cyber aggression typically takes two forms: (a) aggressive messaging and (b) commenting/posting embarrassing photos/videos.

Cyber aggression has been generally studied among adolescents and online game players (e.g., Law et al., 2012; Williams & Skoric, 2005), yet aggressive behavior is also seen among adults in other online contexts including social networking sites and discussion board. More importantly, the reasons why online users engage in aggressive behavior are not yet clarified. For example, many online researchers initially suggested anonymity in online communication is related to users' aggressive behavior, yet empirical support has been limited (e.g., Huang & Chou, 2010; Moore, Nakano, Enomoto, & Suda, 2012). Likewise, online behavior was originally viewed differently from face-to-face (FtF) behavior. However, online communication is part of our daily life today, and more people may behave online in a similar way to FtF contexts. In fact, online user's conflict management styles follow their styles to solve FtF conflict (Ishii,

2010). Yet, little is known about how traditional FtF aggression is related to cyber aggression. Although Raskauskas and Stoltz (2007) found that FtF aggression is the predictor of cyber aggression among adolescents, Schoffstall and Cohen's (2011) study did not demonstrate the significant relationship. In addition, cyber aggression among adolescents often occurs as a reiteration of FtF events in school among adolescents (Schoffstall & Cohen, 2011). Unlike adolescents, adult aggressors may not always know the online target personally. Accordingly, this study investigates the relationship between verbal aggressiveness and cyber aggression among adults. It also attempts to identify the predictors of cyber aggression considering both personal and situational factors. By filling the gap in past research, the findings of this study will provide the current online communication behavior and enhance understanding of cyber aggression.

"Survival of the Fittest" or The End of a False Myth

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The original concept coined by Herbert Spencer in his "Principles of Biology" (1864) after reading Darwin's theory of "natural selection" and then repeated by Darwin himself had a tremendous impact on human thinking.

Spencer's powerful metaphor fit perfectly into the dominating "story" that ruled the human mind in the past centuries, namely economics.

It was thought that human survival, as well as the success of human societies, depended on a selection principle that favored the "fittest". Human existence was perceived as a constant struggle for survival, and the stronger, the more efficient, the fitter have always prevailed.

Thus, competition, violence and human aggression were perceived to be the driving force for survival.

What is that truly motivates human beings?

Is it really a struggle for survival what fundamentally drives us?

Has 21-century science confirmed Spencer's theory of human nature?

How do we explain human actions and objectives that seem to contradict to this theory?

Spencer's metaphor will be examined, interrogated and in the light of the findings of 21-century Neurobiology, Psychology and Anthropology ultimately discarded.

Human biology, the motivational and reward systems of the human brain revealed a very different picture from Spencer's concept.

Human beings are motivated not by some survival instinct; rather the overwhelming motivation is for social attachment, mutual acceptance and recognition.

In reality, Neurobiology has confirmed that the effort of the self to get personal recognition overtakes biological instinct for self-preservation.

Consequently, the true cause of human aggression has more to do to social attachment or to a lack of it.

In other words, humans could become aggressive for being part of a community or for the opposite, being ostracized, excluded, isolated and lonely.

Thus, aggression instead of being the glorified tool for survival will have to be approached as the sign of dysfunctional personal, social, or communal relationships.

Dowry Violence in India as Aggressive/Violent "Negotiation" Strategy: An Analysis of Media Coverage and Cultural Meaning

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The dowry system of securing marriage agreements has been illegal in India since 1961. Despite this, such practices are still quite common in certain regions of India, as well as other south Asian countries. Dowry payments can be framed and understood as negotiations within complex familial and social systems that cement and secure particular "deals" between families and married couples (the marriage and fair treatment of a daughter, for example). Many such deals are, however, rarely fixed or final. In fact they are frequently subject to the aggressive renegotiations (demands) of the groom and his family who can assume the power to "change the deal." One common storyline, for example, is that the groom's family comes back for more dowry payments which the bride's family is often unable to pay. The bride is reduced to being viewed as a "means to an end"—more payments. The families are thrown into vivid conflict through which enmity quickly manifests. The bride is then subject to the threat or actuality of violence and other mistreatment at the hands of her husband and his family. The violence or threat of violence, and sometimes more subtle emotional pressure and abuse, are used to leverage, extort, and/or punish/discipline/shame the woman and her family sometimes in social/public display, and sometimes hidden in private family space (many cases go unreported).

This paper theoretically reframes dowry violence as the manifestation of aggressive/dominant negotiation strategies typical in such relationships of dramatically unequal power. Aggressive communication and behavior such as threat based leverage, extortive revisions of agreements, and violent displays of punishment and discipline/shame for non-compliance with extortion and more subtle emotional abuse, can easily fracture the fragile "negative peace" of marriage agreements and lead to violent conflicts. Violent conflict often leads to attacks on the bride, and sometimes her death.

This paper provides an analysis of five years of dowry violence cases (approximately 100 cases) reported in the *Times of India* and *The Hindu*. These cases are examined for content around the three most prevalent aggressive negotiation strategies of (1) threat based leverage; (2) aggressive extortion; and (3) violence based discipline/punishment/and emotional shaming for non-compliance. Such negotiation strategies are then understood against the cultural and narrative backdrop in which they are often viewed as reasonable and justified forms of conflict communication and behavior by grooms and their families. The implications are examined for how media coverage of dowry violence cases help cultivate and reify, as well as challenge and call for changes to, the cultural assumptions around the use of aggressive and violent (gendered) negotiations.

