

ISSA Proceedings 1998 - You Think, I Know: Argumentation In Self-help Counseling



1. Introduction

As a hortatory genre, self-help counseling books aim at influencing readers' conduct. Regarding their obligatory semantic structure (Halliday & Hasan 1989), these texts are characterized by four main components:

- a. establishment of the authority/credibility of the author,
- b. presentation of a problem/situation,
- c. issuing of one or more commands,
- d. resort to motivation (Meurer 1998).

In this paper I explore the role of evaluative strategies typically occurring within two of these semantic components of the hortatory schema: motivation for readers to accept authors' arguments and establishment of authors' credentials.

I focus on the notion of *status evaluation* (Hunston 1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1994), applying it to the analysis of a typical sample of self-help books, namely, *Calm Down: How to Cope With Frustration and Anger*, (by Paul Hauck, an American clinical psychologist. Sheldon Press, London, 1974, 8th impression, 1993). The analysis investigates how this author uses explicit and implicit evaluative strategies in order to

- a. strengthen his Proposed Claims and thus motivate readers to adopt them,
- b. establish and maintain his credentials as a counseling persona.

What follows is subdivided into four sections: section 2 discusses the notion of evaluation; section 3 investigates the role of evaluation as a form of reader motivation in the conflict between Hauck and characters presented in case histories reported in the book; section 4 investigates aspects of evaluation and its relation to authors' credentials; and section 5 presents the concluding remarks.

2. Evaluation

The term evaluation has been adopted in a number of strands of discourse analysis to encapsulate the general notion that, in addition to information, every utterance carries a certain 'orientation towards or an opinion about that

information' (Hunston 1993a: 98). Ten years ago, as also observed by Hunston, Stubbs (1986) urged linguists to provide - 'in a matter of prolonged field work' - for a description of language use that would 'take into account the attitude or evaluation that is encoded in every utterance' (Hunston 1993a: 98). Hunston (1993a, 1993b, 1993c, 1994) has proposed a model of analysis where evaluation is 'operated along three different parameters': *status* or degree of certainty (certain-uncertain), *value* (good-bad), and *relevance* (important-unimportant). For the purposes of this paper, I will explore the notion of status evaluation only.

Status evaluation has to do with how certain or uncertain the author believes a given proposition in her/his text is regarding the type of information or knowledge represented by that proposition. Hunston (1993c: 120) defines status evaluation this way: 'The status assigned to a proposition indicates where it is located in terms of the process of knowledge construction, for example, whether it is an observation, an experimental result, an interpretation or a conclusion.' To grant higher status to a proposition is to evaluate a claim as superior to another claim based on its higher degree of certainty as a piece of information or a particular instance of knowledge. Within the perspective of status evaluation, a lexical item such as *fact*, for instance, is considered as conveying a higher degree of certainty and thus having a higher status if compared to *opinion*, for example. Lexical items such as *finding* and *result*, to further illustrate the point, have a higher status as compared to *interpretation* and belief. Thus, if a writer refers to a given state of affairs as being a fact and to another as being an opinion, belief or *assumption*, the state of affairs referred to as a *fact* is being "pushed up" (Hunston) the status scale, that is, the author implicitly evaluates that piece of information as representing a higher degree of certainty and, therefore, higher status.

Status evaluation is built into each one of the clauses of every text. Every proposition contains, sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly, some attitude in relation to the certainty of what is being conveyed. Therefore, 'status is attached to each clause - each clause must have one status or another, so that the whole text is evaluative in this sense' (Hunston 1994: 195), If one says, for example, 'it is raining', or 'it may be raining', or 'it will certainly rain', or 'they say it is raining', each one of these statements stands at a different level in the status evaluation scale because each one implies a different degree of certainty and commitment in relation to the truth of the proposition expressed. **[i]**

In written texts, the status of a proposition is conveyed by means of four different but connected meaning relations: the 'different activity' the writer is performing

(e.g., the writer states, interprets, reports), the connotations of the lexical item itself (such as fact and opinion previously mentioned), 'the ascribed source of the proposition' (i.e., the writer's own or somebody else's), and 'modifications such as modal verbs, report verbs and metalinguistic labeling' (Hunston 1994: 194-5). In this paper I concentrate on evaluation relatively to connotations of selected lexical items and the ascribed source of propositions.

3. Status evaluation: enhancing author's argument in self-help counseling

In contrast to the language of written academic discourse, for example, where authors oppose the claims of other authors, in the language of self-help counseling, writers frequently oppose the assumptions held by characters in the case histories narrated in their texts and the assumptions of prospective readers of this kind of literature. As a result, frequently in self-help texts there is some conflict going on between views held by authors and the views supposedly entertained by case history characters and potential readers. In this section I examine status evaluation strategies used by the American clinical psychologist Dr. Paul Hauck as author of the specific self-help text already mentioned (*Calm Down: How to Cope With Frustration and Anger*). A self-help counseling book has been chosen because this genre constitutes a type of contemporary mass culture written discourse widely read by the general public but largely ignored in discourse analysis and argumentation.

