



What is stochastic terrorism?

It's when influential figures use coded language, "jokes," or rhetoric to vilify a group, knowing it will likely inspire *someone else* to commit violence—even though they never give a direct order. Think of it as planting seeds of hate in the public square, then pretending you didn't water them when someone acts.

How does this connect to the Montessori experience?

1. Children live in the world adults shape

Montessori emphasizes that the child absorbs everything from the environment—both the direct lessons and the indirect messages. Stochastic terrorism is part of that "prepared environment" of society. Children in Montessori schools don't just absorb beads and letters—they absorb the way marginalized groups are spoken about in media, politics, and community spaces.

2. Fear reshapes freedom

Montessori is built on freedom of movement, choice, and voice. But when children and families live under the shadow of targeted hate (whether anti-Black, anti-immigrant, anti-queer, etc.), that freedom contracts. Families might hesitate to attend events, children may self-censor, and schools feel pressure to "stay neutral" to avoid becoming targets. That erodes the very conditions Montessori says are essential for development.

3. The hidden curriculum of silence

If a Montessori environment ignores or downplays the climate of stochastic terrorism, children learn a hidden lesson: "Your safety isn't worth naming." Silence communicates as powerfully as speech. Conversely, when guides and schools name injustice with clarity, children learn that truth-telling is part of peace.

4. Peace education isn't abstract

Maria Montessori tied peace to justice. If schools talk about "peace" only as personal calm or classroom order, but don't connect it to real-world violence fueled by rhetoric, then children get a distorted picture. Real peace education has to grapple with the way words become weapons in society.

Why it matters right now

- Montessori children are growing up in an era where stochastic terrorism is normalized through media and politics.
- Montessori adults (guides, leaders, families) have a responsibility to create environments that help children discern truth from propaganda, empathy from manipulation, and



courage from silence.

- Protecting the “absorbent mind” means protecting children from becoming desensitized to hate—or from internalizing it.