ISSA Proceedings 2014 – "I Did Not Do It, Because I Would Not Do It": Defending Oneself Against An Accusation

Abstract: When hard proof is absent, someone who faces an accusation can seek assistance in arguments making it plausible that (s)he 'did not do it'. This paper deals with an argument saying that the accused would never do the alleged act because of the harmful consequences it would yield. An analysis and evaluation of this kind of argumentative strategy is demonstrated with examples of two professional cyclists defending themselves against doping accusations.

Keywords: accusation, character, convincingness, denial, counterfactual, critical questions, hypothetical, plausibility, risk weighing, soundness

1. *Introduction*

In August 2012, the head of the USADA (United States Anti-Doping Agency), Travis Tygart, reported that its investigation had revealed manifold doping practices by Lance Armstrong. The accusation was based on detailed allegations of ex-teammates. Armstrong responded in a statement published on his website. He called the investigation a 'witch hunt' and a 'one-sided' trial that was only set up to punish him at all costs. As he had done before in defending himself against doping accusations, he based his denial of guilt on the hundreds of controls he had undergone during his career without a single positive result:

There is zero physical evidence to support his [Tygart's] outlandish and heinous claims. The only physical evidence here is the hundreds of controls I have passed with flying colors. I made myself available around the clock and around the world. In competition. Out of competition. Blood. Urine. Whatever they asked for I provided. What is the point of all this testing if, in the end, USADA will not stand by it? (King, 2005)

The problem with so many negative test results is, however, that the tests used for controls always lag behind developments in the doping circuit. Professional cyclists, their doctors and other attendants are very inventive in finding new ways

to mislead inspectors and tests, for example by using new substances that cannot yet be detected. Negative test results may therefore free an accused person at a *formal* level, but with regard to the *facts*, one may still have doubts. And doubts there certainly were in Armstrong's case, ever since 2005 when the French newspaper *L'Equipe* reported that a lab had retested urine samples taken from Armstrong in 1999. This lab used new tests that were able to detect EPO – tests that were not yet available in 1999. Six out of seventeen samples tested positive.**[i]**

L'Equipe, not very fond of the American seven-times Tour winner, published the news of the retesting with bold headlines on its front page (*L'Equipe*, 2005). But in spite of the big fuss the newspaper made about it, no sanctions followed; neither from UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale: the international cycling union) nor from any other cycling institution. The reason was that no formal evidence could be gained from the retesting, because the samples had been used up. This meant that no confirmation tests could be carried out – a formal requirement in the testing procedure. In addition, Armstrong questioned the new test's credibility, arguing that there was no guarantee that the samples had been properly stored, and even if they had been properly stored, there was still no guarantee that the substances would remain the same after so many years.**[ii]** As a result, the case was dismissed. Nevertheless, the speculations continued, and were discussed by Armstrong fans and Armstrong haters alike, as well as by Armstrong himself.**[iii]** It was only when Armstrong made his confession to Oprah Winfrey in January 2013 that the truth finally came out.

This case shows that there are situations in which formal evidence does not correspond to what seems convincing to a general audience. According to the standards of a formal legal setting, Lance Armstrong had to be considered innocent, but there was nevertheless reason for the general public to question his innocence. In order to remove this kind of doubt, a defendant who wants to defend himself publicly has to use other argumentative strategies: arguments that do not provide conclusive proof, but nevertheless make guilt seem unlikely. This paper analyses one such argumentative strategy, which was used by Armstrong to argue his innocence in the public speculations about his alleged doping. Furthermore, the same kind of strategy was also used by the Tour winner Bradley Wiggins when confronted with suspicions about his outstanding Tour performance in 2012. I will refer to this strategy as the 'I would not do it'

argument. Although the examples I use are taken from cycling, similar arguments can be and are used in other contexts, and are especially applicable in situations where (f)actual evidence is not available or not conclusive.

2. *The 'i would not do it' argument*

The 'I would not do it' strategy was used by Lance Armstrong in a 2005 interview with Larry King. Armstrong was King's guest after *L'Equipe* divulged the retesting of Armstrong's 1999 urine samples. The argument was put forward in response to the question of whether he could unequivocally say that he had never used any illegal substance ever. Armstrong replied as follows:

Listen, I've said it for seven years. I've said it for longer than seven years. I have never doped. I can say it again. But I've said it for seven years. It doesn't help. But the fact of the matter is I haven't. And if you consider my situation: A guy who comes back from arguably, you know, a death sentence, why would I then enter into a sport and dope myself up and risk my life again? That's crazy. I would never do that. No. No way. (King, 2005)

With this answer, Armstrong appeals to the idea that someone who has survived cancer would not dope. In the British newspaper The Telegraph a journalist referred to this idea as: 'an implicit understanding that someone who had almost lost his life would not take drugs' (Moore, 2012).**[iv]** The argument seems to have been rather persuasive to all journalists and fans during the years that Armstrong was a Tour winner. At least, he was never questioned about it in a critical way, whereas he certainly could have been, as will be shown below.

Bradley Wiggins used the same kind of strategy in an open letter to The Guardian. Wiggins begins by saying that the relevant question is not why he would *not* dope but rather why he would? His answer to this question lists all the potential negative consequences of doping:

If I doped I would potentially stand to lose everything. It's a long list. My reputation, my livelihood, my marriage, my family, my house. Everything I have achieved, my Olympic medals, my world titles, the CBE [Commander of the Order of the British Empire, HJ] I was given. I would have to take my children to the school gates in a small Lancashire village with everyone looking at me, knowing I had cheated (…). (Wiggins, 2012)

Wiggins proceeds with this line of argument by saying that his entire life and

source of income is built around cycling. This includes not only his job in Team Sky, but also the fact that he and his wife organise cycling events, and many of his friends and family work in the cycling business. Wiggins states that he would not jeopardise his living, nor would he betray all the people who are involved in these activities:

If all that was built on sand, if I was deceiving all those people, I would have to live with the knowledge it could all disappear just like that. (…) I would not want to end up sitting in a room with all that hanging on me, thinking: 'Shit, I don't want anyone to find out.' (…) If I felt I had to take drugs, I would rather stop tomorrow, go and ride club 10-mile time trials, ride to the cafe on Sundays, and work in Tesco stacking shelves. (*Ibidem*)

Just like Armstrong's argument, Wiggins's argument for not doping is also based on what he might lose if he did. Armstrong speaks of literally losing his life, while Wiggins refers to figuratively losing his, i.e. losing everything that is important to him. And just like Armstrong's argument, Wiggins's argument also mentions weighing the risks:

Doping would simply not be worth it. This is only sport we are talking about. Sport does not mean more to me than all those other things I have. Winning the Tour de France at any cost is not worth the possibility of losing all that. I am not willing to risk all those things I've got in my life. (*Ibidem*)

3. *Analysis*

What kind of argument is expressed in these statements by Armstrong and Wiggins? Let's have a closer look and see how it can be reconstructed. Firstly, note that both Armstrong's and Wiggins's arguments are formulated hypothetically:

'(…) *why would I then enter into a sport and dope myself up and risk my life again?*' (Armstrong)

and

'*If I doped I would potentially stand to lose everything*' (Wiggins)

Wiggins's argument is clearly a conditional, in which 'If I doped' is the antecedent and 'I would potentially stand to lose everything' the consequent. Armstrong's

argument can be reconstructed as a conditional by adding the antecedent 'If I doped'. The rhetorical question stands for the consequent connected to this antecedent. The whole conditional then reads: 'If I doped, I – a guy who comes back from arguably, you know, a death sentence – would risk my life again'.

Both conditional statements make up an argument in which the standpoint is a denial of the act one is accused of: 'I did not dope'. In the antecedent of the conditional premise – 'If I doped….' – this negation is left out because the argument is built on temporarily assuming the truth of the accusation. This hypothetical antecedent is suggested to imply a hypothetical consequent in which a detrimental consequence is formulated – in both examples risking one's life (either literally or figuratively). And finally, there is an implicit premise that denies the consequence of the conditional premise, namely 'I would not do that' ('I would not risk my life'). This adds up to the following reconstructed argument (according to the pragma-dialectical model):

1. I did not dope, because
1.1 If I doped, I would risk my life again, and
1.1' I would not risk my life

In my view, however, this does not account for the whole argument. There is more to this kind of argument than is shown in this reconstruction. The power of the unexpressed premise (1.1') lies in the implicit understanding referred to in the *Telegraph's* comment on Armstrong's credibility: '(…) someone who had almost lost his life would not take drugs' (Moore, 2012). So, not only would the *protagonist* not risk his life, but no rational person would do such a thing. The argument appeals to generally shared ideas about how people behave in certain circumstances. What makes this an appealing strategy is that hearers can connect it to their own desires and fears, knowing that they would go through a similar weighing and balancing of risks.**[v]** This allows for an extended version of the above argument, in which the reference to what normal people would (or would not) do supports the unexpressed premise:

1. I did not dope, because
1.1 If I doped, I would risk my life again, and
1.1' I would not risk my life, because
1.1'.1 Nobody would risk his life

But the argument is even more elaborate than this. That the arguer 'would not do such a thing' may not only be reasonable to accept because – according to generally shared expectations – *nobody* would do such a thing; we may also accept it because of a normative aspect that backs up these expectations. Both Armstrong's and Wiggins's arguments appeal to the undesirable consequences that would normally make up an 'argument from consequences' – the type of argument that also goes under the name 'pragmatic argument'. An 'argument from consequences' also contains an explicit *If…then* statement, but it takes a different kind of standpoint. In an 'I would not do it' argument the standpoint is descriptive – i.e. it describes a situation in the past. The standpoint of an argument from consequences is incentive: it *announces* that the speaker will (or will not) do something or advises the hearer to do (or refrain from doing) something. An example of such an argument would be: I will not dope, because if I do, I will lose my life. Now the unexpressed premise – 1.1' – reads 'losing my life is undesirable':

1. I will not dope, because
1.1 If I dope, I will risk my life again, and
1.1' That is an undesirable consequence

In Armstrong's argumentation this normative aspect is explicitly present, namely in the phrase 'That's crazy'. This phrase can be reconstructed as the support for the 'nobody would do it' premise:

1. I did not dope, because
1.1 If I doped, I would risk my life, and
1.1' I would not risk my life, because
1.1'.1 Nobody would risk his life, because
1.1'.1.1 It is crazy [undesirable] to risk your life

Below I will argue that the last – more elaborate – reconstruction can explain why an 'I would not do it' argument would be *convincing*. But when it comes to the soundness of such an argument, it does not matter in the least whether anybody would do it, or whether it would be crazy to do so.

4. *Evaluation*
In my view, 'I would not do it' arguments can be evaluated by asking some critical questions derived from the basic reconstruction of the argument – the main

argument. The first question that can be asked concerns the weighing of risks and whether the outcome would really be the one suggested by the argument. Risk weighing is affected by the chance that the alleged undesirable consequence will in fact occur. But a proper evaluation of an 'I would not do it' argument can only take place once the weighing of risks is viewed in relation to the character of the arguer. It should not be viewed from the perspective of what people in general would or would not do. An appeal to what everyone else would do can indeed make the argument *convincing,* but that is not the same as making it *sound*. After all, a particular arguer may turn out to be the kind of person who would not act according to general standards or expectations in a specific situation. This means that with regard to 'I would not do it' arguments, the second critical question concerns the arguer's personality and how it relates to the alleged risks.

Let us first apply these considerations to Armstrong's argument. The first question then reads: is it true that taking dope will cause death? The answer depends on how one takes it, how much of it one takes and whether it is taken in combination with other drugs. As a result of his cancer treatment, Armstrong was familiar with taking EPO, and this would seem to provide an argument for – rather than against – him taking this kind of drug. But even if the risk were as high as implied, is this really reason enough for not taking it? Many people smoke, drink and eat bad food and continue to do so because the harmful consequences only become apparent in the long run; most people are not deterred by potential long-term effects. Therefore, asking the first critical question already leads us to cast some doubt on Armstrong's argument. Risk weighing may indeed point in favour of doping because the advantages of winning are so high that one may even accept that one might die a few years earlier, especially since the chance of this happening may not be very high. And this is particularly true because Armstrong was an extremely fanatical racer who had only one aim: to be the best.**[vi]** Of course, it is easy to say this in retrospect, knowing that Armstrong did indeed make a risk calculation that was different from what his argument suggested.

A critical examination of Wiggins's weighing of risks amounts to balancing the chance of losing the life he has led so far against what would happen were it all to come out. Granted that losing one's means of income, family and public status is a rather disagreeable situation, the convincingness of Wiggins's argument depends on the chance of him being caught and therefore on the adequacy of drug tests. How big is that chance? As revealed in Tyler Hamilton's book *The Secret Race*

(2012), in the first decade of this century, not getting caught was all about ingenuity and access to the best doctors. For example, Hamilton, a former teammate of Armstrong's, writes that Armstrong's French gardener would follow the team on a motorbike during the Tour de France (and was therefore called 'Motoman'), taking the illegal substances with him, so that inspectors would not find them on the bus. Furthermore, the right doctors know what doses can safely be used without risking detection, and they know about ideal time spans between different blood transfusions.**[vii]**

On the other hand: some people say that those days were another era and things may have changed since then (e.g. Stephenson, 2012; Muench, 2013; although the ex-cyclist Bassons expresses his doubts in an interview: Cary, 2014). A biological passport programme has been introduced, and they say that the ethics of the big teams have changed. This may plead in favour of Wiggins's argument for not wanting to take the risk. However, whether his argument holds depends very much on his personality, i.e. whether he is likely to find the risk worth taking. This consideration is addressed in the second critical question. With respect to this consideration, it is relevant that Wiggins calls himself a 'shy bloke', who does not think of sport as the most important thing in his life:

I am not willing to risk all those things I've got in my life. I do it because I love it. I don't do it for a power trip: at the end of the day, I'm a shy bloke looking forward to taking my son to summer rugby camp after the Tour, where he could maybe bump into his hero, Sam Tomkins. That's what's keeping me going here. What I love is doing my best and working hard. (Wiggins, 2012)

The way Wiggins presents himself in the media does indeed seem to suggest that he is a different type of person than Armstrong, with a lot less self-confidence. Nonetheless, we can never be sure of his real mindset.**[viii]** The evaluation of an 'I would not do it' argument is therefore always speculative.

5. *Conclusion*

My conclusion is that an 'I would not do it' argument is weak because the answers to the critical questions are always speculative. This holds especially for the answer to the second question, i.e. whether the arguer has the kind of personality that is likely to be deterred by the undesirable consequences sketched in his argument and is therefore unlikely to take the risk. On the other hand, an 'I would not do it' argument may give some plausibility to a denial of guilt. In this respect,

we have to take into account that when an accused person is really innocent, there is not much he can say apart from referring to his character and what this character would or would not do.

The 'Nobody would do it' element – brought to light in the extended version of the reconstructed argument – does not play a role in the argument's evaluation. This element seems to be important because it makes the argument more *convincing*. This may – at least partly – be due to the fact that this element can block a critical examination. Suppose that a critic were to respond: 'Would you really not take that risk?' The accused can reply: 'Of course not. Nobody would. Would you?' What should the critic answer now? In theory he might respond: 'No, I would not do it, but I think you are the kind of person who would.' However, in real life critics are unlikely to react in this way. Such a response is just too face-threatening because it implies that the accused is not normal and a liar.**[ix]** This may have been one of the reasons why no journalist ever dared to raise doubts concerning Armstrong's use of his 'I would not do it' argument.**[x]**

NOTES

i. According to the New York Times (Abt, 2005): 'The lab confirmed that it had conducted the tests, but said it could not confirm that the samples were Armstrong's because the labels were identified only by six-digit numbers. L'Équipe said it had decoded the labels by matching each sample with forms filed with the French Cycling Federation during the Tour. Those forms, filled out each time a sample was taken in a drug test, identified the donor by name as well as the six digits on his urine sample.'

ii. He also made a big deal of questioning the credibility of the test itself and discrediting everyone who had made or believed an accusation aimed at him.

iii. Armstrong was generally given a high degree of credibility by his fans and most journalists, no doubt partly because of his foundation's work in helping cancer patients (see also note 7). Only one Irish journalist, David Walsh, dared to ask critical questions after Armstrong's comeback. When the USADA report was published, Walsh wrote about his queries that began as early as 1999: 'Everybody would say, "what evidence have you got?". I would say, "well I don't have enough evidence to ever prove to anyone that he's guilty…I just feel that I have huge responsibility, a huge need, to go and ask a lot of questions".'

iv. See also Wassink (2012): 'His past as a cancer patient made every question about doping superfluous, even immoral. Why would anybody having faced death

take such risks with his health and reputation?' [My translation of: 'Zijn verleden als kankerpatiënt maakte iedere vraag naar dopinggebruik overbodig, ja zelfs immoreel. Want waarom zou iemand die de dood in de ogen had gekeken nog zulke risico's nemen met zijn gezondheid en reputatie?']

v. Therefore, such an argument pre-eminently satisfies the description of the classical eikos argument as given in the classical handbook Rhetoric to Alexander (1428a25ff.). An eikos argument is an argument from plausibility – plausibility in the sense that the arguer should adhere to ideas or to representations of events that correspond with an audience's expectations. In Rhetoric to Alexander it is stated that such an argument should depict a course of events in such a way that the audience agrees that this is the most likely way for things to have occurred. See Kraus (2007, p. 7; 2010, p. 365), Hoffman (2008, p. 22), Kennedy (1994, p. 24).

vi. According to Muench (2013), Armstrong 'was obsessed with winning, with fame, with power'.

vii. See also Seaton (2012), who mentions that Lance Armstrong spent more than one million dollars on doctor Ferrari and concludes the article with the rhetorical question: 'Who would you prefer to see winning the Tour the France: the greatest cyclist in the world or the dope-cheat with the biggest budget?'

viii. According to Kimmage (2012), Wiggins's defence statements are harmed by the fact that Team Sky has been working with the Dutchman Geert Leinders, a doctor who was associated with doping.

ix. The accuser can also put forward a less face-threatening argument, namely: 'If I were you, yes, I would take the risk, considering all the advantages'. But even if this line of discussion is followed, at some point the accuser will have to use a face-threatening move. I.e. in that line of discussion the accused will reply that the accuser does not know what he is talking about, that the risk really is too high. If the accuser wants to pursue the critical examination at this point, he can only do so by attacking the argument's content – 'The risk is not as high as you suggest' – thus still implying that the accused is lying.

x. Such doubts would be particularly face-threatening in view of Armstrong's cancer history. As Walsh said, cited in an article by Andrew Pugh (2012): 'It felt like the cancer was a big factor from day one. A lot of people didn't think it was appropriate to ask what were very necessary questions. I think part of the reason they didn't want to ask those questions was because the guy had come back from cancer.' The good works done by Armstrong's cancer foundation were another reason: '(…) the Armstrong story was deemed to be so good, so remarkable, an

inspiration to countless millions, who wants to rain on that parade?'