Romantic Partner Surveillance as a Predictor of Relational Conflict, Aggression, and Satisfaction

by Shannon T. Carton

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Partner surveillance occurs in a variety of ways, including via interpersonal electronic surveillance (IES; Tokunga, 2011). Tokunga defines IES as, "surreptitious strategies individuals use over communication technologies to gain awareness of another user's offline and/or online behaviors. Dainton and Gross (2008) identified that *spying* is a negative relational maintenance behavior, or a "mechanism for equity restoration" (p. 181). Goodboy and Myers (2010) found that negative maintenance behaviors are indicative of low quality romantic relationships. Negative maintenance behaviors could be functions of or predictors of relational satisfaction. For example, Dainton and Gross (2008) argued that relational satisfaction is the mechanism which explains use of negative maintenance behaviors. However, the nature of that research prohibited directional or causal claims, so it could be that (dis)satisfaction predicts negative maintenance behaviors, but it could equally be true that satisfaction is predicted *by* the negative maintenance.

With that in mind, the goal of the present study is to examine how the negative maintenance behavior of *partner surveillance* predicts conflict style, aggression, and satisfaction in romantic associations. Specifically, hypotheses predict that surveillance will lead to less productive conflict, aggression, and lower relationship satisfaction. To test these hypotheses, researchers will measure the independent variable of *surveillance* using the measure for the negative relational maintenance behavior of spying (Dainton & Gross, 2008) and the IES scale for social networking sites (SNS; Tokunga, 2011). The dependent variables will be measured using the following scales: conflict styles (adapted from Rahim, 1983; Rahim & Magner, 1994[1]), romantic partner aggression (Goldstein, Chesir-Teran, & McFaul, 2008), relationship satisfaction (Rusbult, Martz, & Agnew, 1998). This research will also include an open-ended question that inquires about other surveillance behaviors in the participants' current romantic relationships.

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[1] This method was replicated from Cann, Norman, Welbourne, & Calhoun, (2008).

Explorations and Redefinitions of Human Sexuality and Relationships in the Era of New Media Technology (Videochatting and Social Networking): The Invigoration of Exploitations of Filipino Men and Women

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The advent of the new media technology introduces many ways to cultivate sexual connections between and among individuals across boundaries and geographical territories. Various forms of relationships, which several decades ago would not have been possible, have been cultivated. Sexual passions and desires were observed by many scholars and psychologists to have been more grounded on virtuality than physicality. These apparent changes in sexuality and/or relationships brought implications and ramifications to modern social lives. Aggressions and exploitations among men and women of various nationalities including Filipinos have been observed.

To explore this situation, this research paper would have the following objectives:

1.   Describe the phenomenology of virtual relationships through the testimonies of Filipino women and men who are indulging themselves in this kind of relationships;

2.   Explore the motivations and drives of both European and Filipina men and women in indulging in virtual relationships;

3.   Describe and classify sexual deviations and sexual neurosis that may likely developed from virtual relationships;

4.   Explain the possible exploitations of Filipina men and women that may be caused by these sexual interactions through the digital and internet technology; and

5.   At the conclusion of the research, the researcher would be producing two artistic outputs based on the research: (a) Photo-Painting Collage of Filipina Men and Women

in the act of virtual sexual interactions; and (b) an audio-video collage of men and women while indulging in virtual relationships. In these artistic outputs, the researcher would show the likely scenarios that may be brought about by these virtual relationships.

The research paper will be using a combination of phenomenology and descriptive method of research. By this methodology, the researcher hopes to explore and elucidate important ideas and themes which would help modern and contemporary philosophers and psychologists in their study of human sexuality in the computer and digital age.

The Multiple Scary Worlds of Television, An International Perspective on Gerbner's Cultivation Theory

by Jan Van den Bulck

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In the 1960s Gerbner proposed a cultivation theory of media effects. It argued that the picture of the world presented by TV gradually affects how viewers perceive the real world. Much of the evidence in support of cultivation theory was reproduced in a number of countries.

Gerbner's theory, however, was developed in the United States of America. American viewers are exposed mostly to content depicting (and produced in) the US. International cultivation studies generally have not taken into account the fact that non-US audiences are exposed to a mixture of US and homegrown (and, often, other) TV content. International cultivation theory should therefore study what viewers learn from homegrown TV (primary cultivation), what they learn about the US from US-TV (secondary cultivation) and whether and how US TV affects their view of their own world (integration).

This paper presents the results of split-ballot experiment in an online survey of 1900 Flemish adolescents. One group received traditional, generic, "Scary World" questions about their estimates of demographics and judgments such as trust in other people. The second group received the same questions, but with the geographic specification "in Flanders". The third group received the questions with the specification "in the US". All respondents detailed their exposure to Flemish, US and other TV content. The study analyses relationships of primary cultivation (exposure to Flemish TV and perceptions of Flanders), secondary cultivation (exposure to US TV and perceptions of the US) and integration (exposure to US TV and perceptions of Flanders and general perceptions of the world). Finally it compares these relationships to the results of a traditional cultivation analysis in which overall viewing was studied in relationship to non-geographically specific questions about real world perceptions.

The implications of these results and of the international perspective on cultivation for the validity of cultivation theory and for the study of cultivation outside of the US are discussed.

Retesting Cultivation Theory on the Origins, Causes, and Predictors of Aggression: The Case of Pre and Post Genocide Rwanda

by Agnes Lucy Lando, Linda Muthuri, Everlyne Otieno, Joan Wanja Macharia, Stella Nsubuga, Martin Mwengah, Paul R. Odira

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Gebner's Cultivation Theory suggests that television can change or 'cultivate' a viewer's perception of social reality. In other words, a viewer's belief of reality is shaped by the amount of television watched combined with a continual exposure to media messages over a long period of time. Gebner's theory in essence focuses on research based on the negative effects, and particularly violence of television programming on consumer behavior and attitude.

In 1994, Rwanda was the site of one of the most atrocious genocides in human history. Rwandan media played a central part in the tragedy. It is worth noting thatRwanda's public television began broadcasting in 1992. However, the impact of television as a form of media was very limited because only the upper-class elite had televisions at the time, and the middle-class had televisions that only played video cassettes. Radio, on the other hand, played a significant role in fuelling hatred in Rwanda and was used as a channel for anti-Tutsi propaganda. "Hate-radio" served as a voice of the anti-Tutsi campaign, inciting and instructing people whom and how to kill. Through radio, hate propaganda was responsible for fanning and coordinating the rapid wave of violence that was carried across the country.

