

# Our Very Uncivil Civil Wars

By Phyllis Chesler

Yesterday I wrote about the decline in civility—completely [unexpected rages and unfounded accusations](#)—among fairly accomplished women who were not arguing about politics. I must have hit a nerve because I received more comments about this piece than I ever did before. As a psychologist, please allow me to suggest that only very traumatized people behave this way, as do neurologically and psychiatrically challenged folk.



I do not know whether this applies in my examples.

But, dear reader, I want to give you a forum where you may share the Very Bad Behaviors that have ensued in your lives when it comes to “politics.”

I’ll start us off.

Sometime earlier in the 21st century, I began to notice a sea-change when American students began to curse and even hit high school teachers; when college-age students interrupted professors and rudely, loudly, and continuously interrupted speakers in ways that did not allow a speech to proceed; when

roaring, raging mobs of activists roamed hallways as well as streets, disrupting student and civil life, screaming out their hate. I was especially shocked by how many women were mob members—women who never behaved so aggressively on behalf of women's rights.

But as of 2016, I saw something new.

I saw angry mobs assail public figures outside the restaurants in which they were dining, outside their homes, outside/inside the White House—I thought: This is not a good look. What is going on? I saw women mobbing Justice Kavanaugh in an elevator during his confirmation hearing for the Supreme Court—I again thought: This is not a good look. What is going on? In 2021, I saw angry mobs assail the Capitol. Definitely not a good look.

Both sides of the aisle started to behave very, very badly.

Was this being influenced by the rise of Islamic Jihad, both in the Middle East and Central Asia and in the West?

When the pro-“Palestine” marches began, the leaders all screamed, they never talked, not even loudly. More and more hijabbed women commanded the bullhorns or the microphones. This mimicked Muslim leaders and clerics. The well-funded American mobs all brazenly clamored for the death of Jews, the death of America, the death of the West.

Imagine what happened and what continues to happen in the immediate aftermath of 10/7. Sadistic aggression was called “justified resistance.”

Small and ugly wars are playing out among everyone I know. Everyone. All issues have become hot button issues; one is expected to salute one flag only and to silence and disappear all others.

Family members have cut each other off over the issue of voting for Republicans versus voting for Democrats.

Colleagues, club members, neighbors, have accused each other of racism, sexism, transphobia—as if their very lives depended upon it.

Then there's always, always Israel and the Jews.

One non-Jewish woman lost “half her friends” over the issue of Israel.

Another Jewish woman lost all her Jewish, presumably more “progressive” friends over the same issue.

Heads of organizations have stopped inviting anyone from “the other side.” Wagons have been circled and are now heavily patrolled. Transwomen/men attack feminists who stand for women's rights. And I mean physically not just verbally attack. The pronoun people attack anyone who disagrees with them. The anti-vaccine people, the climate change people, the pro-sex worker people, the atheists, the God-fearers—words fail me as to how they all shut their opponents right down.

Now, tell me: Has anything like this happened to you? What are the hot button issues in your lives?

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