My contention is that authors of this genre make use of status evaluation to argue for their claims and thus enhance their argument and advice as opposed to the claims they attribute to potential readers and characters in the case histories, which are utilized in the text for illustrative and community-building purposes (Meurer 1997; 1998). This strategic use of evaluation plays an important role in the motivation component of self-help counseling books.

I use Hunston's (1993c) terms *Opposed Claim* to indicate the claims attributed to, or assumed by the writer to be held by case history characters and potential readers, and *Proposed Claim* to refer to the claims of the author himself. I am specially interested in exploring how the author of *Calm Down* textualizes (Meurer & Motta-Roth 1997) the Proposed Claims so that they come out as having higher status than the conflicting Opposed Claims. This type of analysis may apply to argumentative texts in general.

The essence of Hauck's argument and the dispute with potential readers and case history characters in this specific self-help text - *Calm Down* - centers on the following sequence of situations and relations represented by A - B - C: it is not

some event (A) that causes anger (C), but it is one's beliefs, what one thinks or tells her/himself (B) about A that leads to the emotion of anger. According to this view, clients are urged to reject the idea that A causes C and to realize that what causes C is B, not A. The central thesis, therefore, is that one causes her/himself to be angry and not that anger is a direct consequence of a given event.

As is the case with all hortatory texts (Longacre 1992), the function of the motivation obligatory semantic component of Hauck's *Calm Down* is to encourage readers to restructure one or more of their beliefs, leading to some change in actual conduct. In the specific case of *Calm Down*, readers are urged to reconceptualizing B in such a way as to be able to avoid driving themselves into the 'emotional state' of anger.

A pervasive strategy used by Hauck to motivate readers to side with his views to coping with anger, is to grant higher status to Proposed Claims (i.e., his claims) and lower status to Opposed Claims (i.e., case study character's claims). To grant high status, as defined in section 2 above, means to evaluate a claim as conveying a high degree of certainty as a piece of information or a particular instance of knowledge. Let us take a stretch of text from *Calm Down* and look at it in its immediate co-text (S stands for sentence):

S1 - This is the tone our previous sessions had taken:

S2 - I trying to *show* her that she was getting herself angry over behavior her husband simply could not control and *she* always *arguing* with me that I just didn't understand her situation and that if I did I wouldn't talk like that.

S3 - *But it was she who was mistaken, not I.*

S4 - I had been through this debate with hundreds of people before, *I knew* almost word for word what their arguments would consist of, and *I also knew they thought* I was ridiculous for suggesting some of the views I did.

(*Calm Down*, p. 10. emphasis added)

The argumentation for the higher status of the author's perspective in this excerpt is revealed both explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, the author states that the client is *mistaken* (S3), and he thus makes clear where he stands. The implicit argumentative strategies, on the other hand, are more numerous and not so obvious. Let us examine the second sentence of the quotation above. Through the choice of verbs the author implicitly portrays a slightly unbalanced situation: as a counselor, he reports that he tries to *show* something to be the case to a client (the protagonist in a previously narrated case history in the book), while the client is reported to *argue* that the counselor does not understand her problem. It is an

unbalanced situation in the sense that the counselor's and the client's verbal activities are given different weight: in a scale of status evaluation *show* is more positive than *argue*. An evidence for this is that while the author could say 'I was *arguing* that...', he would be unlikely to say that 'Mrs. Baker was trying to *show* me that...'

Different status is also implicit in the way the author uses different mental state verbs to report his verbal activity as opposed to the client's. Specifically, the author *argues* with the client not in terms of what he *thinks*, as the client does, but in terms of what he knows, on the basis of his experience with 'hundreds of people': 'I *knew* almost word for word what their arguments would consist of, and I also *knew*...' Two paragraphs later in *Calm Down* the author assigns further higher status to his side of the argument by stating that his perspective derives from institutionalized knowledge grounded on 'the latest psychological findings'. Being derived from experience and established knowledge, the author's claims stand for more than clients' opinions and feelings. Thus, on the one hand, opinions and feelings - the Opposed Claims - can be easily rejected. Rejecting the Proposed Claims, on the other hand, is tantamount not only to rejecting Hauck's statements but also to refuting the implied 'latest psychological findings'. As Hunston (1989: 36) puts it, by tying to a theory the knowledge s/he expresses, a writer creates a situation such that the rejection of the stated knowledge implies challenging the theory itself in which her/his thoughts are based.