While Gebner's theory focuses on Television as the main channel of violent influence, and inasmuch as the cultivation effects prove true, we see television as not applicable in the case of Rwanda. This is because radio, which was more available to the general public, was more impactful in promoting violence in a context where television had limited reach and audience. We hold that continuous exposure to messages of hate and violence over the radio and the amount of radio listened to, played a significant role in causing the Rwandan genocide.

In this paper therefore, we seek to show Gebner's theory as not only applicable to television but also other media, and in this case, radio. Thus our paper is an attempt

to widen the scope of Gebner's cultivation theory by applying it to aggressive communication behavior due to the amount of radio content continually listened to over a significant period of time. By examining the origins, causes, and predictors of aggression in pre and post genocide Rwanda, our study is guided by the research question: can radio cultivate violent behavior and attitude as television can, where Television is not accessible?

Remediating Aggression: Humbaba, Mythic Transformation, and Virtuality

by Elaine Sponholtz

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This paper explores themes of aggression, destruction, and transformation in the ancient Epic of Gilgamesh, and the role of Digital Media in the remediation of the world's oldest written story. Within the context of a contemporary retelling, the monster Humbaba's position in the narrative as the antagonistic Other is evaluated. The project portrays how Humbaba, the divinely appointed protector of the Cedar forest, is seen to impede the desire of the foreign invaders for valuable natural resources, the Cedars of Lebanon. Seeking glory, the aggressors, led by the impulsive tyrant Gilgamesh and his companion Enkidu, invade the forest, kill Humbaba, and cut down the sacred cedars. In doing so, they set into motion unintended consequences, divine retribution, resulting in the death of Eniku. The epic chronicles the transformation of Gilgamesh, as he changes from an arrogant ruler into an ethical one focused on serving the best interests of his people. Through the recreation of these scenes from ancient cuneiform texts, parallels are drawn between modern acts of military aggression, and those in the mythic past of Mesopotamia/Ancient Iraq. The project also aligns Humbaba's environmental consciousness with that of contemporary reforestation activist Wangari Maathai. The author explicates the process of blending an original spoken word performance and live action with 3D avatars in a virtual game engine environment. By employing repurposed Microsoft Kinect sensors with motion capture capabilities, the characters are controlled through Natural User Interface (NUI) by the motions of the actors. With the new possibilities of inexpensive motion capture technology, elements that include 3D virtual characters partnered with live performers on stage create new storytelling experiences. This leads to an examination of the interrelationship between mythic portrayals of conflict and injustice, and the role that Digital Storytelling play in creating a public dialogue about the history of human experience.

The Ethical Implications of the "Cool" Professor

by Rebecca M. Chory

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and

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The communication behaviors of classroom instructors at the post-secondary school (college/university) level have largely been examined in terms of their impact on student learning, student perceptions, student out-of-class communication, and student satisfaction. Much less attention has been paid to the negative effects that instructors' communication may have on students' character development, value adoption, and ethical conduct. The present study seeks to address this issue by investigating college instructors' unethical behavior, poor judgment, management of social distance, hurtful communication, and/or professionalism and the associations these behaviors have with students' ethics-related beliefs, values, and behaviors. In short, this study will examine the following proposition: In an attempt to relate to students by appearing down-to-earth and "cool," professors may inadvertently be modeling problematic behaviors that their students learn, generalize, and reproduce in the classroom and beyond.

Communication Dynamics Addressing Conflicts Encountered by Researchers Working in Groups

by Divina T. Pasumbal, Windy P. Añonuevo, Gelyn D. Arciaga, Camille M. Corral, Katherine M. Dator, Alvin John M. Fernandez

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I. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This institutional study which was completed in 2011 sought to describe how conflicts between and among members of thesis groups affect the research process. It also looked into the ways by which these members communicate to and deal with conflicting group members. Furthermore, it attempted to describe the communication approaches and strategies that helped them manage and resolve conflicts while in the process of doing their research.

II. RESEARCH DESIGN

In this study, qualitative research design was employed. Participants were selected purposively and focus group discussions were administered to generate the data.

III. HIGHLIGHTS OF RESULTS AND MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

The researchers found out that conflicting situations inevitably arise in research undertakings which are done by a group of researchers. These conflicts are caused by several factors such as meager financial resouces, conflicting activites and schedules, adviser's standards and expectations, among others.

In the midst of these conflicts, thesis group members thought of and employed communication strategies through which conflicting situations that emerged could be addressed. The research team attempted to capture such strategies through this study.

The presentation is outlined as follows:

A.   The Factors Considered In Choosing Group Members

B.   The Working Environment

C.   Conflict situations in Thesis Groups

D.   Communication Strategies and Approaches to Resolve Conflict

   1. At the onset of conflict situation

   2. As conflict situation worsens

E. Major factors that contribute to the resolution of conflict

Knowledge Creating Conversations: Endlessly Unfolding Inquiries of Discovery and Invention

by Arthur Brogden Male

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Knowledge creating conversations revise the fluctuating boundaries of warranted argumentation in intergradient educational discourse: the framework for endlessly unfolding inquiries of discovery and invention. Working together engaging learning relativities, staff and student colleague actioning narratives develop diverse research agendas. Sharing authority, personhood voice and learning actions craft experience experiments. Fusing action research, design science, ethnography and grounded theory, doctoral school learning environments are investigated from January 2000 to the present. The purpose of the inquiry is to develop The Arts–Science–Education–In–Performance (ASEIP) Model. Eight community projects, 55 colleague interviews, 10 supervisory relationships and 34 ASEIP demonstrations scaffold engagements with authority. The inquiry utilises humanistic, collaborative–conversational–creative methodology to break new theoretical ground establishing how–what–why formal, mainstream pedagogical practices undermine learner outcomes.

