

Transforming Media Coverage of Violent Conflicts: The New Face of War

Zohar Kampf, Tamar Liebes

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Transforming Media Coverage of Violent Conflicts offers a fresh view of contemporary violent conflicts, suggesting an explanation to the dramatic changes in the ways in which war and terror are covered by Western media. It argues that viewers around the globe follow violent events, literally and metaphorically, on "wide" and "flat" screens, in "high-definition". The "wide-screen" means that at present the screen is wide enough to include new actors - terrorists, 'enemy' leaders, ordinary people in a range of roles, and journalists in the field - who have gained status of the kind that in the past was exclusive to editors, army generals and governmental actors. The "high-definition" metaphor means that the eye of the camera closes in on both traditional and new actors, probing their emotions, experiences and beliefs in ways that were irrelevant in past conflicts. The "flat-screen" metaphor stands for the consequences of the two former phenomena, leading to a loss of the hierarchy of the meanings of war. Paradoxically, the better the quality of viewing, the less the understanding of what we see. Through these metaphors, Kampf and Liebes systematically analyse changes in the practices, technologies, infrastructures and external institutional relationships of journalism.



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