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – The Failure Of Fact-Checking

Abstract: Fact-checking rests on a foundation that is desirable: an educated citizenry, informed of the facts, will make a rational decision. Unfortunately, the theory of motivated reasoning suggests prior attitudes strongly influence the process. This paper reports the results from two studies (n=456) that investigated the effectiveness of fact-checking in the context of ObamaCare. The results of the studies confirm the real problem for fact-checking: prior attitudes intervened to reduce the utility of the fact check.

Keywords: fact-checking, motivated reasoning, Obama, political affiliation, Romney

1. *Introduction*

In an effort to combat a new wave of false and misleading political advertisements, American journalists in the early 1990's shed their tendency merely to report politicians' claims and instead took up the challenge to report their truthfulness. These new adwatches were meant provide the public with the information necessary to make an informed decision. Journalists embraced their role as the arbiters of truth with the hope "that prospective voters will use information about misleading ads to discount their claims and turn away from candidates who ads lack veracity" (Frantzich, 2002, p. 35). The idea that voters would rely on evidence and rationally choose a candidate is an ideal that is firmly rooted in democracy. But, what is less clear is whether voters use the information provided in adwatches to make a "good" decision.

Early research investigated the effectiveness of television news adwatches and found mixed results. Some studies found that adwatches were not effective. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1996) found adwatches backfired since "the candidate who was scrutinized by the media enjoyed increased support among those who watched an ad-watch report" (p. 82). Pfau and Louden (1994) report mixed results: one candidate gained support while the opponent in the race faced lower support. Jamieson and Cappella (1997) criticized both studies over methodological problems. The result found by Ansolabehere and Iyengar, they argued, was the result of a generally favorable fact-check conclusion that

"supported the gist of the claims made in the ad" (p. 16). Similarly, the conclusion found by Pfau and Louden was the result of "inviting comparison between candidates" (p. 14) since they were in the same race. In contrast to these studies, Cappella and Jamieson (1994) found adwatches were effective. "The adwaches appear to do precisely what they are designed to accomplish, namely put the claims of the ad in context so that the ad is judged less fair and less important" (Cappella & Jamieson, 1994, p. 355). Other studies also have found exposure to fact-checking to be effective (Garrett, Nisbet, & Lynch, 2013; Gottfried, Hardy, Winneg, & Jamieson, 2012; O'Sullivan & Geiger, 1995). Contemporary research in political science and social psychology has investigated the topic under the banner of "corrections" to political misinformation also with mixed results. Several studies have documented the failure of new information to correct the misinformation (Bullock, 2006; Kuklinski, Quirk, Jerit, Schwieder, & Rich, 2000; Nyhan & Reifler, 2010). In contrast, some research has found that corrections were effective at changing opinion (Gilens, 2001; Howell & West, 2009; Kuklinski et al, 2000). In those cases, however, the public changed their mind because the information was so overwhelming that it "hit them between the eyes" (Kuklinski et al., 2000, p. 805).

How can we make sense of these inconclusive results? There is hope to find an answer. Referred to variously as motivated reasoning (Mercier & Sperber, 2011), the prior attitude effect (Taber & Lodge, 2006), belief perseverance (Bullock, 2006), biased assimilation (Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979), or an attitude congruency bias (Taber, Cann, & Kucsova, 2009), the theory is simple: individuals will "judge confirming evidence as relevant and reliable but disconfirming evidence as irrelevant and unreliable" and will "accept confirming evidence at face value while scrutinizing disconfirming evidence hypercritically" (Lord, Ross, & Lepper, 1979, p. 2099). In other words, people are more likely to believe what they already believe and are less likely to believe what they already reject. Political affiliation serves as an important source of bias in the interpretation of political information (Allen, Stevens, & Sullivan, 2009; Bullock, 2006; Gaines, Kuklinski, Quirk, Peyton, & Verkuilen, 2007; Nyhan & Reifler, 2010). Prior research on adwatches and fact-checking rarely accounted for the role of motivated reasoning. Some articles mention descriptive statistics for political affiliation, but most studies did not analyze the role of motivated reasoning, expressed most clearly as political affiliation and a partisan bias for the source, in the evaluation of the advertisement (Ansolabehere & Iyengar, 1996; Cappella &

Jamieson, 1995; Jamieson, 1992; McKinnon & Kaid, 1999; Milburn & Brown, 1995; Pfau & Louden, 1994; O'Sullivan & Geiger, 1995). This is a major shortcoming in prior research. The influence of prior attitude is significant, and political affiliation is an important part of that attitude. This project attempts to remedy this shortcoming by explicitly addressing the role of prior attitude, especially political commitments, when evaluating statements subject to fact-check criticism. As such, it is guided by the following hypotheses and research question:

H1: Evaluation of the strength of the initial argument will be influenced by initial evaluation of the source and political affiliation, such that attitude congruent arguments will be rated higher and attitude incongruent arguments will be rated lower.

H2: Evaluation of the strength of the fact-check analysis will be influenced by initial evaluation of the source and political affiliation, such that attitude congruent arguments will be rated higher and attitude incongruent arguments will be rated lower.

H3: Final evaluation of the strength of the argument will be influenced by initial evaluation of the source and political affiliation, such that attitude congruent arguments will be rated higher and attitude incongruent arguments will be rated lower.

RQ1: Do other factors such as age, sex, level of education, or level of political interest create prior attitude effects when evaluating political messages or fact-check responses?

2. *Methodology*

Two studies were conducted in the fall of 2012 to investigate the topic. Both studies followed the same basic procedure and will be explained together. Experiment 1 focused on reactions to a statement by President Obama on the cost effectiveness of preventative health care. Experiment 2 focused on reactions to a statement by Mitt Romney on the cost savings associated with repealing Obamacare.

Participants initially completed a series of basic demographic questions, including age, sex, level of education, political affiliation and level of political interest. Participants also completed a feeling thermometer to express their attitude

toward Obama (Experiment 1) or Romney (Experiment 2). The main experiment involved three stages. First, respondents were shown a brief statement by either Obama (71 words) or Romney (62 words) and recorded their evaluation of the strength of the argument using a semantic differential scale (explained below). Then, respondents were shown a lengthy refutation of the argument (439 words in Experiment 1, 332 words in Experiment 2) by a fact-checking organization and recorded their evaluation of the strength of the fact-check statement using the same scale. Finally, participants were asked to re-evaluate the strength of the original claim using the same scale.

In both experiments, the fact-check analysis provided strong refutation of the original statement and definitively suggested the claim was false. The evidence in support of the fact-check conclusion came from politically neutral sources. In Experiment 1, the sources included the Congressional Budget Office, a report in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, and a study sponsored by the American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, and the American Cancer Society. In Experiment 2, the sources included the Congressional Budget Office and detailed the revenue enhancements contained in Affordable Care Act.

Argument strength was measured using a semantic differential scale adapted from La France and Boster (2001). The pairs included correct-incorrect, valuable-not valuable, unsound-sound, poorly reasoned-well reasoned, and reasonable-unreasonable. Items were recoded so the negative element received the lowest score. Items were summed to create an overall evaluation for the argument. Scores ranged from 6 to 42. A low total score suggested the argument was weak while a high total score suggested the argument was strong. The scales were reliable (alpha reported for each experiment).

Attitude toward Obama and Romney was measured before and after the experiment using a feeling thermometer (0-100) typical in political research (ANES, 2008). Level of political involvement was measured with a single item that asked, “How interested are you in information about what’s going on in government and politics?” (ANES, 2008). Respondents could select extremely interested, very interested, moderately interested, slightly interested, or not interested at all. Level of education was measured on a five-point ordinal scale (ANES, 2008). Respondents could select no high school diploma, high school diploma, some college (but no Bachelor’s degree), Bachelor’s degree, or education beyond a Bachelor’s degree.

3. *Experiment 1*

Participants (N=187) were recruited from several communication classes (in exchange for course credit/extra-credit) and from Amazon's Mechanical Turk service (receiving payment ranging from $.8 to $1.5 for completing the survey). Participants ranged in age from 18 to 66 years of age (M=29.12, SD=11.77). A slight majority was female (n=95). Most participants had some education beyond a high school diploma (n=149). A third of the participants (33.7%) reported either an extremely high or very high interest in information about government and politics. About a quarter of the participants (26.7%) reported only some interest or no interest in similar information. Over a third of participants reported a political affiliation consistent with the Democratic Party (37.4%) compared with nearly a quarter that identified as Republicans (23.5%). Just more than a quarter identified as Independents (28.3%) with the remaining selecting some other political affiliation (10.7%).

The semantic differential scales used in the survey were highly reliable. Cronbach's alpha for the three scales were: initial evaluation of Obama's argument (α=.94), evaluation of fact-check analysis (α=.92), and re-evaluation of Obama's argument (α=.95).

The first hypothesis suggested that people would be influenced by their prior attitudes when judging the initial strength of the argument made by President Obama. There was overwhelming support for the hypothesis. A one-way ANOVA of political affiliation was conducted on initial evaluation of the strength of the statement by President Obama. This analysis produced a statistically significant result, $F(3,183)=28.54$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.32$). Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction revealed a significant difference between Democrats (M=35.8, SD=6.98), who rated the argument strongest, and Republicans (M=21.98, SD=8.30), who rated the argument weakest, as well as Independents (M=30.94, SD=8.01) and others (M=29.95, SD=8.63). In fact, the only comparison that was not statistically significant was between Independents and others. In addition, correlation was used to test the relationship between attitude toward Obama and the initial evaluation of the argument. There was a strong association between the pretest thermometer rating for Obama and the initial evaluation of the argument, $r(185)=.64$, $p<.001$, $r2=.41$. As ratings for Obama increased, so too did the evaluation of his argument.

The second hypothesis suggested that people would be influenced by their prior

attitudes when judging the strength of the fact-check analysis. There was support for this hypothesis. A one-way ANOVA of political affiliation was conducted on the evaluation of the strength of the fact-check analysis. This analysis produced a statistically significant result, $F(3,183)=4.76$, $p=.003$, $\eta 2=.07$. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction revealed a significant difference between Democrats ($M=26.29$, SD=8.01), who rated the argument weakest, and Republicans ($M=31.66$, $SD=7.44$), who rated the argument strongest. There were no other statistically significant differences. In addition, correlation was used to test the relationship between attitude toward Obama and the evaluation of the fact-check analysis. There was a moderate negative correlation between the pretest thermometer rating for Obama and the evaluation of the fact-check analysis, $r(185)=-.33$, $p<.001$, $r2=.11$. As ratings for Obama increased, evaluation of the fact-check criticism went down.

The third hypothesis suggested that people would continue to be influenced by their prior attitudes when making the final evaluation of the argument. A one-way ANOVA of political affiliation was conducted on the final evaluation of the strength of the statement by Obama. The analysis produced a statistically significant result, $F(3,183)=32.39$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.35$. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction revealed a significant difference between Democrats ($M=32.41$, $SD=7.65$), who continued to rate the statement strongest, and Republicans ($M=17.41$, $SD=7.20$), who continued to rate the statement weakest, as well as Independents ($M=26.00$, $SD=8.86$). The only comparisons that were not significant were between and others ($M=27.10$, $SD=7.81$) and both Democrats and Independents. In addition, correlation was used to test the relationship between attitude toward Obama and the final evaluation of the statement. Even after exposure to a fact-check criticism, a stronger positive correlation was found between the pretest thermometer rating for Obama and the final evaluation of the statement, $r(185)=.67$, $p<.001$, $r2=.45$.

Finally, to investigate the research question, a series of one-way ANOVAs were conducted to compare sex, level of education, and level of political interest with the initial evaluation of Obama's argument, the evaluation of the fact-check analysis, and the final evaluation of Obama's argument. In addition, given the importance of political affiliation, a series of two-way ANOVAs were conducted using sex, level of education, and level of political interest along with political affiliation on each evaluation. Correlation was used to compare age and the three

evaluations. Factors beyond political affiliation played almost no role in the evaluation of Obama's statement or the fact-check criticism.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted between sex and the three argument evaluations. No group differences based on sex were found for initial evaluation, $F(1,185)=.74$, $p=.39$, final evaluation, $F(1,185)=.09$, $p=.77$, or evaluation of the fact-check analysis, $F(1,185)=.312$, $p=.577$. A two-way ANOVA was conducted between sex and political affiliation on the three argument evaluations. There was no main effect for sex and no interaction effect between political affiliation and sex for any of the three evaluations.

A one-way ANOVA found no group differences based on level of education for initial evaluation, $F(4,182)=.805$, $p=.524$, final evaluation, $F(4,182)=.381$, $p=.882$, or evaluation of the fact-check analysis, $F(4,182)=.875$, $p=.480$. In addition, a two-way ANOVA was conducted between level of education and political affiliation on the three argument evaluations. There was no main effect for level of education and no interaction effect political affiliation and level of education for any of the three evaluations.

Differences in political interest were found for initial evaluation, $F(4,182)=2.582$, $p=.039$. No group differences based on political interest were found for the evaluation of the fact-check analysis, $F(4,182)=1.701$, $p=.152$, or for the final evaluation, $F(4,182)=1.467$, $p=.214$. A two-way ANOVA was conducted between level of interest and political affiliation on the three argument evaluations. There was no main effect for level of political interest and no interaction effect between political affiliation and level of political interest for any of the three evaluations. In general, sex and level of education played no role in the evaluation of the competing political statements. Level of political interest played a very small role in the assessment of the statements. Any role played by political interest was dwarfed by political affiliation.

Correlation was used to test the relationship between age and the three argument evaluations. Age was not associated with the initial evaluation of the argument, $r(185)=.11$, $p=.14$, the final evaluation of the argument, $r(185)=.02$, $p=.77$, or the evaluation of the fact-check criticism, $r(185)=.02$, $p=.84$

4. *Experiment 2*

The results from the first experiment were conclusive in favor of a motivational

bias in the processing of fact-check information. But, for balance, a second experiment was conducted using Mitt Romney as the source and an anti-Obmacare argument as the material for evaluation. Participants (N=269) were recruited from introductory communication classes (in exchange for course credit/extra-credit) and from Amazon's Mechanical Turk service (receiving payment of $.8 for completing of the survey). Participants ranged from 18 to 69 years of age (M=28.92, SD=11.19). A slight majority was male (n=138). Most participants had an education beyond a high school diploma (82.9%). Nearly half of the participants (45.4%) reported either an extremely high or very high interest in information about government and politics. Only 18.6% reported only some interest or no interest in similar information. A plurality of participants reported a political affiliation consistent with the Democratic Party (38.1%). Republicans (26.7%) and Independents (26.3%) were the next most common affiliation. A few participants (8.5%) reported some other political affiliation.

The semantic differential scales used in the survey were reliable. Cronbach's alpha for the three scales were: initial evaluation of Romney's argument (α=.96), evaluation of fact-check analysis (α=.96), and re-evaluation of Mitt Romney's argument (α=.97).

The first hypothesis suggested that people would be influenced by their prior attitudes when judging the initial strength of the argument made by Mitt Romney. There was overwhelming support for the hypothesis. A one-way ANOVA of political affiliation was conducted on initial evaluation of the strength of the statement by Romney. This analysis produced a statistically significant result, $F(3,265)=60.78$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.41$. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction revealed significant differences between Republicans (M=33.18, SD=7.82), who rated the argument strongest, and Democrats (M=15.18, SD=8.17), who rated the argument weakest, as well as both Independents (M=20.93, SD=9.76) and others (M=24.74, SD=10.73). In fact, all other comparisons were statistically significant except between Independents and others. In addition, correlation was used to compare prior attitude toward Romney and the initial evaluation of his argument. There was a strong, positive correlation between pretest thermometer rating for Romney and the initial evaluation of his statement, $r(267)=.78$, $p<.001$, $r2=.61$. Increasing evaluations for Romney were associated with increasing evaluations for his statement.