Sharing a sense of infinite probabilities being marginalized, learners of all abilities, ages, conditions and backgrounds are in conflict with perceived understandings of authoritative, hierarchic practice as a reified mode. The error is to treat controlling situations as the real thing: over investing in competitive learning environments because that is what is happening in the classroom. This leads to the focusing hypothesis: in knowledge creating conversations, individuals experience creative genius, learning heroics and personal transformation. Joy emerges. Study findings:

1 Collaborative conversations organise insight methodology, divergent thinking and changing perspectives explicating Arts–Science–Education–In–Performance.

2 Self-study inspirations, activist aspirations and research journeys generate quests-in-process, projects-in-development and artworks-in-progress achieving entelechy.

3 Experience experiments successively approximate the ineffable polysemy and infinite probabilities of ontology, epistemology, content, contexts and communication.

4 ∞ Learning **=** energy (awareness) **²** trans-formulations synthesise spontaneity**–**authenticity**–**originality and mimicry**–**mastery interactivity and coalescence.

5 Diverse fractal-metric-art-forms fuse episodic, evolving, evidentiary events nesting energy within awareness manifesting nine universal elements of education including self expression, memoir stories, spontaneous creativity and universal languages.

Retaining hierarchies of authority and advantage, dogma, disaffection and marginalizing inequalities colonise academe, the workplace and society. Fusing formal and informal educational cultures, intergradient learning processes produce subsequent frames and framings of time, space and form one nested within the other. Utilising educational activities, learning relativity inspires three research questions. (1) How do learners develop new syntheses of expected educational experiences? (2) What learning relativities elicit reciprocity in educational entanglements? (3) Why do awareness trans-formulations facilitate argumentation in academe? All participants in mainstream education are respondents to authority. Knowledge creating conversations counteract constraints. Activating the mostly untried, and untested, universal learner-self, enlightened Renaissance persons coalesce nature, human nature and humankind enabling the next stage of human development. Research recommendations:

1 Engage spontaneous–authentic–original and mimicry–mastery learning encounters

2 Access learner physical–mental–emotional–spiritual awareness–quests–processes

3 Enfranchise humanistic, collaborative–conversational–creative competencies

4 Develop agency–autonomy–authority entitlements in academe–workplace–society

5 Constitute individual–collective–international trans-disciplinary research projects

Double Dose: The Joint Effect of Media Violence and Family Conflict on Adolescents' Aggression

by Karin M. Fikkers, Jessica Taylor Piotrowski, Wouter D. Weeda, Helen G.M. Vossen, Patti M. Valkenburg,

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Media violence and family conflict have both been studied as risk factors for adolescents' aggressive behavior (e.g., Gentile, Coyne, & Walsh, 2011; Krahé & Möller, 2010; Tanaka, Raishevich, & Scarpa, 2010; Vandewater & Lansford, 1998). However, this has largely taken place in separate studies and disciplines (Vandewater, Lee, & Shim, 2005).

Media researchers have focused on the effects of media violence, while largely ignoring effects of family conflict, whereas the reverse is true for family researchers. This lack of researchattention for the joint effect of media violence and family conflict on adolescents' aggression is surprising. Several theoretical models expect that observing aggression both in themedia and in the family can create a "double dose" effect (Gerbner, Gross, Morgan, & Signorielli, 1980). Cultivation theory includes the concept of resonance, which is the idea that people whose life experiences are congruent with what they see on television will be more affected by media messages (Gerbner et al., 1980). The Differential Susceptibility to Media effects Model (Valkenburg & Peter, 2013) stresses that media effects are often conditional, and that social context can reinforce the effects of exposure to media violence. Therefore, we investigated the hypothesis that family conflict strengthens the effect of media violence on adolescents' subsequent aggression.

A total of 499 Dutch adolescents (aged 10 to 14, 48% girls) participated in a two-wave longitudinal survey (4-month interval). Survey questions assessed their exposure to violence on television and in games, family conflict (Jansma & Coole, 1996; Moos & Moos, 1994), and aggressive behavior (Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992). Time 1 aggression and gender were included as control variables in multilevel models.

Main effect analyses indicate that media violence did not significantly predict aggression when controlling for family conflict. We did find a significant interaction between media violence and family conflict, which supported the hypothesized double dose effect: media violence led to increased aggression in families with higher family conflict. Unexpectedly, in families with lower family conflict, media violence was related to decreased aggression.

This study is the first to investigate a double dose effect of media violence and family conflict on adolescents' aggression. Our findings identify two avenues for future research.

First, the fact that we found an effect of media violence on aggression only in interaction with family conflict indicates that not all adolescents are affected by media violence in the same way (in line with Valkenburg & Peter, 2013). Future research which seeks to investigate other potential moderators of the media violence-aggression relationship would improve our understanding of the effects of media violence. Second, in line with cultivation theory's concept of resonance, our findings underscore the importance of including the social context when investigating the effect of media violence on aggression (in line with Gerbner et al.,

1980; Jordan, 2004). Given that media violence was related to decreased aggression in low conflict families, further research into specific family characteristics (e.g., parental mediation; parenting style) that can enhance or diminish the effect of media violence on aggression would be worthwhile.

Constructing Televisual Violence as an Issue in Children's Speech

by Anca Velicu

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One of the issues which seem to be triggered by the abundance of media in our society is the media violence, usually correlated with vulnerable publics, and especially youth. Yet, there is not a unity of opinion regarding the pertinence of the issue or its existence. In the US (Hamilton, 2000), France (Kriegel, 2003), Romania (Dragan et al., 2009) and in other spaces, studies were made regarding the quantity and types of audiovisual violence, taking for granted that TV violence will negatively affect the children and so, the very presence of violence in the media (television) is considered a bad thing. Nevertheless, there are voices denying this initial assumption and rather address the 'moral panics' or 'media panics' (Barker & Pentley, 2001; Frau-Meigs, 2011). Recently some scholars were trying to propose a third, mid-way, and put the problem in the terms of social constructionism and/ or new cultural history (Buckingham and Jensen, 2012).

