

The *Intifadah* provides a different case study, and it gave seminar participants an interesting visual sample of how several TV networks covered a particular incident in a West Bank Arab village. On the conflict between the Palestinian Arabs and their Israeli rulers, almost everyone has an opinion, often a strong one. Coverage by both newspapers and broadcasters is watched with eagle eyes by defenders of both sides, and reporters who cover the story know that whatever they say will annoy someone.

Akiba Cohen, professor of communications at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, began by saying that in Israel everybody seems to be claiming unfair coverage of the *Intifadah*. Bumper stickers say, "People Against Hostile Media." After the killings of Palestinians in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in 1982, identical news clips were shown to separate groups of pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli viewers in the United States. "Those who were pro-Palestinian, pro-Arab felt that the media were entirely biased in favour of the Israeli position. Those who were pro-Israeli felt that the media were entirely biased in favour of the Arab or Palestinian position."

Professor Cohen's studies indicated that if TV coverage is considered over time and rated statistically, it becomes more similar on the various networks, even though on any given night the coverage is different. He showed TV coverage of an incident in which four Palestinian villagers were killed in a confrontation with the Israeli army; a fifth died of wounds later. The clips were from US, British, French, German and Israeli networks. Each was different in the way the film was used, showing events in different sequences. Three networks used film of events at another village the same day to illustrate the story, without explaining that the film was taken elsewhere. The BBC, whose reporter provided voice-over from Cyprus, said six had died and quoted Israelis as saying that one had died and four were wounded. The Israeli reporter said four had died. The major difference was that Israeli television showed no bodies, or only glimpses. Its film showed long shots of the village and a short struggle in the street. The other networks showed the street battle and the dead at close quarters.

Professor Cohen commented: "These clips show a lot of violence, but over time the amount of violence and killing shown is rather small proportionately, showing that