The second hypothesis suggested that people would be influenced by their prior

attitudes when judging the strength of the argument presented in the fact-check analysis. A one-way ANOVA of political affiliation was conducted on evaluation of the fact-check. The analysis produced a statistically significant result, $F(3,265)=14.83$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.14$. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction revealed significant differences between Republicans ($M=23.42$, $SD=9.21$), who rated the argument weakest, and Democrats ($M=32.14$, $SD=10.80$), Independents ($M=32.28$, $SD=7.67$) and others ($M=30.13$, $SD=7.91$). There were no other statistically significant differences. In addition, correlation was used to compare prior attitude toward Romney and the evaluation of the fact-check criticism. There was a moderate, negative correlation between pretest thermometer rating for Romney and the evaluation of the fact-check criticism, $r(267)=-.46$, $p<.001$, $r2=.21$. Increasing evaluation of Romney was associated with a decreasing evaluation of the fact-check criticism.

The final hypothesis suggested that people would continue to be influenced by their prior attitudes, even after exposure to a fact-check criticism, when evaluating the strength of Romney's argument. A one-way ANOVA of political affiliation was conducted on the final evaluation of the statement made by Romney. The analysis produced a statistically significant result, $F(3,265)=81.70$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.48$. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction revealed significant differences between Republicans ($M=30.04$, $SD=8.03$), who continue to rate the argument strongest, and Democrats ($M=11.26$, $SD=5.97$), Independents ($M=16.14$, $SD=9.62$) and others ($M=20.35$, $SD=9.59$). In fact, all of the comparisons were statistically significant except between Independents and others. In addition, correlation was used to compare prior attitude toward Romney and the final evaluation of his statement. There was an even stronger, positive correlation between pretest thermometer rating for Romney and the final evaluation of his statement, $r=.79$, $p<.001$, $r2=.63$.

Finally, the research question was investigated using a series of one-way ANOVAs between sex, level of education, and level of political interest with all three argument evaluations. In addition, a series of two-way ANOVAs compared political affiliation along with sex, level of education, and level of political interest with all three argument evaluations. Correlation also was used to identify a relationship between age and the three argument evaluations. Very few factors had a meaningful impact on argument evaluation.

There were no group differences between sex and the initial evaluation of the

argument, $F(1,267)=.004$, $p=.95$, evaluation of the fact-check, $F(1,267)=2.24$, $p=.14$, or the final evaluation of the argument, $F(1,267)=1.25$, $p=.27$. In addition, a two-way ANOVA with sex and political affiliation found no main effect for sex and no interaction effect with political affiliation for the initial evaluation of the argument, the final evaluation of the argument, or for the evaluation of the fact-check criticism.

There were no group differences between level of education and the initial evaluation of the argument, $F(3,265)=2.27$, $p=.08$, final evaluation of the argument, $F(3,265)=1.09$, $p=.36$, or for the evaluation of the fact-check criticism, $F(3,265)=.23$, $p=.88$. In addition, a two-way ANOVA with level of education and political affiliation found no main effect for level of education and no interaction effect with political affiliation for the initial evaluation of the argument, the final evaluation of the argument, or for the evaluation of the fact-check criticism.

There were no group differences between level of political interest and the initial evaluation of the argument, $F(4,264)=1.61$, $p=.17$, final evaluation of the argument, $F(4,264)=0.83$, $p=.51$, or for the evaluation of the fact-check criticism, $F(4,264)=1.16$, $p=.33$. A two-way ANOVA with level of political interest and political affiliation found a main effect for both political affiliation, $F(3,250)=42.12$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.34$, and level of political interest, $F(4,250)=4.49$, $p=.002$, $\eta 2=.07$, but not for the interaction. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction found significant differences between those with no interest at all, who rated the argument lowest, and those with a slight interest and those with a moderate interest. No other levels of political interest were significantly different. Similarly, a two-way ANOVA found a main effect for both political affiliation, $F(3,250)=49.60$, $p<.001$, $\eta 2=.37$, and level of political interest, $F(4,250)=2.67$, $p=.03$, $\eta 2=.04$. Post hoc tests using the Bonferroni correction found no significant differences between any of the groups. A two-way ANOVA with level of political interest and political affiliation found no main effect and no interaction effect with political affiliation for the evaluation of the fact-check criticism.

Correlation was used to test the relationship between age and the three argument evaluations. Age was not associated with the initial evaluation of the argument, $r(267)=-.094$, $p=.12$, the final evaluation of the argument, $r(267)=-.07$, $p=.24$, or the evaluation of the fact-check criticism, $r(267)=.02$, $p=.74$

5. *Conclusion*

Fact-checking represents a laudable goal in a democracy. In an effort to help shape public opinion, fact-checking provides citizens with the "facts" necessary to evaluate competing political claims. The public comes to any political dispute with some prior opinion. But, once exposed to a fact-check, they *should* update their opinion on the basis of the new information. Fact-checking, then, *should* promote a broad consensus on the topic. When the scrutinized claims generally are true, the public can have confidence in their prior opinion. But, when the scrutinized claims generally are false, exposure to a fact-check analysis ought to undermine the prior opinion and serve as the justification for a new opinion.

Unfortunately, the results from both experiments reported in this paper suggest that reality is far from the ideal. In both cases, prior partisan attitudes strongly influenced the evaluation of the arguments. The initial evaluation of the argument was shaped by prior commitments. Prior attitude toward the source and political affiliation were strong predictors of the initial evaluation of the statement: Proattitudinal messages were supported and counterattitudinal messages were rejected. The same commitments shaped reaction to the fact-check analysis. The criticism levelled by the fact-check was strong, well-supported from neutral sources, and unambiguously concluded the initial claim was false. Yet, in both studies, prior commitments were strong predictors of the evaluation of the fact-check claims: attitude congruent messages were rated much higher than attitude incongruent messages. Finally, even after exposure to a strong fact-check analysis, prior attitudes continued to influence the evaluation of the political statement: attitude consistent messages continued to be supported and attitude inconsistent messages continued to be rejected.

It could be argued that the results of these experiments confirm that fact-checking is effective. After all, the evaluations of the statements were lower after exposure to the fact-check criticism. But, such a conclusion is not warranted for two reasons. First, the evaluations did not decline substantially. In both experiments, those in the proattitudinal conditional (Democrats in Experiment 1 and Republicans in Experiment 2) maintained evaluations that were very positive. While partisans reduced their evaluations, the average scores were still very positive. Exposure to a strongly worded criticism that seriously challenged the validity of the claim resulted in only a minor adjustment in evaluation by committed partisans. With average scores still above 30 (on a scale to 42), it is clear that partisans continue to believe the claim even in the face of a relentless

challenge. Second, fact-checking ought to cause a convergence of opinion. The ideal of fact-checking is premised on the idea that there is a "truth" and that exposing the public to the "correct" information will cause them to reject the misleading statements. Bayesian updating suggests that fact-checking should result in a convergence of opinion (Bartels, 2002, p. 122). "Two groups of Bayesian learners exposed to the same set of information should inexorably come to see the world in the same way" (Grynaviski, 2006, p. 331). Unfortunately, fact-checking does not encourage this effect. Instead of a convergence of opinion, the minor updating by committed partisans prevents agreement. The lack of agreement on the facts, confirmed by the continuing gap in the final evaluation of the statement, suggests that partisanship continues to influence the evaluation of the statement even after exposure to a strong fact-check criticism.

Motivated reasoning provides a useful explanation for these results. Competing political claims, and the statements of fact-checkers, invoke partisan interests that prevent a rational assessment of the information. As a result, messages that are consistent with prior commitments are viewed as strong and not subject to scrutiny while messages that are inconsistent are viewed as weak and actively scrutinized.

It would be easy to interpret these results as a call to abandon fact-checking. That is not the intent of this project. Rather, this is a call to encourage those engaged in fact-checking to move beyond basic descriptions of true and false. Merely identifying one side as making a false claim is not likely sufficient to change public opinion. Where Jamieson (1992) advanced the utility of adwatches by providing a visual "grammar" to make them more effective, this research highlights the importance of creating a "motivational" grammar to make them more compelling. Fact-checking should not be abandoned. But, fact-checkers need to be cognizant that counterattitudinal messages will be actively scrutinized and they must develop strategies to make their messages more compelling in the face of strong pressures to reject their claims. Merely hoping that the audience will be motivated by accuracy goals (Taber & Lodge, 2006) will not be sufficient.

Several limitations of this project deserve mention. First, study participants mainly were drawn from Amazon's Mechanical Turk online labor market. While the service has been shown to be a reliable source for participants for academic research (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Horton, Rand, & Zeckhauser, 2011; Mason & Suri, 2012), future research should attempt to gather responses

from a random sample. Moving from a convenience sample to a random sample would provide more confidence in the generalizability of the conclusions.

Second, this study addressed a single issue with a single, brief exposure to a fact-check criticism. While it appears that exposure to a single fact-check was not effective at changing opinion, it is possible that fact-checking could serve to change opinion in the long-term. Future studies should attempt to study the effect over many months, especially with repeated exposure to the criticism. In addition, fact-checking could serve to induce media coverage of misleading information, prompting repetition of the weakness of the claim. Repeated exposure, over a significant period of time, could provide the basis for opinion change, even if gradual and small. Additional research is needed to test the long-term effects of fact-checking on public opinion.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Mitt Romney And Ideological Enthymeme In Denver: "Obamacare" And Its Functions

Abstract: This paper argues that surface-level analysis of political argument fails to explain the effectiveness of ideological enthymemes, particularly within the context of presidential debates. The choice of a terminological system limits and shapes the argumentative choices afforded the candidate. Presidential debates provide a unique context within which to examine the interaction of ideological constraints and argument due to their relatively committed and ideologically homogenous audiences.

Keywords: argument, Barack Obama, enthymeme, ideology, Mitt Romney,

Obamacare, presidential debates, terminology

1. *Introduction*

On October 3, 2012 Mitt Romney and Barack Obama took the stage at Magness Arena at the University of Denver and participated in the first of three debates prior to the general election. Heading into the Denver debate, Romney was suffering a slow bleed of independents and moderate conservative voters (John F. Kennedy School of Government, 2013, p. 210). Whether due to the now-infamous 47% comment at a fundraiser in Florida, the near-calamity of the GOP convention, or Romney's persistent vagueness in regards to his tax policies, one aspect of the race was abundantly clear; the challenger's campaign needed a significant boost to remain competitive in the last month of the election. As a result, the Romney campaign entered the debate in Denver with a lower threshold of expectations than President Obama.

Reactions after the debate did not match the expectations established prior to the encounter. Rather than being the "knock down, drag-out fight" described in *US News* and *World Report*, the first matchup between Mitt Romney and Barack Obama was, as described by one writer at *Politico,* "relatively sleepy" with "no fireworks or big 'moments' to speak of" and "unusually civilized" (Metzler, 2012; Haberman, 2012; Mariucci and Farofoli, 2012). Expectations were on the Obama's side by a 2 to 1 margin among voters, with the belief firmly in the minds of the electorate that Obama would win because of his experience (Milbank, 2012, p. A02). However, pundits agreed that the biggest difference between expectations and results was the lacklustre performance of the president (Medved, 2012; McAskill, 2012; Ingold, 2012).

Romney's performance was surprising but should not have been unexpected, as eighteen months of practice against twelve other potential GOP nominees provided him with ample opportunity to hone his performance and strategy. Following the debate, polls and pundits agreed that Romney had closed the gap between himself and the President and was in a much better position after Denver than before (Stelter, 2012, p. A22; Milbank, p. A02). David Axelrod, senior advisor to the Obama campaign, speaks about the result of the debate: "I think what he did was, in one night, he got back those Republican-leaning Independents. I think he improved enthusiasm among his base. I think the race snapped back to where it was essentially before the convention" (John F. Kennedy School of Government, p. 218).

The debate at Magness Arena provides scholars with a particularly vexing problem. Despite the media consensus that Romney won the debate in Denver, Robert Rowland's analysis reveals the superiority of Obama performance at the argumentative and evidentiary level, leading him to conclude "that something other than the arguments must have been the operative force moving public opinion" (Rowland, 2013, p. 537). In what follows, I argue that the strategic argumentative choices of Romney and his campaign played a crucial role in influencing public opinion. Mitt Romney uses a particular configuration of terms to overcome the substantive and evidentiary barriers facing him. Rather than articulating a set of policies clearly and defending them with supporting materials and evidence, Romney utilizes three specific strategies to avoid direct confrontation and outflank the Obama team.

First, Romney rejects the definition of the debate as a contest of ideas. Instead, by challenging the unspoken decorum and unenforceable rules of the presidential debate, Romney eschews the norms for a form of ideological combat. He exchanged a contest of ideas for what the *New York Times* called a "clash of philosophies" (Baker, 2012, p. A0). Descriptions of the debate such as Metzler's, calling for a "knock down, drag-out fight" is indicative of the media's preference for such a sport. Focusing primarily on attacking the president and abandoning the rules enables Romney to fulfill the gladiatorial role perfectly (Dionne, 2012, p.A23). Second, Romney redefines evidence as something not based on widely accepted standards of reason, only ideology. By challenging the evidence and reasoning of the president, Romney makes it impossible to engage in a reasoned discussion about policy issues. Freed from the burden of proof, Romney becomes nearly indefatigable. Obama's ability to refute the claims of his challenger was undermined by this strategy, preventing any real gains on the part of the president. A final strategy employed by Romney is a particularly effective enthymeme – a title of titles – that relies on the ideological commitments of the audience. In *Grammar of Motives*, Kenneth Burke talks about how symbolic equations can be reduced to representative anecdotes that contain the entire order of symbolic equations (selection, reflection, deflection) within their structure (1969, p. 59). Romney goes a step further and develops an anecdote that refers to all other issues in play. By deploying "Obamacare" as an enthymeme in a variety of contexts and arguments, including some wildly outside the scope of the Affordable Care Act, Obama's policy successes are re-characterized as failures. Each iteration of the anecdote contains the entire

symbolic equation of the previous versions and allows Romney to chain out the Obamacare enthymeme in a way that "sums up" his evaluation of the entire administration. In what follows, I develop these positions and show how Romney used them to create an ideological worldview without speaking to the specific policies required by his own ideological commitments (Burke, 1974, p. 84).

2. *Strategic considerations*

Before examining the debate itself, it is necessary to examine some of the key strategic choices made by the campaigns prior to the debate. First, both election teams understood both the opportunity and necessity of the first debate. Beth Meyers, senior advisor to Romney, indicates that "people would want to see it on the line" and that "whatever was happening in the campaign" they would need a "winning jolt" (John F. Kennedy School of Government, p. 208). David Axelrod indicated that the Obama campaign understood the historical significance of the first debate and admitted the team was too focused on the debate as a problem area and "over-prepared" the president with "too much material" (p. 210). Clearly, the Magness Arena debate offered significant dangers and opportunities for each candidate.

Next, the preparation strategies indicate that the campaigns were focused on two separate engagements. On the one hand, the Romney campaign arrived in Denver ready for a direct confrontation, Beth Meyers describes this strategy: "On every issue, …we were very focused on finding an attack – a place to attack President Obama on every issue… that's what we did so that when Mitt came on that stage at the first debate, he was loaded for bear on every issue" (p. 210). Mitt Romney's campaign devised an offensively focused strategy, and targeted specific policies of the president in an attempt to place Barack Obama on the defensive.

On the other hand, Axelrod describes how the Obama campaign approached the debate as a discussion, focusing mainly on the policies and content preparation, which limited the President's ability to adapt to the situation of televised debating (p. 211). In Axelrod's words, the Obama team "had a strategy of limited engagement" that the president then took to an "illogical extreme" in the moment of the debate (p. 214). The result of the interaction of these two strategic approaches was that the debate "didn't do much to the president's image… It's more of what it did for Mitt Romney" (p. 220). David Simas, director of opinion research for the Romney campaign, reflects on the impact of the strategic choices made by the campaign and their effect on the election:

What we saw after twenty-four hours was a consolidation back to Governor Romney. It accelerated in the second twenty-four hour period…What we saw is, by the third day, as David said, the race had settled back to preconvention levels. When we analyzed who it was that moved, it was precisely those voters from our perspective who had peeled off during the 47, so that's on the quantitative side… in the qualitative, it opened up the door for Governor Romney. It corrected with a whole bunch of voters the problem that he had… for the first time we saw his very favorable numbers among the Republicans rivaling numbers that we had seen in 2008. (p. 218-9)

Axelrod agrees with this sentiment and argues that Obama's numbers "didn't suffer" but Romney "definitely improved" his standing in the race (p. 218). The debate in Denver offered the Romney campaign with a significant opportunity to reset the election and the former governor certainly surpassed expectations.

The debate

In the debate at Magness Arena, Romney used three argumentative strategies to capitalize on his strategic opportunities. The results of the debate prove that the particular strategies adopted by Romney were successful, at least in the short term. First, Romney approached the debate as an engagement in ideological combat, rather than a debate about ideas and policies. Some audiences who watched the debate were expecting and desired a "knock down" fight, and a fight is exactly what Romney produced for bring the audience. Burke describes this strategy as "appetite fulfilment" and argues for its supreme psychological effectiveness (Burke, 1957, p. 31). The appetite, however, did not need to be created by Romney in this case, for the expectations of the audience had already been established beforehand by the framing of the media. Outlets like *US News* and *World Report* and the *Denver Post* characterized the debate as a "fight" and "duel" respectively (Metzler, 2012; Crummy, 2012, p. A2S). Polling data prior to the debate also indicated that one of the two main foci of the electorate during the debate was going to be Romney's adherence to conservative principles (NBC News, 2012, p. 11). The conditions were prime for the Romney campaign to approach the debate as an ideological fight.