In this paper, we intend to leave the floor to children (following the study by Van der Voort, 1986) and see what their perception on the issue is and how do they build their discourse around it. What is TV violence to them? Is their discourse on violence matching adults'? Between realistic violence (in news) and film violence (regulated by NAVC), which one is felt by children as being 'more violent'? How much violence is there on TV? What triggers it? What are their feelings towards it? Is there a relationship between the way they perceive film violence, respectively, violence in 'classical' arts? What's the place of news violence, between information and spectacular? We tried to address all these through a research on children and teens in Romania (in secondary school and high school); data were gathered in 2011, in a self-administered questionnaire with 3,800 respondents and through six focus-groups.

Empowering Dialogue in Intercultural Conflicts between Children

by Vittorio Iervese

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Dialogue is a particular form of communication, which is contrasted with "attitudes such as aggression, hostility, prejudice, sectarianism, and with conflicts of varying degrees, including war" (Wierbicka 2005, p. 677). Therefore, dialogue is a form of communication in which participants' positions are intentionally questioned and negotiated, in order to reach their positive interactive and reflexive positioning.

In this respect, it is possibile to speak of *empowering dialogue* as a specific form of communication which creates the opportunity to negotiate contributions and to show positive involvement in the relationships between participants. This idea may be considered normative and idealistic (Ramsbotham, Woodhouse & Miall 2005) as it embodies a positive evaluation and a social ideal. However, in the perspective of this presentation, empowering dialogue has a technical meaning. Empowering dialogue is based on peculiar cultural presuppositions (patterns of expectations) and implies specific kinds of turn-taking or action-reaction sequences. More specifically, dialogue requires *equity*, *empathy* and *empowerment* as cultural presuppositions of communication; it requires equity and empathy as premises for empowerment. Based on equity, empathy, and empowerment, dialogue enhances expression and acknowledgement of diversity, creating conditions for reciprocity. It is supposed to abolish ethnocentric boundaries and promote cross-cultural adaptation.

This contribution tries to understand how dialogue and conflict management can be productive in the interaction between adults and children. For this purpose, the results of field research are presented; they concern videotaped interaction in different groups of children coordinated by adults trying to support children's conflict management. The data show the adults' dialogic actions, which may promote children's conflict management, as well as the problems and limitations of these actions, highlighting coordination between adults' dialogic actions and children's agency in intercultural conflicts. In particular, this contribution focuses on the relationship between participation and conflict, and between conflict management and decision-making during CISV educational activities (example 1) and during a project developed by the NGO Oxfam It.

Ostracism: The Powers and Effects of the Silent Bully

by Timothy Gozanski

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Does being ignored, rejected, and/or excluded by others as a child lead to aggression and anti-social behavior later in life? In an attempt to answer this question, this literature review begins by explaining the model of ostracism proposed by Williams (1997) to illuminate the mechanisms theorized to drive this process and its potency. The focus then moves to the exploration of what has been studied regarding the cognitive, affective, and behavioral consequences of ostracism during childhood, and continues to an assessment of what evidence there is supporting the contention that ostracized children are prone to anti-social behavior in later life. In conclusion, future directions for research are proposed.

The Barabbas Complex: Targeting the Wrong Villain in the Global Warming Debate

by Gabor Hardy, Eyub Yegen

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This essay explores the rhetoric of political discourse, scientific evidence, and spiritual myths used within the current dialogue on global warming. It is apparent that social, political, and economic forces have failed to produce any significant halt to the warming of this planet earth. To investigate the logic of denial I employ a form of Cultural Criticism based on the influence of myth: specifically biblical apocalypse. This apocalypse myth from the book of John in the New Testament offers a revealed vision of a world narrative. The rhetoric of three prominent global deniers is analyzed. Through an analysis of the discourse used by these three political and spiritual figures, we link their articulations of global warming denial to modern Western conceptions of "apocalypse" where it is associated with catastrophic end, or near-end, of the human race. Ultimately, I argue that the vision of the apocalypse shapes many political and spiritual viewpoints regarding the validity of the implications of global warming.

Places of Personal Identity, Places of Violence: A Research on Contemporary Film about the (Near) Future

by Monica-Elena Mitarca

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As the recent concerns for biotechnologies, human genome and advanced bio&nano-technologies permeate the fiction bareer, film becomes a witness, as well as a predictor of our *zeitgeist*.

Our hypothesis is that, beyond some of the stories in fiction film worldwide (but mostly in Hollywood movies), there is a legitimate social concern towards the use of techology to impact, alter or define personal identity, especially since its representation through film gives room to both debate and acceptance/naturalization of it. And, while technologies got to be used as a tool in a identity re-defining process, violence is also present as a counter-part tool, in representating such a process. The films we chose to analyze were **Face/Off**, **La piel que habito**, **Gattaca** and **Minority Report** – all of them, visually and psychologically violent – in search of personal's identity agency in times of technological cha(lle)nge. We shall assess agency in corporal change which alters identity, as well as identitary features (facial features, iris, blood, skin, sex, etc.), in order to show how ,hot issues', such as genetic inferiority, social control through iris scan and other biometrics and the quest for human perfection reflect back from society into film.

If studies regarding fictional violence swing between conceiving it as a 'physical act directed towards a character' or as 'anything that emotionally impacts, of a negative manner, the viewer', the sci-fi films – especially dystopias – feature human characters, slightly or extensively engineered, by medical & technological procedures altering one's identity. These representations situate themselves between the explicit (irrevocable changes of one's identity features, for personal or social necessity) and the implicit (since the characters are submitting willingly to those changes).

