

Contact Email for April 2015

Greeting all,

This month I have been reading archaeology, mostly about the Minoans. The first thing that struck me was that we are 2,015 years into the Common Era, whereas those who commentate on the Minoans are talking about that, and other eastern Mediterranean civilisations, with peoples going back up to 6,000 years before the Common Era. With this in mind we can only wonder at the exquisite, yet relatively mass produced pottery and metal work that they could produce. My mind then turned to the succession of events in our news media, which is full of murder, rape, bullying, military invasions, and natural catastrophes and the fact that these events were just as common for them, as for us, and the impact of such events would have been just as horrifying for those embroiled in such events 2015 years or more before the Common Era as for those 2015 years after.

It seems to me there is a sociological aspect to all of these issues, so I turned to the Collins Dictionary of Sociology to see what the general view of these issues might be. The results were as follows:

Murder - Nothing
Rape - Nothing
Bullying - Nothing
Natural catastrophes – Nothing

The only one that got a mention was Military invasions, under the heading of warfare. There it tells me that warfare and the preparation for warfare is often regarded as a near universal feature of human society. This (it adds) is sometimes explained by the presence of innate human aggression as well as by the operation of a territorial imperative in human society.

I then turned to the Penguin Dictionary of sociology for an alternant view, but found that it did not refer to any of these issues.

It seems to me that all of these issues have a sociological content, if, for no other reason that they occur in the social environment and impact on the social environment. What have we got to say about Bullying, even rape in the work place? And perhaps a related issue of promotion through sexual favours. There have been murders by disgruntle former employees, do we have no comment on its effect on the social environment?

Or is it that we see all these issues as belonging to others. Murder is a police issue. Rape is a police issue. Bullying is a management issue. Natural catastrophes – no one can do anything about that, except clear up the mess, and warfare comes from our innate aggression and we cannot do anything about that.

The Collins Dictionary declares that “No aspect of society is excluded from consideration by sociology.” If this is so, why is there no discussion of the issues I have raised? Durkheim took a similar issue, ‘suicide’ and said this is more than a religious issue, a moral issue, or a police issue, it is a social issue, even though he has his critics and new studies have come to different conclusion about some issues, it took a Sociologist to say, this is a social issue and we have something to say about it.

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