In contrast to voters expecting a duel, a full one in five likely voters felt that Romney "flip flops and changes his mind too much on issues" and "is too wealthy to understand the day-to-day concerns of most Americans" (*NBC News*, p. 11). The electorate's demand for consistency from Romney represented a significant

barrier to his success in the debate. Burke, however, indicates that the fulfilment of audience expectations only requires the maintenance "of a principle under new guises. It is the restatement of the same thing in different ways" (Burke, 1957, p. 125). For Burke, fulfilling psychological expectations can supplement and sometimes exceed the effectiveness of the content. Independent and moderate Republicans had an appetite for a particular type of confrontation heading into the Denver debate, and Romney provided them with exactly what they wanted.

For example, at the end of the first segment on the economy, Mitt Romney undermined the norms on speaking order, decorum about who speaks first and who gets the last word. First, Romney appealed to Jim Lehrer, demanding that he get the final word in the segment. "Jim, the president began this segment, so I think I get the last word, so I'm going to take it. All right? (Chuckles)" (NPR.org, 2012).**[i]** Romney aggressively claimed the response time, then asked for permission as an afterthought. Lehrer objected briefly, but the President provided Romney the opening he needed to really shape the debate, "He can – you can have it." "That's not how it works," replied Lehrer, and despite stringent objections, the terms of rebuttal order and the time limits on those refutations were discarded by both candidates, leaving Lehrer with little room to re-establish the original parameters.

A second example of Romney's ability to control the debate's overall structure is an exchange over the issue of Medicare and the impact of the Affordable Care Act on current and upcoming retirees. After a section where Obama attempted to pivot back to the macro-level health care issue, Romney objected:

Mr. Romney: That's — that's a big topic. Could we — could we stay on Medicare?
President obama: Is that a — is that a separate topic? I'm sorry.
Mr. Lehrer: Yeah, we're going to — yeah. I want to get to it, but all I want to do is very quickly —
Mr. Romney: Let's get back to Medicare.
MR. LEHRER: — before we leave the economy —
Mr. Romney: Let's get back to Medicare.
Mr. Lehrer: No, no, no, no —
Mr. Romney: The president said that the government can provide the service at lower —
Mr. Lehrer: No.
Mr. Romney: — cost and without a profit.

Mr. Lehrer: All right.
Mr. Romney: if that's the case, then it will always be the best product that people can purchase. But my experience —
Mr. Lehrer: wait a minute, governor.
Mr. Romney: my experience is the private sector typically is able to provide a better product at a lower cost.
Mr. Lehrer: can we — can the two of you agree that the voters have a choice, a clear choice between the two of you —
Mr. Romney: absolutely.
President obama: yes.
Mr. Lehrer: — on medicare?
Mr. Romney: Absolutely.

In this extended exchange, Romney argued with Lehrer in an attempt to keep the discussion away from the larger health care issues and focus instead on the relationship between Medicare and the Affordable Care Act. Romney, even after repeated objections from Lehrer, continued to change the topic until he succeeds. Rather than complete the discussion, Lehrer attempted to end the segment as quickly as possible. Instead of asking for an articulation of the differences between the two candidates, Lehrer satisfied himself with merely establishing that one exists.

The shift away from predetermined norms about the debate provided Romney with two direct strategic benefits: (1) he can stay on the attack throughout the debate by always demanding the last word in any given segment and (2) he can extend the discussion in areas where he is strongest and avoid defending his own positions. When Jim Lehrer interrupts the candidates to let them know that "—we're way over our first 15 minutes" Romney says "It's fun, isn't it?" Fun? Perhaps. Strategic? Certainly. By the end of the debate, Romney has so thoroughly succeeded in shattering the time limits, Jim Lehrer is forced to scrap an entire segment of the debate. Romney undermined the parameters of the debate from the outset and one consequence of that is by forcing Obama on to the defensive and avoiding the expectation to rebut Obama's arguments.

The second strategy adopted by Romney undermined a key pillar in Obama's argumentative approach – the use and usefulness of evidence. Romney consistently challenged the president's statistics and use of studies throughout the debate, establishing an unequal balance in the burden of proof. In one of the

more memorable exchanges, Romney indicted the use of studies to challenge the president's attack on his tax plan.

"Now, you cite a study," Romney said, "There are six other studies that looked at the study you describe and say it's completely wrong. I saw a study that came out today that said you're going to raise taxes by $3,000 to $4,000 on middle-income families. There are all these studies out there." Romney employed four particular strategies to undermine the use of evidence within this single statement. First, Romney challenged the authority of Obama's evidence with a quantitative advantage. Romney used a ratio of six to one to offer the audience with a clear distinction between the two candidates. Second, Romney attacked the qualitative advantage of Obama's study, arguing that the studies he cited are macro-level evaluations of Obama's evidence. Romney can now make the claim that he provided a more comprehensive view of the situation, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Third, Romney cited a study that he read earlier in the day to challenge the recency of the president's evidence. In citing the most recent study, Romney offered new evidence that undermined the relevance of Obama's study to the status quo. Finally, Romney discarded the idea of comparing studies to determine truth altogether. "There are all these studies out there," he said, implying that any attempt to discern truth from scientific study is futile.

The entire purpose of this exchange revolves around one of Romney's key goals in the debate – creating as much distance as possible between himself and the tax cuts called for in the Ryan Budget. In the short term, the tactic worked, and Romney's success in the first debate is clear. Nine days after the debate in Denver, *The Atlantic* published an article calling into question the validity of the studies and their usefulness as support for Romney's tax plan (O'Brien, 2012). Articles challenging Romney's "six studies" appeared in most major newspapers shortly thereafter, and the gains Romney achieved in Denver swiftly evaporated (Khimm, 2012; Schlesinger, 2012). In the long run, the media and eventually the public found Romney's evidence wanting. During and after the debate, though, the strategy worked to Romney's immediate advantage. Despite the fact that the "studies" he cited were largely produced by ideologically suspect organizations, the limits of the debate, and the dismal state of public reason made it almost impossible for Obama to effectively make this point clear during the debate.

Third, Mitt Romney developed the term "Obamacare" as an encapsulation of all Obama's policy positions and cast universal aspersions upon them. It functioned

primarily as an enthymeme designed to resonate with far-right, moderate conservative, and independent voters. The term Obamacare has long been a subject of immense definitional confrontation by both political parties (Cox et. Al., 2012, p. A12). Mitt Romney, coincidentally, was the first politician on record to use the term. In 2007, he spoke at a campaign speech in Iowa, "The path of Europe is not the way to go. Socialized medicine. Hillarycare. Obamacare." This simple equation developed in 2007 in Iowa would be repeated again and again by Romney throughout his two presidential campaigns (Sarlin, 2012; Goldman & Talev, 2012). Fundamentally, the argument can be summed up as – the Affordable Care Act is a form of socialized medicine which puts the nation on a slippery slope towards socialism, this, being the fundamental problem with the European Union, meaning that the Affordable Care Act dooms America to financial ruin. The rhetorical and argumentative effectiveness of this anecdote relies on three interrelated arguments that operate together to engage multiple audiences with contradictory expectations of the candidate.

First, Romney used the name itself – Obamacare – to shape the terms of the debate. Viewers of the debate literally see this happen. Romney used "Obamacare" first in Denver, and tells the president that he uses "that term with all respect." Obama quickly responded by saying "I like it" and later in the same segment he said "I have become fond of this term." Jim Lehrer also bought into using Obamacare to describe the president's health care policies when transitioning into the segment of the debate on health care. "Now let's move to health care," he said, "where I know there is a clear difference – (laughter) – and that has to do with the Affordable Care Act… 'Obamacare'." Rather than using the name of the legislation and correcting the candidates, Lehrer used Romney's terminology consistently for the rest of the debate. When Lehrer says to Romney, "tell the president directly why you think what he just said is wrong about 'Obamacare'" the name rolls off Lehrer's tongue as easily as it does Romney's.

For Romney, Obamacare is a *title of titles*, it "sums up (that is, literally contains) all the particulars of things and ideas" that the audience should dislike about the president (Rueckert, 1983, p. 256). A title of titles contains the "perfect essence" of an idea and encourages audiences to associate the kernel of the idea with all of its derivations. "One goes up, arrives at the title of titles… and comes back down through all the levels… bringing (borrowing) back what one discovered at the top, following the reversible logic that is everywhere at work in these analogies"

(Reuckert, 1983, p.256). Romney made meta-level arguments about the problems with Obamacare, and after having established their credibility with the audience, carried them back down to other policies, and condemn the whole lot with a single idea. If Obamacare is a bad policy, all of the administration's policies are bad policy. If Obamacare is socialized medicine, all of Obama's policies are socialized policy.

Next, the use of the "path" metaphor allows Mitt Romney to talk about the Affordable Care Act in what Kenneth Burke calls the "end of the line" mode, or the principle of entelechy (Burke, 1974, p. 84). The end of the line mode utilizes "principles of entitlement and entelechy," in which "everything human is being driven toward the perfection of itself, to the end of its line" (Reuckert, 1994, p. 9). The principle of entitlement, or the titling of situation, names the situation, creates a set of conditions for behaving in that situation. Romney asks the audience to take the implications of Obama's health care policies to the end of the line. Rather than just being a typical slippery slope fallacy, Romney's reliance on entelechy develops the Obamacare anecdote as the first stage of socialism leading to economic and social ruin. The argument does not hinge on the actual effectiveness of the president's health care policy, but rather relies on the audience's conception of the "path" down which the policy takes the nation.

During the debate, Romney used this strategy to attract fiscally undecided moderates, some of whom may have been unsure about the arithmetic behind his tax policies. Romney connected wasteful spending of the Affordable Care Act with the budget deficits to our economic competitor, China. "Is the program so critical it's worth borrowing money from China to pay for it? … 'Obamacare' is on my list." Romney connects the spectre of big government with budget deficits, and argues that those deficits put us in the same position as Europe's faltering economies. "I don't want to go down the path to Spain," he says only a few moments later, "I want to go down the path of growth that puts Americans to work." Differentiating between the "path to Europe" or "path to Spain" and the "path to growth" sets up a dichotomy between (successful) capitalist economies and (failing) socialist economies. Romney previewed this in his opening statements of the debate when he said "it's going to take a different path, not the one we've been on, not the one the president describes as a top-down, cut taxes for the rich." The path metaphor helped Romney to make the debate about ideology, not policy. The strategy allowed Romney to take one set of arguments

about the policy and carry them over to other policies and issues that have little to nothing to do with health care.

Finally, Romney casted the choice between himself and the president as a moral issue and used the "clash of philosophies" expectation to elevate the election to that of an existential crisis for the American way of life. Romney applied this logic to a variety of issues throughout the debate. When speaking about Medicaid during the debate, Romney argued that the entire situation is a states-rights issue, and suggested that the entire nation "craft a plan at the state level" rather than implement a single federal mandate. Rather than addressing the technicalities or providing a nuanced response, Romney cased the issue into the state-rights/federal-authority divide and asserts that a state-level policy would be superior. Shifting to the economy, Romney argued that Obama care has "killed jobs" and even implied that the president is personally responsible for the failed recovery:

I just don't know how the president could have come into office, facing 23 million people out of work, rising unemployment, an economic crisis at the — at the kitchen table and spent his energy and passion for two years fighting for "Obamacare" instead of fighting for jobs for the American people.

Romney directly blames the president for making a choice to enact health care at the cost of the recovery, and rather than addressing the difficulty of dealing with two crises simultaneously, Romney argued that Obama bungled both. In addition to killing jobs, the administration raised taxes "by a trillion dollars" under Obamacare. In fact, the characterization of Obamacare as a tax by the Supreme Court earlier in June probably helped Romney argumentatively more than Obama. Few things are more essential to core American political mythology than the issue of taxation. The grievance of "taxation without representation" written in American founding documents exhibits the centrality of the topic in American political mythology. Calling health care reform a tax casts a positive term "reform" within the ideologically charged realm of "taxes."

Obamacare also destroyed the bipartisan spirit in Washington according to Romney, driving both sides into their respective corners, from which they have yet to emerge. Republicans didn't want Obama's version of health care reform, but "you pushed it through anyway" Romney tells the president "without a single Republican vote." In Romney's version of events, Obama, "pushed through

something that" he, "Nancy Pelosi and Harry Reid thought was the best answer and drove it through." Romney himself is the counter-example to Obama's partisanship: "I like the fact that in my state, we had Republicans and Democrats come together and work together." The genius of this move is that it undercuts Obama's ability to attack Congress while simultaneously placing the blame on Obama for the failure of the recovery and bipartisanship. Romney also charges the president with taking away a public good. The health care reforms, he says, "put people in a position where they're going to lose the insurance they had and they wanted." Romney is targeting voters who already have health insurance, people for whom the fear of losing one's health insurance operates far more effectively as a bogeyman than does the promise of a more efficiently run system. Finally, if voters have any doubt about the consequential nature of this election, Romney casts the choice in near biblical proportions – "If the president's re-elected, 'Obamacare' will be fully installed. In my view, that's going to mean a whole different way of life for people." At its fully realized extension, Romney wants the Obamacare enthymeme to present an ideological choice to the audience. Choose the incumbent, head down the path to Spain and socialism, and inevitably national social and financial ruin; or, pick the challenger and head down the "Path to Prosperity."

4. *Conclusion*

Mitt Romney's three strategies in Denver were relatively successful in the short term. Neil Newhouse, polling director for the Romney campaign explains the effect of the debate on the race:

… these voters saw Mitt Romney, and they watched the debate. They're impressed… And the image that had been portrayed of him, painted of him, had begun to kind of wash away a little bit… 47 percent kind of went away… it was all good for us. It gave us perceived momentum. Not just that our numbers were moving… but we began to see some erosion and some softening of Obama support. The information flow numbers, everything, began to kind of trend our way a little bit so that you got a sense there was a wind at our back. (John F. Kennedy School of Government, 2013, p. 219)

Romney eschewed the norms of presidential debates and was successful in keeping both Barack Obama and Jim Lehrer off balance throughout the debate. He also diminished the utility of supporting evidence for both candidates, and due to his lack of reliance on it, ended up benefiting more from this condition than the

president. These two strategies enabled Romney to control both the arguments within the debate, but the conditions under which those arguments were perceived by the viewing public.

As an enthymeme, Obamacare was useful for arguing for multiple audiences. Romney fluidly shifted between one attack and another in Denver, using the flexibility provided him by the anecdote and preventing the president from going on the offensive. Romney manipulates the ideological coordinates of the audience to create "clusters" of arguments that obviate the need for independent supporting evidence for each argument. Using particular terms in particular configurations, Romney can guide the audience toward the conclusion that the president has failed in his first term, and use the ideological content of "Obamacare" to malign other policy. While speaking of health care reform, Romney can smoothly introduce topics of taxation, states-rights, the economy, bipartisanship, public opinion, and so on. Obamacare operates as the central cluster or hub anecdote around which all other political arguments are arranged. The demands of televised debates, the format, the state of public reason, and the partisanship on both sides of the political spectrum are all conditions under which these types of ideological enthymemes operate with maximum effectiveness on television. However, they take little to no time to use in a debate, have relatively few downsides, and feed all the worst habits of the American electorate (sensationalism over substance, attack over defence, and effervescence over evidence).

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NOTE

i. All quotations from the debate were taken from the NPR transcript and audio recording of the debate.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Fine Arts As Visual Argument: Optical Argument In Discourse, Technology And Paintings*

Abstract: This essay performatively critiques seventeenth-century Dutch visual culture to offer an alternative way of understanding visual argument. The formation of optical discourse is rhetorically analyzed, and a focus is given to how the relationships among paintings, knowledge and technology are rhetorically subverted, transformed and maintained along with a pre-text of optical controversy. As visuality is historically and culturally constituted, its constitution is practiced in and by argumentative discourse of optics and technology.

Keywords: camera obscura, controversy, excess, extramission theory, iconophobia, intromission theory, Johannes Kepler, optics, retinal image, seventeenth-century Dutch visual culture.

1. *Introduction*

Recent scholarship on visual argument in the field of argumentation theory has produced some fruitful areas to explore in order to re-conceptualize the relationship between verbal texts and visual images. George Roque's argument offers a promising starting point. Roque (2010) argues that it is time for visual argumentation to self-reflect this emerging field and to start conferring a thorough definition, after having grounded a legitimacy of its scholarship by collective demonstrations of numerous cases for visual arguments ever since its incipient recognition of the field. Specifically, he points out the disciplinary problem in which the visual is singled out as a means of communication to display the contents of argument, and accordingly, in which visual aspects become considered neutral and transparent, and hence subservient to the verbal (Roque, 2010, p.1723).

The points he raised – revealing a political bias of the epistemological ground for communication technology and its praxis – show the ideological problem of current scholarship.**[i]** Indeed, the unconscious hierarchy putting the verbal over

the visual underpins the iconophobic attitudes embedded in the tradition of argumentation – that which Roque (2009) identifies as "linguistic imperialism," having borrowed the term from W. J. T. Mitchell's *Iconology*.