The Rhetoric of Gun Violence: Blurring the Focus, Blaming the Lens

by Christine M. Willingham

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and

Margaret K. Chojnacki

Barry University, USA

In 1999 two male students of Columbine High School, 17 and 18 years old, went on a rampage killing 13, wounding 28, and, in their final act, taking their own lives. The citizenry of the United States mourned and debated the issue of gun control. Should we seek to place constraints on access to, and ownership of, guns? Or is the problem, as the National Rifle Association (NRA) contends, the people who use guns inappropriately, rather than access to guns? Eventually, the debate lost its urgency. In 2007, a 23 year-old male student at Virginia Tech University killed 32 and wounded 17 before killing himself. Again the nation mourned and public dialogue about gun control reignited, but as time passed, the gun control debate faded away. In December 2012, a 20 year-old male, after having killed his mother at home, walked into Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, killing 20 children, 6 teachers, and then taking his own life. This latest tragedy reinvigorated the gun control debate.

According to William Brown's Rhetoric of Social Intervention (RSI) model, each senseless act of violence was a catalyst that created social disorder, thus propelling the State to assert its "monopoly on violence;" in this case, by promoting further restrictions on access to and ownership of guns. As a result, increased awareness of the incompleteness of this solution among "social arbiters" should prompt social interventions to revise the ideological system by providing other interpretations for our experiences. In particular, the NRA has proposed the new naming pattern of *people-kill-people* (under which, consequently, restricting gun ownership is seen as an unnecessary violation of Second Amendment rights) as an alternative to *guns-kill-people* (so we must have more laws to keep guns away from people). In Brown's model, either the revision of the ideological system, or its reification, avoids a vicious cycle and restores social order.

However, as a result of the above incidents of violence, the ideological system has not changed; neither has there been greater gun regulation. The authors posit two potential reasons: 1) the social disorder created by these acts of violence was insufficient in both duration and magnitude for the ideological system to become truly deviance amplifying; therefore, 2) the anomaly-featuring and anomaly-masking

communication of the NRA (social intervener) was ineffective to enact its intended attention shift. In this paper, we examine the rhetoric of Wayne LaPierre (Executive Vice President and CEO of the NRA since 1991), public opinion polls regarding gun control, and gun legislation passed between 1999 and the present. We provide an analysis of the attempted attention intervention of the NRA, as they encourage the adaptation of a *people-kill-people* ideology, which would, perhaps, shift the public debate on violence away from guns and toward culture, specifically, the treatment of mental health.

Hard-Knock Life: Exploring Prisoner Perceptions of Media's Influence on Society and Crime through In-Depth Interviews and Q-Methodology

by Savannah R. Overton

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Crime and violence are rampant across all forms of media and in every corner of the globe, causing audiences to become increasingly exposed to this type of content. With the U.S. prison population continuously rising, it is vital to recognize the fundamental dynamics of what leads to crime and violence; past research indicates mass media are worthy of investigation in this area . The purpose of this study is to unearth and reveal the perceptions of media's influence on society and crime of incarcerated persons as well as their individual behavior and lifestyle choices. This study of perceptions uses Q-Methodology as well as in-depth interviews with 15 incarcerated persons at three correctional facilities in the United States regulated by the Massachusetts Department of Corrections. The focus is grounded in how these convicted persons perceive the effects media have had on their individual behaviors, both criminal and non-criminal in nature. From social psychology, anomie and strain theories help to contextualize the individual's position in society and their relationships; in the field of mass communications, social learning theory, social cognitive theory and cultivation theory, help to offer explanations of media effects as well as have strong influence on participant responses of their experiences. Results indicate that there are two primary factors from the Q-data sorts by the inmates: media's influence over the individual and over society. The results and themes from the in-depth interviews reveal four major themes: (1) gap between media and society, (2) familial influence and environment, (3) the dichotomy between individual choice and the third person effect, and (4) media's relationship with crime and violence.

This paper applies socio-psychological theories to the study of media content effects on attitudinal and behavioral choices in a population that is vastly understudied. For individuals involved in a life of crime, it is important to question whether their exposure to this type of content influences their perceptions of the actions they have committed

and how aware they are of the media's role in their lives. The purpose of this study is to discover and understand the perceptions incarcerated persons have of media's effect on their past individual criminal behavior. This study revealed media content to which participants were exposed, as well as their beliefs on how that exposure affected their criminal or illegal behavior, aggression, attitudes and beliefs.

Strategic Communication and Security Policy –Towards a Communicative Centrum Gravitatis?

by Natascha Zowislo-Grünewald, Alexander Paquée

Bundeswehr University Munich, Germany

Theoretical Framework

Recent developments in international politics have shown the unabated relevance of security policy questions. Typically, security policy considerations assume that risk situations are to be avoided or dissolved by way of mission engagements. Accepting this premise, the meaning of communication management is restricted to producing communication concepts preparing and explaining military action. Research exploring the topos of security policy from different organizational perspectives, however, point towards a different understanding of strategic communication's function. Organizations, thus the conclusion, in our days cannot be adequately described by way of a mere purpose-means-relation. Instead, organizations such as p. ex. military mission engagements are understood as constructs constituted through the process of communication. In a military security policy context, this rather radical approach would mean that organizational action / a mission engagement is nothing but a social artifact based on communicative attribution. The consequences are severe: When self as well as third party attribution and construct a military event, the original actor – the mission engagement – loses control over its action's intentions.

In a nutshell: Others interpret the action's (il)legitimate causes and (un)desired consequences. Success or failure of a mission engagement is not determined by military action, but by the interpretation of the mission engagement force in interdependence with the interpretation of all other parties (stakeholders) involved. If this is indeed the case, a military operation's centrum gravitatis is not only extended by, but shifted from a military towards a communicative perspective.

