

Conflation Confirmation Conflagration

Nobody asked but ...

Conflation is running amock these days. People are actually making important decisions because certain things are viewed as Republican, Democrat, conservative, liberal, patriotic, religious, lawful, or criminal.

It is critical in this complex world that each person take in as much information as needed, in the most effective way, to make thoughtful decisions. We should practice Ockham's Razor whenever we sift facts, fictions, and factoids. Ockham's Razor, you may recall, is an admonition not to overstir the pot. Reject overwrought accounts. Just think. Almost all of the information crucial to our physical or social health comes through news media, social media, politicians, bureaucrats, hidebound professional associations — none of whom know of what they speak, passing along only hearsay. It is cacophony. Can you keep your head when all around you are losing theirs?

There are traits that do not serve humans well as a rational species:

- Conflation,
- Confirmation, and
- Conflagration.

Conflation is putting ideas together that should be sorted apart, first, before looking for specious connections. An example would be to make some ideas congruent merely because they arose together.

Of course conflation goes hand-in-hand with confirmation. We tend to conflate ideas that confirm our pre-conceived notions.

When we have thoroughly burdened any chance at truth, we start dropping bombs. Presto! Conflagration.

— Kilgore Forelle