Following Roque's critical spirit with the proposition against this disciplinary problem – and deconstructing the field of visual argument – this essay addresses the visuality of visual argumentation, and the possibility of how to locate this visuality in the history of argument. This essay argues for an argumentative history of visual images that accounts for images in history as well as images as history. Drawing from the case of seventeenth century visual culture, this approach is different in that it seeks to demonstrate how the historian of argumentation might possibly engage the visual by examining its background in scientific controversies over optics and its technology.**[ii]**

2. *Cultural approach to the study of visual argument*
This essay approaches visual argument by extending one of the three theoretical orientations of the field classified by Bruce Gronbeck (2007). Gronbeck observes that the three theoretical orientations in current scholarship on visual argumentation approaches the visual as:

1. evidence in arguments to give us lively experience through its information gathered in our sights;
2. cultural assumptions that enthymematically justify epistemological claim of propositional contents in an inferential process; and
3. self-contained semiotic systems that operationally code signifying activity of representations within a broader realm of culture. This essay extends the third orientation of the visual, as an independent code in a semiotic system of cultural formations.**[iii]** Along with the critical approach by W. J. T. Mitchell's iconology, it offers another way of understanding visual argument when focusing on the visuality of a particular historical period.**[iv]**

As foci of this approach, the formation of discourse becomes one location of the visual. Gronbeck maintains that "visual culture inevitably reflects the dynamics of power," and is "contextualized in on-going controversies" as a way of seeing public life (Gronbeck, 2007, p.294). The relationship between verbal (argumentative) discourse and visual material is historically established as a cultural, and thus unconscious, semiotic association comprehended in a particular space and time. The discourse becomes a context, or vice versa, of the visual

through which its cultural meaning becomes recognized.

Yet, analysis of this controversy offers more than a simple verbal exchange of propositional arguments as a context of visual material. An analysis of controversy does not offer a state of mixture between verbal text and visual images, simply blurring the line between the different categories. Rather, following Mitchell's critique of iconophobia and linguistic imperialism, I intend to trace "what is at stake in the incorporation of one medium by another, [and] what values are being served by transgressions or observances of text-image boundaries" (Mitchell, 1986, p.156). A controversy does not linearly proceed by interchangeably replacing text to images or vice versa, and it shows a subtle process of transgression. The relationship of representations among paintings, knowledge and technology change along with controversies between different theories of vision. In the process of argument, the relationships are rhetorically subverted, transformed, maintained and re-delineated for the sake of visuality. The line between text and images is transgressed so that "visualization evoke whole arguments" (Gronbeck, 2007, p.294) as a site of struggle to determine what is true to be seen. For an extension of the semiotic understanding of the visual argument, this essay focuses on the cultural constitution of the visual as a historical and cultural epistemology of vision.

This essay applies such a notion of iconology to transform the relationship to be established as association in a specific cultural space that includes fine arts. Analyses on visual argument in the fine arts are limited.**[v]** I argue that the visuality of fine arts is not (and certainly should not be) taken for granted as ocular visibility innate to human physiology. Visuality is historically and culturally constituted, and I believe such constitution is conducted through argumentative discourse of optics and its technology. Visuality of a particular picture, then, could be changed in accordance with different sorts of discourse constituting how to see the world.

3. *The visuality of the seventeenth century*

Visuality in the seventeenth century is historically overdetermined by multiple layers of cultural representations. Here, the following three aspects of cultural representations are analyzed.

3.1 *Controversy about the state of lights in the optics*

Ideas about vision have been historically a controversial subject of critique among

Western theorists and philosophers as well as scientists ever since the classical Greek period. The controversy, the argumentative exchange of ideas among theorists, about the model of vision, happens around a long traditional conflict over two different modes of theory before the seventeenth century. The space of this paper, however, is limited and cannot exhaustively trace the changes in visual theory since the Greek period; rather, I would like to briefly summarize the history of the controversy, arguments and issues in two different theoretical positions.**[vi]**

The history of visual theory has witnessed frequent clashes between so called "extramission theory" and "intromission theory." In extramission theory (or emission theory), vision depends on light that streams out of the eye and by means of the beam from the eyes, detects surrounding objects. This idea originally came from pre-Socratic Alcmaeon of Croton (ca. 450 BCE), who is said to be the first to advocate the brain as the seat of sensation and cognition and to dissect parts of the visual system. He observed fire flashing in his eye as visual gleaming, presumably when he bumped his head. This idea of vision, "fire in the eye" was extended by Plato. In *Timaeus,* Plato argues that visual fire streams out of the eye and combines with daylight to form a body as an instrument for detecting visual objects:

Such fire as has the property, not of burning, but of yielding a gentle light, they [the Gods] contrived should become the proper body of each day. For the pure fire within us is akin to this, and they caused it to flow through the eyes. . . . Accordingly, whenever there is daylight round about, the visual current issues forth, like to like, and coalesces with the daylight and is formed into a single homogenous body in a direct line with the eyes, in whatever quarter the stream issuing from within strikes upon any object it encounters outside. So the whole . . . is similarly affected and passes on the motions of anything it comes in contact with . . . throughout the whole body, to the soul, and thus causes the sensation we call seeing. (Plato, Timaeus, 45b-d)

Following Plato, great mathematician, Euclid (ca. 300 BCE), in his *Optika,* developed geometric extramission theory.

Rectilinear rays proceeding from the eye diverge infinitely [and] those things are seen upon which the visual rays fall and those things are not seen upon which the visual rays do not fall . . . (Euclid, 1948, p.257)

Euclid's idea of extramission theory was further extended by Ptolemy (127-148) in combination with Galen's (129-199) work on the anatomy of the eye. Ptolemy argues that the visual rays formed a cone or bundle of lights. The Emission of light created by fire in the eye becomes a tool to search for the object, seen in the form of cone, which suggests the perspectival cone of vision.

On the other hand, intromission theory explains vision as something entering the eye from the object seen. This class of theory forms the basis of the argument among many Greek natural philosophers for vision perceived into the eye. Democritus (ca. 420) and Epicurus (ca. 341-270) are the first intromission theorists, who believed an isomorphic image (or *eidora*) streamed off of objects and entered the eye, where they were sensed. Epicurus puts it in his "Letter to Herodtus",

For particles are continually streaming off from the surface of bodies through no diminution of bodies is observed. . . . And those given off maintain their position and arrangement . . . it is by the entrance of something coming from external objects that we see shapes and think of them. (Epicurus, 1925, 10. 48-49)

A similar view was later also held by atomist poet Lucretius (ca. 60 BCE), who called the images coming from objects *simulacra*.

Aristotle develops a detailed discussion of vision in intromission theory. He rejected the atomist view for the following ground. If objects put out copies of themselves, these would be objects themselves; but this is impossible because the copies would overlap on their way to the eye and two objects cannot be in the same place at the same time. Aristotle also argues against Alcmaeon-Plato's extramission view for its inadequacy:

In general it is unreasonable to suppose that seeing occurs by something issuing from the eye; that the ray of vision reaches as far as the stars, or it goes to a certain point and there coalesces with the object as some [Plato] think. (Aristotle, De Sensu 2, 438a26-438b2)

In so arguing, Aristotle developed a complicated intromission theory. He assumed a transparent medium necessary for vision, something like the modern ether, which could be found in air and water. Light is the state of this transparent medium. According to Aristotle, the eye can sense movement in this medium, which is continuous between the object and the eye, and this movement yields

visual sensation.

The dialectic between these theories of vision originating in the Greek period frames later discussion of vision that emerge in various forms of arguments. After the death of Ptolemy and Galen, scientific inquiry shifted to Islamic centers of learning, first in Baghdad and then Cairo and Cordoba. Many Greek scientific works were translated into Arabic in the eighth century, and their achievements were actively discussed and extended in Islamic science. The nature of vision and light was of great interest for them. Among them, Al-Kindi (d. 866) defended and expanded Euclid's extramission theory. Avicenna (980-1037) assaulted extramission and reconstructed Aristotle's theories of vision. Alhazen was the most prominent figure of synthesizing the two strains in his *Book of Optics* (*De Aspectibus*), which indeed dominated physiological optics in Europe for two hundred years until Kepler.

Alhazen's contribution was to introduce a new type of intromission theory incorporating both Euclid's rays and the visual cone of Ptolemy's extramission theory. He argues that while visible objects give off light in every direction, only one ray from a visible object falls on the eye perpendicularly. Only the rays from objects that fall perpendicular to the surface of crystalline humor (our lens) are sensed. The other rays fall obliquely, and are refracted and weakened virtually to ineffectiveness. The sensitive part of the eye like the crystalline humor or lens, following Galen, responds only to the perpendicular rays, and these form a cone with the visual field as the base and the center of the eye as the vertex.

The theoretical scheme of the new intromission theory Alhazen built incorporates the geometric ideas of Euclid and Ptolemy and the anatomico-physiological ideas of Galen. Alhazen's intromission theory of vision combines elements of earlier intromission and extramission theories. His theory became "enormously influential," and the basis of most of the subsequent work in optics in Europe between thirteenth and seventeenth centuries (Lindberg, 1976, p.86). Indeed, Kepler's (1571-1630) theory of the retinal image in the reverse form (1604), which had found modern visual science, was influenced by this Alhazen's idea.

At first glance, Alhazen seems to elucidate the valid visual mechanism. On closer examination, it still holds a crucial problem in his weak explanation of the selective process of refracted light rays. Kepler offers the answer to this problem Alhazen could not resolve.

Even if Alhazen succeeded in synthesizing intromission and extramission theories, there was still a crucial deficiency of discerning lights in his theoretical scheme. Countless rays of lights emitted from the vertex of the visual cone to be presented in front of the eye, it in turn comes in while being refracted into the eye by lens of the eye. In this theory, one must hold a means to discern the appropriate ray of vision from other light rays coming to pass through the center of the lens in a set of visual cone at the vertex. For this purpose, for instance, a hypothesis that power of refracted rays of light is weaker and the eye catches the strongest ray was introduced. However, there is no way, even in this case, that the light from the vertex comes to penetrate into the eye. If vision is established by discerning one light among a myriad of lights emanating from the vertex of the cone in the liquid of vitreous humor right behind the glacial humor or the lens, it is extremely difficult to prove as a true process of human vision. As long as Alhazen is concerned, facing this significant trouble, it is almost impossible to resolve this problem.

It was Kepler who offered a solution to this problem with his knowledge of optics and anatomy of eyes. Kepler's solution was to posit a reverse retinal image to be converged through a lens. By being refracted through the lens, light rays emitted from an object converge at one point in the portion of the retina within the eye. Rays of light, considered by Alhazen as the subject of exclusion in the selection of weaker rays irrelevant to vision, have been allocated to their appropriate role and rescued in the discussion of Kepler. In this way, the retinal image was discovered. Yet, it is rather the image portrayed in the pyramid of vision; it was the inverted image of the left-right reversal. Kepler states when he discusses the establishment of the retinal image that if the picture on the retina were fixed for a moment, then the one who sees it would see a precise miniature of the hemispherical world deployed in front of the eye. He elucidates the mechanism to establish the vision with his optical idea of convergence in a reversed image. At this point, he stops analyzing the manner in which this reversed retinal image forms our natural vision. He then lefts the question to the hands of natural philosophers about how the (natural, not upside down) retinal image of the both eyes is established. This unanswered question about the reversal of retinal image opens a discursive space of modern optics after Descartes and until nineteenth century.

3.2 *Camera obscura as visual apparatus for the intromission theory*

In seventeenth Dutch paintings, lays of light held a special status as a part of its visual culture. Dutch paintings during the seventeenth century are uniquely characterized by their realistic depiction. Dutch paintings may hold a passive attitude to remain just to be seen, unlike the Italian paintings that come to speak to the audience and ask to be actively read. Unlike major paintings of the Southern Renaissance, Dutch paintings often describe what is seen as real without a narrative. For instance, one of the genres of Dutch paintings established is still life, in which images are so real that things depicted hold its verisimilitude to our eyes by the use of light and color. The real image of things on tableau is so natural to our eyes, with a bright and dark contrast of lights and beautiful colors appealing to our vision.**[vii]**

Lights (and shadows) flowing into the visible space are one of the distinctive traits of the seventeenth century Dutch paintings.**[viii]** Johannes Vermeer is also reputed for his magic with light. Jonathan Crary analyzes two pictures by Vermeer, *The Astronomer* (1668) and *The Geographer* (1668-69) as descriptions of the subjective interior:

Each of the thinkers, in a rapt stillness, ponders that crucial feature of the world, its extension, so mysteriously unlike the unextended immediacy of their own thoughts yet rendered intelligible to mind by the clarity of these representations, by their magnitudinal relations. Rather than opposed by the objects of their study, the earth and the heavens, the geographer and the astronomer engage in a common enterprise of observing aspects of a single indivisible world. Both of them (and it may well be the same man in each painting) are figures for a primal and sovereign inwardness, for the autonomous individual ego that has appropriated to itself the capacity for intellectually mastering the infinite existence of bodies in space. (Crary, 1992, pp.46-47)

Both figures show the inwardness of the individual subject who masters and observes the world. They observe the world in the room, and in the beam of light from the window, scrutinize maps, the miniatures of the world itself to represent. These rooms filled with lights are paradoxically extensions of the world into the inner space, and at the same time outer space that immediacy are evinced in the subjective mind. Light from the outside indicate one strong aspect of visuality in seventeenth century Dutch painting, and its subjective feature suggests the important knowledge to be produced in the context of visuality and the intromission theory.

One important source of this epistemological assumption to establish optical knowledge and vision can be derived from the camera obscura, the most famous visual technology in this period. The possibility that Johannes Vermeer used the camera obscura as a device to draw his paintings has been often pointed out among art historians since the nineteenth century.**[ix]** Aside from whether Vermeer actually used the camera obscura, there is no doubt that it was re-invented in the discourse of intromission theory as an optical apparatus of the seventeenth century. In the camera obscura, like the retinal image of the eyes, an image appears reversed – upside down and right-left – on the interior wall of a darkroom. As an epistemology of vision, this visual technology was a dominant metaphor through which people could comprehend vision in the seventeenth century (Crary, 1992). The important question one must ask, then, is not how painters used these optical devices, but how the images in the camera obscura were understood and received as the paradigmatic knowledge of vision in the cultural space of fine arts. This question probes the constitution of visuality in the seventeenth-century Dutch culture. What constitutes an image in camera obscura leads to the question of how images in paintings are understood against the backdrop of this optical apparatus.**[x]**

It was the fifteenth century when a camera obscura came to be utilized among artists as a device to draw a picture.**[xi]** It is said that Johannes Kepler is the first person to coin the phrase camera obscura in 1604. In 1609, he further suggested the use of a lens to improve the image projected by a camera obscura. The pictorial image in the camera obscura indeed shows a similarity with the retinal image.

Here, Svetlana Alpers' analysis on the seventeenth-century Dutch paintings in terms of visual culture merits our attention for the sake of visual argument. Alpers (1983) demonstrates that the relationship between Kepler and seventeenth-century Dutch paintings should be understood in the background of the emergence of visual culture derived from the new technology of optics. The reception of Kepler confers enormous impact on Dutch visual culture, and it merges with a latest technological development of lens. Kepler, although he lived in Vienna, was actively welcomed by the Dutch *homo fabers* and intellectuals, and became the ideological ground of visuality. His discovery that the retinal image is not a mere optical subject of anatomy and vision; it confers a new way to see the world with a new status of human eyes.

Kepler became an important figure, not merely because he was an optical theorist who resolved the issue of the direction of light, but also because he described the eyes as the most fundamental instrument of observation by an optical mechanism of a lens with focusing properties. He argues for the importance of understanding an instrument to view, which inherently holds distortions or errors. His accounts of distortions in sight come from the retinal image, which is (regarded as) by nature distorted and reversed.

However, according to Alpers, this new vision emerged out of Kepler's performative act of scrutinizing optics. He does not try to prove the epistemological correctness of vision; rather he is interested in deception or artifice of vision, which escapes from the right recognition of the world. This parallels Dutch enthusiasm on technology including lens. There are distortions in the retinal image; this fact was known – and rather than ignoring or eliminating it – Dutch painters recreated the retinal image itself in their pictures.

Vermeer's paintings, according to Alpers, are indeed extractions of an optical lens. She construes that *View of Delft* (1660/61), Vermeer's premier painting, displays a notion of artifice, and "this picture is at the meeting-place of the world seen and the world pictured" (Alpers, 1983, p.35). For instance, white dots seen in tonnage at a barge right side of the screen are similar to the residual distortion of the circular single lens produces. This pictorial painting is a site of struggle between nature and artifice.

Alpers testifies that seventeenth-century Dutch culture was in a unique ambience of "empirical interests of what is commonly referred to as the age of observation" (Alpers, 1983, p.32). In the empirical observation, confidence on technology is highly placed, and strangely enough, when lens are trusted as visual technology, this retinal distortion is also granted as a matter of fact, simply because it is the representation of the observed. We can only see the representational picture in the lens, and the lens prevents our seeing of the object. "Its images and those engendered by it [lens] take their place beside the images of art, which are also, of course, representations. The artifice of the image is embraced along with its immediacy" (Alpers, 1983, pp.32-33). Because the presence of pictorial image in and by lens is observable, it is paradoxically true with such a distortion.