Challenges for Communication Management in a Mission Engagement Context

Based on these theoretical considerations, this paper discusses the professionalization of communication management within a security policy context and the challenges it has to face:

In a first step, the underlying paradoxes are explained, which are the result of different risk perceptions of all stakeholders involved and which need to be differentiated in order to be integrated into a concise concept of strategic (communicative) action. Especially in politico-military contexts of decision making, divergent attributions are unavoidable. Typically, such decisions generate concerned stakeholder groups, who each hold a different perspective as concerns legitimate causes, purposes and goals, consequences, and risk/danger evaluations. However, when trust in the decision's legitimacy is destroyed, the acceptance for these decisions and of their communicative interpretation cannot be taken for granted.

In a final step, the strategic dimensions of security policy communication resulting from a shift towards a communicative centrum gravitatis are determined. It becomes clear that the legitimacy of mission engagements will continue to erode as long as communication management cannot effectively shift its center towards a 'strategic narrative' and thus consolidate its efforts of credible image and issue management. A tradable story needs to be enriched with a symbol-laden discourse in a way that connectivity – and thus legitimacy – with all parties involved are secured.

Solving this core problem of strategic communication is of social relevance, since military core thoughts, thus, can be interlinked with the processes of democratic decision making. A paradox directive holds true: Regaining control over something principally uncontrollable.

Litigation as Aggression: Use of the Legal System and the Media for Bullying, Not Justice-Seeking

by Donald Papy

University of Miami, USA

Clausewitz famously said that war is politics by other means. Today, litigation has become war by other means. The U. S. legal system has increasingly become more of an actual battleground than a civilized method of justly resolving real disputes. Representing the phenomenon most vividly, wealthy celebrities and affiliated organizations have increasingly brought frivolous lawsuits with the purpose of harassing opponents and stifling legitimate debate. This bullying behavior implicates not only the legitimacy of the justice system but also the Constitutional protections of freedom of speech and the press.

This paper will examine recent examples of this aggressive behavior, including litigation by Donald Trump (real estate mogul and reality TV host) against Bill Maher (comedian and political commentator); Bill O'Reilly (Fox News cable host/author) against Al Franken (comedian/author and now U.S. Senator); and Lance Armstrong (then former cycling champion and now-admitted performance-enhancing drug user) against former friends, associates, and newspapers. The inquiry will address how these cases developed in the courts and the media, the costs to participants and the legal system, and the effect on non-celebrity participants in the justice system and to society as a whole.

Finally, this paper will discuss how court and attorney ethical rules are constructed and the reality of their application in attempting to deter and remedy abusive litigation tactics so that public trust in the legal system can be promoted.

Organizational Exit: Communicating Dissent in the Workplace

by Virginia Nardi

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In America, the current organizational environment is ripe with change. A large number of Americans are leaving the workforce and entering retirement. In their place, a younger generation, known as the *Millennials,* are entering the workforce. During this time, organizations will be preparing to both lose current and gain new employees. This process of change can have short term and long term effects on members of the organization and the organization as a whole. Organizational exit, which refers to the process by which current members of an organization prepare to leave their organization (Davis & Myers, 2012), will become an invaluable area of study during this time. Specifically, this literature review focuses on "planned exit," which is an area of organizational exit study in which the time of departure from the organization is predetermined. During this process it is not uncommon for pent up feelings to be released through a wide variety of behaviors. Often organizational members engage in organizational dissent, which is the process of the employee expressing their feelings of disagreement or contradiction to organizational policies and practices (Kassing, 1997). Communicative behaviors which play an interesting role in communicating dissent during organizational exit include verbal aggressiveness and gossip. These behaviors will be discussed as they affect the organization as a whole, and the individual organizational members during the process of organizational exit, and after that process has ended.

Self-Categorization Theory and Racism

by Megan Quirk

West Virginia University, USA

The goal of this literature review is to display how Harwood, Giles, and Palomares's (2005) Social Categorization Theory has been effective in identifying the causes of racism in the United States. With racism being extremely problematic in the United States, it's important to understand the implications SCT. The Social Categorization Theory (SCT) identifies that individuals are constantly categorizing others based on their differences. This idea of constant categorization process is what led Harwood et al. to identify the "Road to Bias," a process where people put others into categories, assign meaning to those categories, and then decide whether to discriminate another based upon stereotypes. The theory also suggests that discriminatory behaviors are a result of our individual motivations (i.e. social norms, parental influence). Maybe these motivations can be used as an explanation as to why discrimination and prejudice still exists in the United States today. Overall the ultimate goal is to provide some research supporting the axioms of SCT within the context of racism and how our country as a whole can work on decreasing the amount of racism occurring within.

The Writing on the Wall: Graffiti and the Circulation of Vulnerability in Everyday Urban Life

by Gordon Coonfield

Villanova University, USA

In order to communicate one must have the capacity to affect and be affected (agency). Put differently, the contexts and modes of communication are each characterized not only by the usual suspects—number of interlocutors, the nature of mediation, the level of "feedback" between communicators and audiences—but also, more importantly, by the circulation of vulnerability and the particular forms it takes. This paper draws on the work of Judith Butler to explore the proposition that vulnerability's circulation and formation are inherent to communication. Drawing on *Excitable Speech*, *Giving An Account of Oneself*, and *Precarious Life*, this paper takes up the task of developing an account both of the role of vulnerability in the performance of communication and its significance for the constitution of oneself and that self's responsibilities for others.

To elaborate these theoretical concerns and their stakes, this paper examines graffiti as a particular form of urban communication. The use of the term dates from 19th century descriptions of drawings and writings scratched into the walls of ancient Egyptian and Roman ruins. But graffiti remains a ubiquitous feature of Western urban life. Whether it appears on a bathroom stall or on the side of a bus; whether it is categorized as "political" or simply as "tagging"; whether it is the work of an inner-city gang member marking his territory or of a "street artist" like Banksy critiquing modern surveillance— graffiti is by definition a deviant, illicit activity. While graffiti has been studied from numerous disciplinary perspectives, the majority of this scholarship almost exclusively focuses on graffiti as representation: as particular instances of written or visual communication of specific messages.