This conclusion is drawn only from the epistemological assumption that "there is no escape from representation" (Alpers, 1983, p.35). This recognition – which

Michel Foucault calls the episteme of the Classical age – is taken for granted as the epistemological condition in a given culture, and hence not a problem of moral view. A picture is a representation; because of its representativeness, its image is not the real object itself, and the presence of image is possible only within the epistemological ground of the vision, which is always distorted on the concave surface of retina.**[xii]**

This epistemological ground of the distorted picture, the nature of representation independent from the human subject, crystallizes a certain series of Dutch paintings in the seventeenth-century. Distinguishing the curvilinear perspective of the Northern Renaissance from linear perspective of the Southern Italian Renaissance, Alpers understands the perspective itself creates the distortions of a pictorial image. In curvilinear perspective, the image appeared on the retina of the eye is itself spherical, while the traditional linear perspective uses straight lines. Therefore, the image gets very strangely distorted at the edges, like a picture taken by a fish eye lens, as is found in Carel Fabritius' *A View of Delft, with a Musical Instrument Vendor's Stall* (1652) and Gerard Houckgeest's *Ambulatory of the New Church in Delft with the Tomb of William the Silent* (1651). Based on the appearance of wide angle or fisheye lenses, the image showed in curved lines is projected into a flat surface of paintings and therefore seems to validate the curviness of visual space. The seventeenth-century argument was that the eye is an internally convex surface, and this must cause the curvature in lines projected onto it.

3.3 *Textual politics of intellectual discourse on the optical controversy*
Kepler's influence to the philosophical discourse was immense. As the powerful metaphor of vision, the camera obscura also offers a concrete explanation of the visuality in philosophical discourse. It is clear that the intromission theory was certainly deployed in extending Kepler, when we see a figure in Descartes' *Dioptric.* In the illustration of his theory of the retinal image, Descartes succeeds Kepler and incorporates the idea of the retinal image where lights coming from the outside converge on the eyeground in crossing through the lens. The retinal image in a reverse form of picture is seen by the person in a dark space behind the retina, whose location is analogically the dark room of the camera obscura, a dark room of its inward separated from the outside filled with lights.

Kepler's discovery of the retinal image was indeed a statement of the intromission theory, and this statement then became a site of struggle to form a discourse of

optics.

Yet, Kepler's influence to a discursive formation of optics is not a simple effect of his reception and succession of his ideas in the scheme of the intromission theory. It rather produced unintended consequences from his discussion of the retinal image or *pictura.* It is easy to understand that the metaphor of camera obscura had become dominated against the backdrop of the victory of the intromission theory over the emission theory, and explained the reverse picture of the back wall by the inflow of light into a darkroom as its mechanism. However, this metaphor with a tacit cultural knowledge of lights on the intromission produces an excess of its own precisely because it backgrounds the controversy as a discursive formation.

Since Kepler's intromission theory was granted legitimacy as a scientific account by anatomy and physiology, the argumentative battle between the theories of intromission and extramission was theoretically and physiologically resolved. But, at the same time, because of this resolution, the emission theory become foreclosed, and produced as an excess of the truth, i.e., intromission theory. The counter position in the controversy taken by the extramission theory then becomes an excess of intromission, and creates a space of agency wherein a new way of thinking about vision can be produced.

The foreclosure indicated by this resolution produces a new discursive formation of vision, and makes a shift of discourse to a space of philosophical (or metaphysical) discussion of vision, while the extramission theory retreats from the academic issues in optics. Catherine Wilson (1999) points out a strange revival of emission theory as a matter of mind that is capable of observation. As she states:

One accomplishment of this [Kepler's] portrayal of perception as a passive rather than an active process is that, in epistemological discourse, an active mind or intellectual faculty takes up many of the metaphors with which vision was formerly dressed. The mind rather than eye is portrayed as a searchlight, a source of illumination, which can be turned and held steadily on material, which is thereby made perspicuous. (Wilson, 1999, p.129)

Scientifically understanding the mechanism of the eyes, philosophers cannot help but posit the subject/mind that emits lights, with a metaphor of searchlight.

Although the structure of eyes, isolated from the body, forecloses the emission theory, that theory constitutes a new discursive formation under the topic of subject and mind.

In reading Descartes' *Rules for the Direction of the Mind*, Wilson specifically points out the paradox that the mind becomes active in contradistinction to the passive eye. As Wilson points out, "if the vision of the eye is passive, that of the mind is active" (Wilson, 1999, p.129). In so saying, Descartes posits the mind as active subject and a source of vision. Wilson subsequently quotes the following Descartes: "The whole method consists entirely in ordering and arranging the objects on which we must concentrate our mind's eye if we are to discover some truth" (Wilson, 1999, p.129). This mind's eye, achieved by philosophical training, holds a faculty to connect one segment of perception to another in a long chain of being, when one sees the link by an intellectual mastery of inference.**[xiii]**

Human eyes eventually become an instrument of the mind as an active subject with a rational frame of geometry. The active subject becomes a source of light emitted through eyes to search for the object within a geometrical matrix of the perspective seen from the top of visual cone.**[xiv]** A gaze of mind, a source of light coming out of eyes, paradoxically holds power to observe with the means of geometric frame set in the eyes. At this stage, the camera obscura took the same structure of preceding the visual model of emission theory in the form of perspective, and at the same time all visual information (or rays of lights) are converged on the retinal image that establishes a visual field projecting a reversed picture.**[xv]** After all, the metaphor of the emission of light as a beam survived in philosophical discourse.**[xvi]**

4. *Conclusion*

I have analyzed visuality of the seventeenth-century by means of the controversy as a pre-text of argument. In this analysis, I tried to illuminate how the forms of painting argue performatively. The form itself argues in a pre-text of controversy of optics, when the visual merges with text. In the controversy, the relationships among paintings, knowledge and technology are rhetorically subverted, transformed, maintained and delineated. Visuality is constituted in such a controversy, and argumentation theory can contribute to reveal such a process.

NOTES

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i. This problem holds two disadvantages, at least, for our present theorization of visual argumentation. First, it is an ideological problem that makes visual argumentation scholars difficult to understand the nature and functions of the visual itself. The visual is so taken for granted that it is always regarded from the view of verbal structure. Visual arguments are acknowledged only as an imitation of verbal arguments, and may or may not be identified as different phenomena with the same verbal (and propositional) structure. Second, observing the visual as noticeably modern phenomena, one fails to recognize the historicity of visuality that predates modern technology. Even before the modern invention of visual technology, visual materials like pictorial paintings along with the knowledge of optics must have been subjects of inquiry for human vision in the epistemological culture of ocularcentrism or "scopic regime" (Jay, 1991). Over emphasizing the modern innovation of visual technology ignores the historicity of pre-modern vision that were supposed to be constituted by the epistemological arguments and controversy manifesting the epistemological bias toward the visuality at that time.

ii. The problem of current scholarship is ideologically found as the essentialism of argumentation over and against visual argument. This essentialism easily manifests when visual argument is defined as a product—a proper noun, if you will—that names a category of argumentative discourse that relies on something other than words or text for the construction of its meaning. Many works that call "visual argument" collapse the idea of "visual" into "image," framing visual argument as a genre category. Subsequently, visual argument is always destined to be visual argument, while verbal argument, often with a propositional message by verbal texts, gets to be just argument. This shows the unconscious hierarchy between the verbal and the visual that discourages an analysis of the visual all along, privileging texts over the visual. In this iconophobic dominance of the text over the visual, visual argument becomes forever subordinate to the traditional artifacts of verbal argument. This is precisely the essentialism of verbal argumentation, and hence its subjection to ideological critique—yet, for my part, in the different way to critique it apart from the practice of traditional argumentation.

iii. Unlike the current efforts in visual argumentation that analyze different forms of argument in visual objects and material, here, instead of conceptualizing visual argument as product, I would like to consider it a "project of inquiry," (Finnegan,

2004b, p.235) defined as a critical and theoretical orientation that makes issues of visuality relevant to argumentation theory. I borrow the idea of visual argument as a project of inquiry from the current effort of visual rhetoric by Finnegan (2004a, 2004b) who advances the field along with Mitchell's iconology and Barbara Stafford's (1996, 1998, 2001) "imagism," which attempts to articulate different categories by means of rhetorical analogy. The critique of iconophobia is not a simple task that easily counters essentialism as a false idea. Rather, it should be performatively conducted in and as scholar's project to self-reflexively critically inquire one's historicity of the present ideology and doxa. As a project of critical inquiry, a visual argument can be considered an effort to urge us to explore our understandings of visual culture in light of the question of argumentation theory, and encourage us to reflexively (re-)examine own aspects of argumentation theory.

iv. Against the iconophobia and the subsequent ideology of linguistic imperialism within the field of argumentation, Roque (2009) refutes its propositions one by one. Whereas the critique of linguistic imperialism is significant, critiquing it by means of verbal refutation, which is highly regarded as the traditional means of argumentation, in turn performatively endorses the linguistic imperialism.

v. Two exceptions are Groark's (1996) analysis of fine arts and Blair's (1996) sharp contrast of fine arts to contemporary mixed media like magazines. While Groark's analysis of fine arts as a visual form of argument, along with the messages transmitted by painters as propositional contents may be valuable within a traditional understanding of fine arts as a manifestation of narratives and anecdotes, this essay instead avoids analysis of visual contents and sidesteps the analyses of narrative as argument embedded in art works.

vi. This summary of the history of optics and visual theories is based upon David Lindberg's Theories of Vision from Al-Kindi to Kepler (1976).

vii. For example, Pieter Claes' painting of Still Life (1634) illustrates a silver drinking cup, a goblet of wine and a cup with a lid along with plates with a peeled lemon. Light from the top illuminates those objects, and are shining in the water. The light comes into the frame of the canvas, emphasizing the wall behind the objects, which separates the illuminated interior from exterior world. This separation is more noticeable in vanitas paintings such as Willem Claes Heda and Jan Davidszoon de Heem.

viii. Rembrandt's fame is highly regarded for his mastery of light from the top to dramatize the pictorial scene with a moment of light, typically seen in his A Man Seated Reading at a Table in a Lofty Room (1628-1630).

ix. One of the most comprehensive analyses of Vermeer's possible use of this visual device is Philip Steadman's Vermeer's Camera (2002).

x. Technologically speaking, the history of camera obscura starts from Aristotle, who referred to the notion of pinhole projection around 330 BC, and to Alhazen, who presumably invented the optical device, or pinhole camera, around 1000 AD. In the thirteenth century, Roger Bacon observed the phenomena of an eclipse with a camera obscura. His figure is said to be the first illustration of its mechanism in the human history.

xi. Leonardo da Vinci, for instance, depicted a camera obscura in Atlantico Manuscript (Codex Atlanticus). Giovanni Battista della Porta, Neapolitan savant, often identified as one of its inventors, in Magia Naturalis or Natural Magic of 1558 explains the use of a concave speculum to insure that the projected image is not inverted on the wall. In the second edition of 1589, he details how a concave lens can be placed in the aperture of the camera to produce a finer image. Lens and mirrors were often used in camera obscura in the sixteenth century, and the development of a portable camera obscura was also started. By the seventeenth century, the precision of lenses had remarkably progressed such that optical devices like the telescope and microscope could be invented.

xii. Wilson (1999) points out the contradictory attitude of rationalists in metaphysics toward the camera obscura metaphor. She argues that rationalist philosophers like Descartes, Lock, Malebranche, and Libniz "believe that the sensory world we experience is wholly different from the mental world that gives rise to it, our perceptions do not mirror nature at all. The visual mechanisms, processes, and results are explicitly held by seventeenth-century theorists of the visual who reject visual species theory to be disanalogous to this kind of copying from exterior to interior" (Wilson, 1999, p.122).

xiii. This mind's eye also leads to the ideas of human wisdom seen in such a metaphor of sunrise (Wilson, 1999, p.129).

xiv. By viewing the eye as the most basic instrument of observation, Kepler isolates human eyes from a site of vision and its mind or psychological aspects. Alpers' (1983) argument for this isolation comes from his trust of visual technology and the optical lens that distorts site of vision can be eventually understood within this new discursive formation of the subject as the source of searchlight. Kepler stops arguing no further than the mechanism of eyes: "I leave it to natural philosophers to discuss the way in which this image on picture [pictura] is put together by the spiritual principles of vision residing in the retina and in the nerves, and whether it is made to appear before the soul or tribunal of

the faculty of vision by a spirit within the cerebral cavities, or the faculty of vision. . . (qtd. Alpers, 1983, p.36). The space of question to inquire how the retinal image is viewed remains unanswered by Kepler and then this open space is filled with arguments by philosophers. By stopping the inquiry, Kepler himself opens to discuss the way in which image is put together in retina and leaves it to the question for human spirit of vision. The discursive space Kepler opened for discussion behind his conclusion of the intromission theory engenders another argument to solve the problem of distrusted perception and sensation. Alpers thus concludes: "It was the power of Kepler's invention, then, to split apart the hitherto unified human field. His strategy was to separate the physical problem of the formation of retinal images (the world seen) from the psychological problems of perception and sensation. The study of optics so defined starts with the eye receiving the light and ceases with the formation of the picture on the retina. What happens before and after—how the picture so formed, upside down and reversed, was perceived by the observer—troubled Kepler but was of no concern to him" (Alpers, 1983, pp.35-36).

xv. The metaphor of emission theory crystallizes in the apparatus of the magic lantern. In extramission theory, the idea of emission, lights coming out of the eyes, is in tandem with a projection of a beam, leading toward the object to be seen, and reaching beyond the screen of what can be seen as the virtual space of gazing back from the behind. This visual excess is more than a simple reversal of lights flowing in the intromission theory. The light beams are rather supposed to be emissions from a magic lantern, which exceeds supposedly the original picture in retina, emissions coming out of the projection apparatus of magic lantern. With emissions of light, an excess of intromission, molded in the optical structure of camera obscura, projects a slide on a flat screen or smoke in a dark room by magic lantern. It is not an accident that the description of which camera obscura should be used as a projection apparatus in setting up a candle inside of the device is given by della Porta, and the topic of this book, the most famous book that describes the uses of camera obscura, is Magia Naturalis or Natural Magic (1558).

xvi. The metaphor of emission, light stemming out of the eye, has still persisted in our beliefs about the evil eye and the power of the love's gaze (Gross, 1999). The famous ads of the 1997 negative campaign against Tony Blair by the Conservative Party used a picture of him, replacing his eyes a pair of demon eyes with a caption of "New Labor, New Danger." This picture is precisely embedded in the metaphor of the emission theory and comes to be a proof of the persistence power

of this discourse.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – A Strategic Maneuvering Analysis Of The Japan's First Internet Election In 2013

Abstract: In 2013, Japan experienced its first Internet election campaign in history. This essay attempts to analyze political moves in the campaign within the framework of strategic maneuvering developed by Frans H. van Eemeren. Different approaches were found between major and minor parties. An opposition party increased its seats with the effective use of the Internet. With the analysis, the authors hope to indicate the future direction of the Internet election of Japan.

Keywords: Internet Election Campaign, Japanese Political Parties, Strategic

Maneuvering

1. *Introduction*

This essay is aimed at clarifying the strategic maneuvers provided by the ruling coalition parties and by a minor one in the 2013 Japanese Upper House election from the pragma-dialectical perspective. In the year's summer Japan experienced its first Internet election campaign in history, which was designed to provide a new form of argumentation. Until then, the previous versions of Public Offices Election Act had restricted the use of web tools in elections. But with blogs and social networking services (SNS), such as Facebook, LINE and Twitter permeating as convenient communication media among individuals, the prohibition of online election campaign became apparently obsolete.

Originally, the election Act had limited the amount of printed materials available for each candidate to call for support in consideration for fairness of public relations chance. Thus the original purpose of this restriction was designed for fairness against the freedom of expression. Needless to say, it is significant to reconcile both values. There is no wonder that the Internet campaigning on one hand would contribute to the freedom of expression with its accessibility, but on the other hand would raise the necessity to carefully design rules to deter false information or fallacious argument from erupting to confuse the electorate. The less restrictive the rule becomes, the more rhetorical argument would be. In such a case argumentative moves likely derail from the rules of critical discussion in "the pragma-dialectical" sense (Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004).

In the tension between fairness and freedom of expression, how strategically did political parties and candidates maneuver their argumentative moves? How did the new Internet platform help to deter fallacious arguments or suppress sound arguments? In answer to these questions, this essay attempts to analyze political moves in the campaign within the framework of strategic maneuvering developed by Frans H. van Eemeren (Eemeren, 2010). Specifically, it intends to do the following: (1) examining argumentative approaches by the involved parties, and (2) evaluating the reconstructed argumentative moves with theoretically possible moves.

2. *Context*

In 2010, moves toward lifting of restrictions on the Internet use for election faded out on the verge of realization in the midst of political confusion on the

resignation of then Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama (Motomiya, 2012). The former bill at that time had not included currently available online tools such as Facebook, LINE, Twitter, blogs, and the like (Kiyohara and Maeshima, 2013). In 2012, the movement for Internet election campaigns rekindled over online and real forums joined by citizens, intellectuals, and politicians with the next general election upcoming. Yet, this move was in the process of finalization when the Lower House election was held in December 2012. Under the conventional election rule, the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) led by Shinzo Abe came back to power. As soon as being chosen Prime Minister in the Diet, Abe revealed his intention to liberalize the use of the Internet ('Netto-senkyo' rainen-no, 2012). Not only the LDP but also other parties agreed with the idea of opening online campaigning.

Eventually, on April 19, 2013, Public Offices Election Act was revised to liberalize the Internet election campaigning. But there were still some restrictions as only parties and candidates were allowed to send emails to enlist voters' support for fear of impersonation, while there was no limitation on campaigns to blackball election candidates (Kiyohara and Maeshima, 2013). In this new framework, the official campaign season of the Upper House election began on July 4 and ended one day before the election day, July 21. For the 17 days, different approaches were found between major and minor parties. For example, the ruling coalition parties the LDP and New Komeito held different views on various issues, such as revision of the Constitution. But they jointly devised an agreeable standpoint. On the other hand, one of the opposition parties, the Japan Communist Party began with target audience and topics. Among these approaches were there some tactics which made contributions to the election winning, although the use of the Internet seemingly did not raise the voting rate, which was 52.61%, dropped 5.31% from the previous election, the 3rd lowest under the postwar political system (Saninsen tohyoritsu 52.61%, 2013). Besides, only 10.2% referred to online information on the election according to an exit survey conducted by Kyodo News (Netto-senkyo yukensha hiyayaka, 2013).

The National Diet of Japan is bicameral, consisting of the Upper House and the Lower House. It is the Lower House that is superior in designation of Prime Minister who is authorized to appoint Cabinet ministers. The total number of the seats in the Upper House is 242, half of which become at stake in the voting every three years. In summer 2013 held was an Upper House election in which the 121

seats close to the expiration of six-year term were contested. Seven months earlier, the LDP and New Komeito had beaten the then-dominant Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) by a wide margin, forming a coalition government. With this momentum, the ruling coalition parties aimed to increase their seats to dislodge the DPJ again from the dominant position in the Upper House. In fact, the LDP gained 65 seats up from pre-election 34, and New Komeito gained 11 seats on target. The joint parties won the majority with the total 135 seats including uncontested 59 seats (Saninsen 2013 tokusyu, 2013), thus dominating both Houses.

Behind the ruling's victorious campaigns, minor candidates targeted a particular group of voters who were discontent with the major parties' mitigation approach. In the Tokyo constituency of five seats, two fresh candidates beat incumbents. One was former actor Taro Yamamoto, ranked the 4rth, who was the only new independent elected in the nation-wide. The other in the Tokyo district was the 3rd ranked victory of Yoshiko Kira young female candidate from the Communist Party, which became the party's first seat of the district in the past 12 years. Including Kira's seat, the Communist Party as a whole nearly doubled its seats from 6 to 11 (Saninsen 2013 tokusyu, 2013). These two first-time candidates, independent Yamamoto and Communist Kira newly attracted a support base in their election campaigns especially with effective Internet strategic maneuvers.

3. *Theory*

The institutional point of political communication is to contribute to democracy in general. Deliberation is a conventionally diversified genre of interactional activity in which the participants are motivated to critically examine the acceptability of a standpoint. Communicative activity types as the genre of deliberation in the domain of political argumentation provide wide varieties of opportunities for "collective decision-making for the public good" (Zarefsky, 2009, p. 115). Specifically, election should serve to deepen our knowledge and discussion about social issues in order to eventually make a public decision through a legitimate resolution process of different opinions.

Domains of communicative activity: political communication
Genres of communicative activity: deliberation
Communicative activity types [Concrete speech events]:
– Presidential debate [1960 Nixon-Kennedy television debate],
– General debate in parliament,

– Prime Minister’s question time,
– *Election campaign [2013 Election Campaign for Upper House of Japan]*
(Eemeren, 2010, p. 139; *Italics* added)

In the principle of popular representation, however, the critical testing procedure of standpoints becomes complex since in many types of speech events interaction between protagonists and antagonists are exposed to the public through various media. Thus with the Internet use, the intertextuality of argumentative moves becomes even more complex because reconstruction of argumentative moves fragmented over the Internet media is painstaking. On the other hand, the difficulty of reconstructing argumentation simultaneously proves worthy of pragma-dialectical approach because the election otherwise would be considered dependently from the rhetorical perspective in the narrow sense and thus lack the institutional point to serve democracy. Also, it should be noted that there is a limitation on this study as critics’ reconstruction of arguments is not fully reflected by the reality of what has happened, but instead focuses on the argumentative aspects.

Therefore, challenging is application of the pragma-dialectical approach to the Internet election campaign. The Internet tools provide nonverbal message such as audio/visual information so that online verbal information can be extensive in meaning. It is difficult to convert all nonverbal arguments into verbal ones for pragma-dialectical analysis. That is why it is difficult to reconstruct Internet-based argumentative moves in a verbal diagram, or logic tree which suffices to cover the condition of analysis. To counter possible criticism of picky reconstruction, there are two justifications. First, it is significant to extract verbal messages to form a corresponding logic tree for the purpose of synchronically and diachronically checking consistency of arguments. This verbal analysis would pressure discussants from excessively pursuing effectiveness so that they are expected to be fair in the online platform. The other is that pragma-dialectical analysis functions as critical theory. Its evaluation compares reconstructed argumentation either with the normative rules for critical discussion or with rhetorical techniques for effective persuasion (Eemeren, 2010). As far as pragma-dialectical analysis serves to find points of derailment from any of the critical rules in a way that the findings otherwise would be unnoticed, such a research project is worthy of academic attention even though the reconstruction is not sufficiently expositive for the broad discourse.

On this point, it should be noted that any actual speech act cannot be perfectly free from fallaciousness if normative discussion rules are rigidly applied in a dialectical sense. Therefore, it is important for the rules to "specify in which cases the performance of certain speech acts contribute to the resolution of the difference of opinion" (Eemeren and Grootendorst, 2004, p. 135) with the assumption that there are some cases the principle of argumentation cannot be applied to. Ideally, a pragma-dialectical analysis should serve to improve a derailed case toward the normative rules of critical discussion, although it falls short by nature. In this sense, "to improve" does not mean absolute solution, but instead the concept of reasonableness in pragma-dialectical approach is expected to realize a better one. Also, it is necessary to understand the quality of fallaciousness not as 'all or nothing' in terms of its presence, but as linear in terms of its significance. In short, the tolerability of fallaciousness in pragma-dialectical evaluation depends on context or activity type. It is thus possible that the same type of move could be admissible in a commercial domain but could be fallacious in a legal one. This is exactly what strategic maneuvering approach should take into consideration.

The aspects of the strategic maneuvering in the election campaign as an activity type of political communication requires discussants to be reasonable and effective (Eemeren, 2010). In light of the institutional point of political communication, being reasonable as a protagonist in an election campaign means that argumentation should be clear for the audience to critically examine for the public opinion forming and decision-making from the dialectical perspective. A candidate should clearly present the topical content and the supporting reasoning in a recognizably hierarchically ordered form so that a wide range of the audience can understand as well as critically look at the logical relation of standpoints and supporting materials. From the rhetorical point of view, a protagonist aims to be effective by exemplifying the arguments in an optimally plausible manner so that the candidate or the party can win trust and vote.

On the other hand, an antagonist in the campaign needs to be reasonable by making criticisms to relevantly test the protagonist's logical relation of standpoints and supporting materials so that argumentation to resolve a difference of opinion in a target topic will lead to a better course of action. Yet, in an election, the primary concern of candidates is to gain votes. From the rhetorical perspective, an antagonist aims to be effective to cast doubts on every

aspect of the protagonist's standpoints and arguments as much as possible. Doing so might function to hurt the credibility of rival candidates and increase the possibility of one's own winning in the voting.

4. *Analysis*
This section is twofold. First, argumentative moves of the ruling coalition parties are reconstructed into a diagram and, second, those of the Japanese Communist Party one of the opposition parties are examined in the same manner but with more focus on its Internet use.

The coalition parties went by an orthodox approach. The LDP focused on economic policy, emphasizing positive impacts of an unprecedented economic package coined "Abenomics." In the manifesto of the LDP, the party leader Abe declares the following:

Last December we faced the challenge of "taking back Japan." It is a battle to take back Japan as "growing," "strongly recovering," and "protecting its territorial land, sea, air." For the first six months of the current government, the bold and unprecedented economic package "three arrows" drastically changed dark and gloomy atmosphere over Japan. […] "Politics of decision" gradually made LDP's pledges certain to result. Yet there is much work to do in economy, education, reconstruction, livelihood, diplomacy and security. Rectifying "the twisted Diet" will realize "political stabilization." Therefore, we cannot lose. Japan has eventually woken to a new dawn. Let us regain our confidence and Japanese pride now. Let us join forces to renew Japan. (Sangiin senkyo koyaku 2013, 2013; translated by author)

New Komeito declares "Stability is hope" for the election (Saninsen juten seisaku). It is stated in the party's pledges that Japan needs political stabilization which could be achieved by rectifying the twisted Diet in which the Upper and Lower houses were controlled by opposing parties. The resolution will make the following possible:

(1) to speedily resolve the problems facing Japan;
(2) to powerfully promote the recovery of national powers, such as economic and diplomatic powers;
(3) to improve people's lives into comfortable and reliable ones, enabling each citizen to feel hopeful about the future. (Saninsen juten seisaku, translated by

author)

In general, it is an all-too-common attitude to insist that political stabilization is important to swiftly tackle urgent issues. Particularly in this argumentative move, however, political stabilization is depicted as equal to the resolution of the divided Diet, which is presented as the main cause of social problems. This abstraction functions to evade careful observation of actual problems of future Japan and major differences of the ruling bloc the LDP and New Komeito. In topical selection, New Komeito together with the LDP rhetorically established the standpoint that Japan should resolve the twisted Diet as the foundation on which they could base further argument without discussing significant issues in dialectical terms. Strategic avoidance of an important issue is apparent in the attitudes of major parties on the issue of social welfare.

The LDP, New Komeito and the DPJ's pledges do not mention an increase in the financial burden of health care on senior citizens, a decrease in pension benefits, the raising of the pensionable age or other proposals that would be disadvantageous to elderly voters. ("Editorial: Parties failed" 2013)

Thus, they avoided offering difficult opinions to the elderly, the main electoral segment and, instead, simplified the cause of the problems as the coalition's limited number of seats in the Upper House. If the main cause of any social problems were the twisted Diet, then it would be the only solution that the LDP-New Komeito bloc wins the majority in the Upper House since the Lower was dominated by the joint parties. This would sound convincing when people felt highly frustrated with the previous government's inability to make a timely political decision. The following is a logic tree of the coalition parties' main standpoint.

Standpoint: *The twisted Diet should be rectified to stabilize politics.*

1. Argument: The twisted Diet is undesirable for its inability to make effective political decisions.
2.1 Unexpressed Premise: Japan needs speedy political decision-making to cope with difficult economic condition.
2.2 Argument: The coalition parties are capable of providing effective economic policies.
3. Unexpressed Premise: Economy which needs speedy political decision-making

is the top priority now.

The ruling coalition parties, the LDP and New Komeito, succeeded in rhetorically creating a common ground to appeal to the public although they had conflicting policies which should have been dialectically examined. The common ground was to rectify "the twisted Diet," in which the coalition parties had been dominant in the Lower House while not in the Upper House. To begin with, the word "twisted" has connotation that it needs to be fixed. In reality, the coalition parties emphasized the twisted condition as the main cause of the problems of Japanese society. In the coalition's manifestos, because of the twisted condition, Japan cannot implement even necessary policies at the right timing. Thus, the coalition parties aimed to make the public focus on the correction of the twisted Diet.

Presenting the issue of rectifying the twisted Diet at the higher level of abstraction is highly rhetorical. If one agreed with the abstracted issue, there was no other way but to vote for either the LDP or New Komeito as mentioned earlier. In the past seven months of the current coalition government since regaining power in the last Lower House election, the power-shared government provided bold and unprecedented economic package, which was favorably perceived in the general public.

From the dialectical perspective, the argumentation derailed from the Rule 10 (Eemeren, 2010). The argumentation abstracted the detailed issues into one simplified issue. According to the pragma-dialectical rules for critical discussion, this is fallacious because the argumentative formation is unclear for its institutional point of the election campaign.

Next, the Japanese Communist Party is focused. The Communist Party set off a total confrontation with the LDP. The Party's standpoint was that in this election the confrontation between the LDP and the Communist Party was the true confrontational axis (2013nen saninsenkyo seisaku). This was the continuation of what the JCP had aggressively campaigned. Thus, the JCP had formed a revolutionary image. But the difference lied in the JCP's attitude. Yoshiko Kira, often referred to as young female in the media was a very symbolic candidate of the Japan Communist Party that targeted at the electorate who felt discontent with the dominant LDP's policies. The JCP developed a soft attitude by positioning Kira in the party's leading figure in order to grant adherence by the general public. The following is a logic tree of the JCP's main standpoint.

Standpoint: *The true confrontational axis is the battle between the LDP and the Japan Communist Party*

1.1 Reckless Abe's regime is dangerously fraying at the edges toward collapse.
1.1.a The LDP's time has expired and its politics is getting rotten at base
1.1.b The LDP's three distortions are "centering around the business community," "mindlessly following the United States" and "turning back the tide of history."
1.2 The Japan Communist Party is the only party that can remove these distortions with a scalpel.

As for audience adaption, the J-Communist Party focused on widely sympathetic issues. In this way, the J-communist Party adopted strategic maneuvers to be effective for vote-getting. The JCP could have committed to communist ideology that denied the current economic and social security system. Instead, the conforming Communist Party emphasized two issues. One is criticism against black companies. The other is anti-nuclear energy. These issues gained a great deal of attention in the Internet as well as traditional media. In her Facebook page, young communist Kira frequently updated her activities so that visitors can access new and previous information about her campaign (Yoshiko Kira Official Facebook). In this page where movies are viewable, it is easy to find candidate Kira's commitment to anti-nuclear and anti-black company activities. These two issues are opposed to the LDP's economic policy, aimed to appeal to the young electorate who were not able to receive concrete benefit from the current economic policy. Naming of "black company" is intended to criticize a company that exploits the young people with low salary for long hours.

Dialectically, the argumentative fallaciousness did not exceed the tolerability in the context. In the first place, shedding the revolutionary image might function as diverting the public attention from the party's other policies. But consistently the JCP clarified its stance on 46 detailed topics covering the general policy areas in its webpage (2013nen saninsenkyo seisaku) so that more concerned viewers can selectively access them.

5. *Conclusion*
Pragma-dialectical reconstruction of the argumentation is useful to clarify strategic maneuvers in the election argumentative discourse. The Internet use in the election can function as delineating detailed issues to serve the dialectical institutional point of critical policy examination, while it also provides rhetorical

opportunities to create one's new image as in the case of the young communist Kira's fresh one.

Positive aspects of the Internet campaign include the creation of public space in which participants can get relevant information as well as expressing their opinions. In fact, citizens with strong awareness on a particular issue such as the Constitution amendment, energy policy, economic policy, social welfare, or the like can easily compare political parties' and candidates' opinion or stance on the issues. Citizens can be active in the virtual that is related to the reality through the voting.

However, there is much room of the Internet potential to be cultivated. It is the 3rd lowest voting rate in the postwar Upper House election that shows ineffectiveness in terms of the general public's consciousness-raising toward politics. With the technical use of the Internet, political parties and politicians can respond not only to the existing issues but also find possibly interest-attracting issues to bring more people to the public forum. Citizens are not just consumers of information, but can be participants of argumentative interaction. In this regard, the strategic maneuvering perspective is one of the keys to develop the better framework of the Internet election campaign for the future.

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ISSA Proceedings 2014 – Political Argument And The Affective Relations Of Democracy: Recovering Vaclav Havel’s Theory

Of Associated Living

Abstract: This essay approaches Vaclav Havel's first and second presidential addresses as artifacts of democratization theory. We propose that Havel's speeches contribute to an affective theory of argumentation that can capture the lived, immersive quality of political phenomena such as the collective emotional experience of the post-communist transition. Specifically, we suggest that Havel's observations illustrate the function of arguments as attuning devices that connect, orient, and sometimes disconnect subjects within the affective atmospheres of common life.

Keywords: affect, affective atmosphere, democratization, post-communism

1. *Introduction*

Post-communism was more than a period of political and economic transformation. It was also an emotional period of hope, uncertainty and affective dislocation. It was not unusual early on for observers to claim that the post-communist transitions in Eastern Europe brought forth an "identity in crisis" or even an "existential revolution" (Matustik, 1993, p. 187). On both sides of the crumbling Berlin wall there was a tendency to imagine the impact of the political and social developments in the region in dramatic emotional terms. Suddenly everyone was "dizzy with democracy" (Jowitt, 1996). In his first presidential address in former Czechoslovakia, capturing the sudden and seemingly inexplicable shift in the public mood, Vaclav Havel referred to the last six weeks of the country's peaceful revolution as evidence that "society is a very mysterious creature" (par. 10). He also wondered about the atmospheric forces that seemingly overnight reconstituted the fabric of society: "Where did the young people who never knew another system get their desire for truth, their love of free thought, their political ideas, their civic culture and civic prudence? How did it happen that their parents – the very generation that had been considered lost – joined them? How is it that so many people immediately knew what to do and none needed any advice or instruction?" (par.10).