This paper explores graffiti's significance to urban everyday life through an analysis of examples taken from a number of locations in the US, the Caribbean, Europe, and South Africa. The goal is not universalize the cultural differences in graffiti's practice, it

is rather to consider its importance as a global "imagination" practice (Appadurai). Nor is the emphasis on the content, characteristics or qualities of particular images or messages. Rather, this paper views graffiti as cultural performance—as a culturally-marked, embodied, tendentious, and recognizable "doing." Rather than focusing on its "presence" or the ways graffiti "mediates" time and space, the emphasis in this paper is on the constitution of a movement-duration unique to this performance. And rather than focusing on the intentions of its creators—to assert individual identity, mark territory, engage in political or aesthetic speech—this paper emphasizes the agency of those performances and the ways they exploit the vulnerability inherent in contemporary forms of urban mobility. After exploring the implications of this theoretical shift, this paper considers the ethical questions which arise—not simply about the ethics of graffiti, but about the ethical situation posed by particular formations of vulnerability in urban life.

Sights of Conflict, Aggression, and Transformation: Vernacular Visual Tactics in the Struggle for Post-Conflict Memory

by Christina M. Morus

The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, USA

More than fifteen years after the end of the Yugoslav wars of secession, competing narratives of the 1995 Srebrenica massacre have been at the forefront of divisive ethno-nationalist discourse on all sides. According to witnesses and survivors, Serb forces killed 8,000 men and displaced 30,000 people to "ethnically cleanse" Srebrenica of Bosniaks. Still, many Serbs deny Serbian culpability, claiming themselves as Srebrenica's true victims. Fortunately, the contest to shape the present through the past has not only been the nationalists' domain. Grassroots organizations are visually engaging public space to foster inter-ethnic consubstantiality through more expansive conceptions of history and contemporary identity.

In 2005, the 10th anniversary of the Srebrenica massacre, Belgrade's Youth Initiative for Human Rights (YIHR) displayed photographs of Srebrenica's mass graves and the words *See, Know, Remember – Srebrenica* on 36 billboards around the city. The campaign challenged the culture of denial in Serbia with evidence of Srebrenica's crimes, igniting controversy in the Serbian press and public. Soon after they were erected the billboards were vandalized with paint, bleach, and ethno-nationalist slogans. Undeterred, YIHR re-erected the original billboards and simultaneously published a book juxtaposing the original and defaced images, and included contrasting local news articles praising and condemning the memorial effort.

When images are disseminated in public space, they become resources for public argument (Finnegan, 2005). The use of images can orient the self within public life, playing a role in the imagination of and constitution of citizen identities (Hariman & Lucaites, 2007). The idea of vernacular visual tactics suggests the deliberate placement of easily recognizable images in common public space as a way of disrupting public

consciousness and challenging dominant thought. Vernacular representations gain public credibility through the suggestion of something unsanctioned - created by and for ordinary people without authoritative mediation. Competing in public space for public consciousness, vernacular displays are subversive as they are produced beyond the confines of normative authority (Haskins & DeRose, 2003). Advocates of social change can strategically deploy vernacular visual tactics to disrupt dominant ideologies by challenging and transforming key societal discourses (DeLuca, 1999).

The public reaction to YIHR's billboards and their defacement imply that vernacular visual tactics can challenge dominant historical and political paradigms. Had the nationalist vandals not viewed the billboards as a threat, they wouldn't have needed to deface them. The reaction of the vandals, press, and public suggest that vernacular visual tactics can force a space for previously unhearable discourses, making alternative worldviews visible and viable.

Through a rhetorical analysis, informed by visual semiotics, this essay critically considers the competing images in the 2005 YIHR case as vernacular visual tactics. I assert how such tactics can affect public consciousness in post-conflict contests over history and identity. Such images do more than simply bear witness to historical events, they are "epiphanic, forcing a psychic transformation of the citizenry by rupturing imagined conceptions of identity" (Johnson, 2007, p. 8). They act as a sort of mnemonic frame in the present through which stories of the past can be activated and interpreted in the light of contemporary events. They can also play a role in helping to establish moral accountability (Zelizer, 2002). Their use in public space offers possibilities for transcending the essentialized subjectivities upon which intractable conflict is predicated.

War as Routine: The Normalization of Violence and War Photo-Journalism in Israel

by Eva Berger

College of Management Academic Studies, Israel

Israel has been at war since its establishment as a state in 1948, and has occupied Palestinian territories since the Six Day War in 1967. Photographs of war have pervaded Israeli newspapers throughout the countries' history and, as this paper suggests, they have had a destructive cumulative effect: the photographs can be perceived as partly responsible for the pessimistic perceptions about the prospects for the resolution of the conflict in the Middle East; for the shaping of the epistemology of the audience about the enemy; and for the low degree of public involvement in demanding an end to occupation.

The ongoing study of which this paper is part, analyzes war photography in the Israeli press over its first 60 years of existence. The analysis of the photographs from Israel's three major newspapers is based on the cultural-interpretative approach that considers a message a combination of signs and symbols that receive different meanings by different readers, but within the framework of a given social and cultural context.

Findings so far show that selected themes pervade all of war photojournalism in Israel, leading to mainstreaming – to a uniformity of political perceptions – and to the shaping of public opinion throughout the history of the conflict. All photographs can be organized into a few categories that represent a few simplified themes. Some of these themes are, for example, "roadblocks," "visiting the wounded," "politicians at the front,"

"demonstrations", "evacuations and evictions," "terrorism," etc. This repetition has led to a stagnant culture for which violence is routine, and occupation the norm. The photographs have cultivated aggressive and stereotypical views of the enemy, and the psychological, political and social impacts of a cultural environment filled with ritualized violent images that Gerbner encouraged us to think about, come to life in the analysis and interim findings of this study.

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