We take Havel's questions as a point of departure into a theoretical conundrum that has haunted argumentation theory for centuries. Namely, we inquire into the role that public arguments play in creating what we can call collective feeling or affect. Right away we face a certain terminological obstacle: We certainly have a

range of concepts – emotion, feeling, sentiment, pathos, affect – that could potentially help us unravel this phenomenon of mass scale, where people who were strangers to each other, often disconnected in a physical as well as socio-cultural sense, could nonetheless experience a range of emotions collectively. However, each of these terms brings along theoretical legacies and trajectories that are often at odds with each other and they frequently fail to grasp or tend to ignore the political character and potential of the embodied, spatial dimensions of collective emotional experiences. And so, after a brief foray into the available theoretical perspectives on the affective social dimensions of argument, we turn our attention to Vaclav Havel's first and second presidential addresses, which we approach as artifacts of democratization theory. We propose that Havel's speeches contribute to an affective theory of argumentation that can capture the lived, immersive quality of political phenomena such as the collective emotional experience of the post-communist transition. Specifically, we suggest that Havel's observations illustrate the function of arguments as *attuning devices* that connect, orient, and sometimes disconnect subjects within the "affective atmospheres" (Anderson, 2009; Stewart, 2011; Rickert, 2013) of common life.

2. *The place of emotion in argumentation theory*

Argumentation theory has long been a bit ambivalent on the subject of feeling, even if a large and diverse literature has been dedicated to it. Recently Raphael Micheli (2010) noted the somewhat irreconcilable historical division between normative and descriptive approaches to emotional appeals, leading him to suggest that emotion appears as "the poor relation of argumentation studies" (p. 1). This "second class" status of emotion is rooted simultaneously in normative theories' preference for rational and reasonable argumentation, an issue that has been widely discussed and often condemned (McGee, 1998), and in descriptive theories' minimization of emotional appeals' role as either add-on strategies that can still be evaluated through formal standards of reasonableness (Manolescu, 2006) or as what Micheli refers to as "adjuvants" or enhancers of argumentation.

In either tradition emotion figures simply as a feature of arguments, rarely as a social or material dimension of discourse. Yet, when emotional appeals are "flattened" into text, argumentation theory ceases to behave as a social theory. Contexts become epiphenomenal to argumentative practice, discourse becomes disembodied, and the capacity of arguments to bring along political structuration is left undefined and unexplained. Furthermore, the place of emotion becomes a

subject of debate. Is emotion a feature of speakers? Is it a feature of language itself? Or is it a latent capacity in people that we expect arguments to awaken? These questions not only put at odds humanistic with postmodern theories, and these days, we would add, neo-materialist, neurobiological theories of affect; they also seem to strain the borders of argumentation studies. As our various subfields develop their own tools and theoretical models, ironically, our capacity to capture the "worlding" (to borrow Heidegger's 1962 term) function of argumentation is diminished. Rhetorical models, abandoning Aristotle's roots, often rely on instrumental models of emotional argumentation with forceful appeals and passive audiences. While pragma-dialectics, with its focus on the formal features of discourse, often loses sight of the humans altogether.

Against this complicated background, we still would like to reclaim argumentation theory as a social theory proper, albeit we do so in an emergent model, heeding Heidegger's (1962) reminder that Aristotle's study of "the different modes of state-of-mind and the ways in which they are interconnected… must be taken as the first systematic hermeneutic of the everydayness of Being with one another" (p. 178). As Greene (1993) has pointed out, "the subjectivity of social actors is constituted by argumentative practices" (p. 124). Moreover, argumentation forges the social "relations of coexistence" (Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969, pp. 293-331). Not the least, as Keremidchieva (2014, p. 60) has argued, along with their media platforms, arguments work as agents of institutional contextualization, thus materializing the structures, routines, and horizons of social organization. To appreciate arguments in an emergent manner, in other words, is to recognize their role in assembling the social, the individual, and the material realm. In this vein, to the extent that they are an inevitable dimension of argumentative practice, it makes sense to think of emotions too as interstitial, social phenomena that emerge at the intersection of arguments, audiences, and material conditions. Or, as Rickert (2013) points out, "rhetoric impacts the senses, circulates in waves of affect, and communes to join and disjoin people. It gathers and is gathered by things not as a denial of the social but as an essential complement to it" (p. x).

Our desire to re-examine the role that arguments played in constituting the affective dimensions of the post-communist transition is motivated by our own recollections of the common emotional intensity of those times as well as by the uncanny degree to which Havel's remarks are in tune with some valuable insights from the emergent interdisciplinary field of affect studies. We approach Havel's

first and second New Year's presidential speeches as constitutive acts and artifacts of an indigenous, living democratic theory. Namely, we argue that Havel captures the affective threads of sociality that allowed individuals to move and be moved as a social organism at the point of the transition. To follow Havel in that trans-personal dimension, however, we need to shed the vocabulary of emotion that so often haunts argument analysis due to its easy psychologism and trade it for the concept of affect. The benefit of that shift, we believe, is that it would allow us to capture the complex interconnectedness between human and nonhuman agency, between public discourse and the material spaces of everyday life. In this sense, affect is a concept that can re-establish the access of argumentation studies to the structures, objects, and language that make collective lived experience possible. It allows us to attend to "collective affects that are not reducible to the individual bodies that they emerge from" (Ben Anderson, 2009, p. 80).

3. *Vaclav Havel and the affective atmosphere of post-communism*

We turn specifically to Ben Anderson's (2009) concept of "affective atmosphere" as a way to capture how public discourse bridges the "prepersonal and transpersonal dimensions of affective life and everyday existence" (p. 77). Like Havel, Anderson begins his analysis with a speech in a time of revolution, with Karl Marx's remarks on one other "revolutionary atmosphere enveloping and pressing [European society] from all sides" (in Anderson, 2009, p. 77). Marx's observations of the 1848 revolutions lead Anderson into the notion that "affective atmospheres" are "impersonal in that they belong to collective situations and yet can be felt as intensely personal" (p. 80). And so was the affective atmosphere at the time when Havel spoke for the first time as president.

Despite the excitement and euphoria of the Velvet Revolution, at the time of Havel's first presidential address, the public was in the grips of a profound sense of uncertainty. What had just happened? What did it mean? What would happen from then on? Along with disrupting the routines and upkeep of the governmental infrastructure, the fall of communism certainly disintegrated the ideological frames supporting Czechoslovakia's national identity. From within the ruins of the old narrative regime and from its material landscapes, the blueprint of the new society would have to be created. In addressing the nation on New Year's eve in 1990, Havel acknowledged the role of the favorable conditions in the sphere of international politics. Indeed, at least from the outside, the Czechoslovak

revolution was just one more piece moving in the domino-like collapse of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. For the people in the midst of that event, however, the turn toward democracy felt profoundly intimate. As Havel emphasized, the revolution came from within, as a collective psychic surge in search of its object of desire.

What would democracy look like? For many in Havel's audience the notion of democracy was derived from images of shiny Western product packages and full store shelves, from images of conspicuous consumption in Western films and glossy magazine covers, from novels and other literary texts that figured subjects free to roam the world and explore their social settings. Was that what democracy was all about? What would it take for Czechoslovak society to move closer to a democratic future? Those were among the many questions that abounded in the aftermath of the revolution. These questions, we suggest, figured the immediate aftermath of the Velvet revolution as a profoundly theoretical moment, an intense opportunity for competing imaginations and experiences to take form and come together.

In this context Vaclav Havel emerged as a distinctive voice that not only responded to the ambiguities of the occasion but also put together a coherent vision for what democracy could mean and do for the Czechoslovak people and what it would take for them to bring democracy about. Havel was certainly not speaking in a vacuum. Democracy was not a concept that he invented. Democracy was indeed a foreign word, one whose roots could be traced to core Western liberal philosophies. Yet, bringing democracy to Czechoslovakia or any other country in the former Soviet block was not a simple matter of translation (Bruner & Marin, 2007; Keremidchieva, 2009). As we aim to demonstrate, Havel articulated an original understanding and blueprint of democratization, one that deviated in significant ways from the dominant western models of transition which privileged structural political reform (Verdery, 1996; Anderson, Fish, Hanson & Roeder, 2001). In our analysis of Havel's speeches, therefore, we do not attempt to offer a comprehensive reconstruction of his rhetorical response to the challenges of the transition. Our task is more narrow. It is to recover and highlight those aspects of Havel's democratization theory that hold the potential of enriching our theoretical understanding of the affective dynamics propelling societies in transition.

In his first New Year's address Havel laid out the public sentiment as the

foundation for the post-communist transition. He quickly located the source of social and political instability in the breakdown of society's moral and affective terminology. As he argued, "concepts such as love, friendship, compassion, humility or forgiveness lost their depth and dimension, and for many of us they represented only psychological peculiarities" (para. 5). He associated the environment of "moral contamination" with a tendency to disassociate the individual from the collective structures of affect so as they "learned not to believe in anything, to ignore one another, to care only of ourselves" (para. 5). In his argument such processes of individuation and affective alienation were precisely the reason why the communist regimes were able to assemble their "totalitarian machinery" (par. 7). Such assemblages were inhumane, according to Havel, precisely because they were impersonal and affectively distant.

"Freedom and democracy," on the other hand, "include participation and, therefore, responsibility from all of us" (par. 8), according to Havel. Importantly, his notion of participation is not limited to showing up; rather it is measured by a sense of distance from the cynicism and "enforced mask of apathy" (par. 10) that marked the previous regime. It is defined in affective terms as a manifestation of "human, moral and spiritual potential" (par. 72). Herewith lies Havel's most profound statement as a democratic theorist who situates certain affective inflections as the foundational conditions for democratic society. As he argues, "First of all, people are never just a product of the external world; they are also able to relate themselves to something superior, however systematically the external world tries to kills that ability in them. Secondly, the humanistic and democratic traditions about which there had been so much idle talk did after all slumber in the unconsciousness of our nations and ethnic minorities, and were inconspicuously passed from one generation to another, so that each of us could discover them at the right time and transform them into deeds" (par 11). In this formulation, a democratic disposition appears at the intersection of spiritual and material forces and, importantly, it does not remain static. On the contrary, it operates on the principle of affective contagion which, as Nigel Thrift (2008) suggests, spreads and multiplies affect most especially through imitation (p. 223).

The affective contagion via imitation thesis might make sense in view of Havel's observation of how different generations joined forces in enacting the Velvet revolution; however, we believe that Havel offers an additional insight regarding what sets off the phenomenon of affective contagion. Specifically, he points to a

principle of affective identification or empathy as the glue that keeps society together when he claims that “all human suffering concerns every other human being” (par 13). Moreover, such identification appears as a source of confidence that can allow affective contagion to cascade up and down the scales of sociality from interpersonal to international relations and back. As Havel asserts, “Let us try to introduce this kind of self-confidence into the life of our community and, as nations, into our behavior on the international stage. Only thus can we restore our self-respect and our respect for one another as well as the respect of other nations” (par. 74).

And so in Havel’s first New Year’s address as president, the project of the Velvet revolution is defined in profoundly affective terms that transcend the state of mind of individuals, but instead form the terrain of politics. The project of democratization is one of attuning society to certain affective moral registers that are meant to be circulated and disseminated. In Havel’s words, “Our country, if that is what we want, cannot permanently radiate love, understanding, the power of the spirit and of ideas. It is precisely this glow that we can offer as out specific contribution to international politics” (par. 17). Politics, for Havel, “should be an expression of a desire to contribute to the happiness of the community rather than of a need to cheat or rape that community.” Politics, he adds, “can also be the art of the impossible, that is the art of improving ourselves and the world” (par. 18).

Despite its strong embrace of the role of positive affect as the foundation of democratic society, Havel’s first New Year’s address does not fully reveal how central that concept is to his argument. We now turn our attention to his second New Year’s address because by that time the public mood had changed dramatically. Gone was “the joyful atmosphere of those first weeks of freedom” (par. 80) and in were “all the pleasant surprises of the past year” (par. 80). Four decades of communist rule had left deep traces in the collective spiritual landscape; hence any effort at an alternative political environment had to address the affective condition of the society. In response, Havel presented democratization as a process of what Kathleen Stewart (2011) calls “atmospheric attunement,” a process of re-negotiating people’s interactions and relationships with each other and their environment.

In the 1991 address, Havel repeatedly referred to a house-themed metaphor in order to illustrate the affective infrastructure needed for a democratic transition.

During the weeks following the Velvet Revolution, the fall of communism had sparked a country-wide euphoria that allowed little space for assessing the scope of the communist legacy and its impact on establishing an alternative. A year into his presidency, Havel captured the common feeling of disillusionment that was now setting in: "We knew that the house we inherited was not in good shape. The stucco was falling off in places, the roof looked rather dubious, and we had doubts about some other things as well. After a year of examination, we have discovered to our distress that all the piping is rusted, the beams are rotten, the wiring is badly damaged" (par. 5). If the house metaphor was meant to stand in for the structure of society itself, then it highlighted two dimensions of democratic transition – an exterior and an interior one. The exterior one referred to easily identifiable flaws in the material environment. The interior dimension, on the other hand, described the affective communicative practices through which society inhabited its environment and made sense of it.

In tune with the materialist orientations of affect theory, Havel's 1991 speech suggested that the interior and exterior dimensions of political transformation cannot be separated. The first post-communist year revealed the degree of infrastructural damage, environmental, and juridical degradation inherited from the previous regime. As Havel put it, "We have discovered that what a year ago seemed to be a neglected house is essentially a ruin" (par. 6). More significant, however, was the affective degradation that had set in society: "In an atmosphere of general impatience, nervousness, disappointment, and doubt," Havel warned, "elements of malice, suspicion, mistrust, and mutual accusation are insinuating themselves into public life" (par. 8). Amidst this situation, Havel recognized a feature of affective atmospheres that Ben Anderson finds as well: "an atmosphere holds a series of opposites – presence and absence, materiality and ideality, definite and indefinite, singularity and generality – in a relation of tension" (Anderson, 2009, p. 80). Havel identified such tension at the heart of his people's inability to move forward on the eve of 1991. For him, the "suffocating atmosphere" (par. 82) at the end of 1990 was due to some tension in the affective atmosphere: "hope for a better future is ever more obviously intermingled with the opposite feeling: fear of the future" (par. 7).

More significantly, such atmospheric tension would create the conditions for further affective attunement and displacements. As Kathleen Steward (2011) finds,

an atmosphere is not an inert context but a force field in which people find themselves…It is an attunement of the senses, of labors, and imaginaries to potential ways of living in or living through things. A living through that shows up in the generative precarity of ordinary sensibilities of not knowing what compels, not being able to sit still, being exhausted, being left behind or being ahead of the curve, being in love with some form or life that comes along, being ready for something – anything – to happen, or orienting yourself to the sole goal of making sure that nothing (more) will happen (p. 452).

Affective attunements, however, do not come out of nowhere; affect invariably mobilizes its objects. On the eve of 1991, Havel discovered, "we have defeated the monolithic, visible, and obvious enemy and now – driven by our dissatisfaction and by the need to find a living culprit – we are searching for enemies in each other" (par. 8). Society, he declared, was in a state of "shock," immobilized by the absence of material referents and signposts to all that was meant to come. Such "subliminal uncertainty" (par. 82) marked by "the feeling that the horizon of the new order is distant, dim, and indefinite" meant for Havel that "many of us cling to partial and substitute horizons, forgetting that the welfare of individuals or groups is possible only against the background of the general welfare" (par. 82). To establish an atmosphere of democracy, would require a sense of shared ownership that finds space for all of humanity under the roof of Havel's proverbial house.

4. *Conclusion*

Havel's house analogy figured the project of democratization as more than a systems change, but as a process of building a new affective space that required certain affective investments. A sense of ownership transforms a house into a home. As Havel reminded his fellow citizens, "[R]egardless of how badly the house was damaged during the long years of [communist] rule, the house now belongs to us, and it is entirely up to us how we rebuild it." Such investment, however, would not materialize out of thin air.

Herewith, we believe, lies Havel's and affective theory's contribution to argumentation studies. Public arguments do more than give form and assign culturally specific words to the affective intensities which, as Anderson (2009) points out, are only imperfectly housed in the proper names we give to emotions. Rather, public arguments assemble, re-shape, and channel the fragments of feeling that otherwise would float disparately, failing to form cohesive society.

Furthermore, public arguments harness and house these fragments, serving as the archives and museums of social character, whose displays both narrate and manage the culture's mood. It is not surprising, therefore, that Havel's own solution to the affective immobilization of his people was to redirect their attention to some other elements of their environment, so as to reconstitute the affective atmosphere. As he pointed out, "we are all inclined to forget the several great and positive surprises of the first year following our rebellion against the totalitarian regime. I think it is my duty today to remind you as well of the good things that have happened, accomplishments that a year ago we could scarcely could have imagined" (par. 82).

However, public argument should not be reduced to an instrument of collective emotional management because it is always already embedded in a given affective atmosphere. Rather, we perceive it as an *attuning device* that shapes the quality and intensity of the connections that allow disparate bodies, objects, and affects to appear in formation. In this way, we believe, public argument serves a political function as it gathers the elements that make up the society. This "worlding" function of public argument would not have been possible, however, had public argument not been immersed in the ebbs and flows of affect, which as Seigworth and Gregg (2010) suggest, "arises in the midst of *in-between-ness*; in the capacities to act and be acted upon… in those intensities that pass body to body (human, non-human, part-body, and otherwise)" (p. 1). With such an emergent model of affective discourse it is easier to see why democratization in the aftermath of communism couldn't be just a product of institutional re-design; it has rather been a process, fueled by feeling and desire, of finding each other, albeit on other terms, once again, in common.

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