Interestingly, Popper (1967) observes that English lacks a term to distinguish between *knowledge* as a *world 3* entity, knowledge that is available in texts and in libraries, as opposed to *knowledge* as a *world 2* entity, that is, knowledge as a state of mind. In spite of the unavailability of a specific term to distinguish these two types of knowledge, there is a general consensus that knowledge as a world 3 entity has greater impact and reliability, and hence higher status, than knowledge as a world 2 entity. We know, for example, that technology would not be possible without world 3 knowledge. (See for example Ong 1982). Of course, knowledge as a world 2 entity may eventually defy knowledge as a world 3 entity. But when this happens, and for it to have any significance, in general world 2 knowledge will already have been given a written representation, and will thus have been transformed into a world 3 entity as well. In fact, it is quite obvious that, in the modern world, authority - in the sense of being recognized as having something to offer in terms of knowledge in a given area - can hardly ever be constituted other than by the consumption and production of world 3 knowledge. All this is

supposed to further substantiate the argument that Hauck's claims as I have discussed so far are given higher status than the claims he attributes to his narrative character and readers for the simple reason that his knowledge is supposedly based on world 3 knowledge. This plays an important role in the reconceptualization the author tries to develop in *Calm Down*. This seems to apply to self-help authors in general.

Recalling Popper's (1967) notions of world 2 and world 3, we realize that the conflict between Hauck as the author of a self-help book and the client in the excerpt above is a conflict between world 2 and world 3 entities. World 2 in this situation is the clients' and readers' states of mind, their current understanding of the subject, what they *think* and feel about it. This is a process that exists only in so far as it goes on in someone's mind. It is thus an evanescent phenomenon. Hauck's viewpoint, on the other hand, is based on *knowledge* as a product, not a state, of the human mind: a world 3 reality. It is this knowledge that is associated with *know* and is thus seen as superior in terms of status because it does not exist simply as a process in the author's mind but is available in books and in libraries. It is a typical identifying attribute of world 3 entities. As such, it is permanent and can be used by whomever has access to it and is able to make sense of it. This feature therefore greatly enhances the motivation for readers to accept the author's Proposed Claims as opposed to the client's Opposed Claims.

4. Creating and maintaining a persona

The credentials backing statements, proposals, and teachings of authors of self-help books constitute another way of attributing status to these authors' Proposed Claims. As pointed out in section 1, the status of a proposition is revealed also by its ascribed source. This means that in general the proposition acquires a higher status when it is uttered by an expert rather than by a layperson. The status of a proposition in an academic text will be higher when its source are, for instance, *results* or *findings* (e.g. 'the *results* reveal that ...') as opposed to personal opinion (e.g.: 'I believe that ...').

In *Calm Down*, the credentials of its author spread throughout the text under different guises. His credentials as a professional are explicitly presented in the first page of the book in the form of an abridged résumé, as follows:

Calm down

Dr. PAUL HAUCK, PhD, is a full-time clinical psychologist in Rock Island, Illinois, USA. He is a fellow of the American Psychological Association, and has lectured widely on various aspects of psychology. He has written many articles for

professional journals, and is the author of the following books - *Calm Down, Jealousy, How to Stand up for Yourself, How to Do What You Want to Do, Why Be Afraid?, How to Love and Be Loved, Making Marriage Work, Depression, How to Be Your Own Best Friend*, and *Hold Your Head Up High* - all published by Sheldon Press.

However, as constructed throughout self-help texts, counseling personae come 'alive' in much more indirect ways than in this abridged résumé. Authors' credentials are to a greater or lesser extent encapsulated in a variety of textual strategies and, as such, they are part of the authors' implicit argument. An investigation of such strategies can also be carried out within the framework of *status evaluation*. In what follows I use this perspective, concentrating again on Hauck's *Calm Down*.

An initial evaluation strategy used by this specific author to present his credentials is *reference to experience* as a practicing therapist. For example, in the excerpt of *Calm Down* already quoted in the previous section, Hauck, reporting on a certain Mrs. Baker's arguments with him, affirms: 'But it was she who was mistaken, not I.' He then immediately provides the basis (Winter 1994) for this statement by saying:

I had been through this debate with *hundreds of people* before. *I knew* almost word for word what their arguments would consist of, and I also knew they thought I was ridiculous for suggesting some of the views I did.

(*Calm Down*, p. 10, emphasis added)

In this stretch of text, the author indirectly classifies his knowledge as being based on direct observation ('debate with hundreds of people'). Hauck's understanding of the problem is attributed higher status than is his patient's because experience constructs knowledge, and knowledge stands high in the hierarchy of certainty. Rhetorically, the mental process verbs (Halliday 1994) used here convey and reinforce the idea that the author knows (*I knew ...*, *I also knew ...*), while his (hundreds of) patients, like Mrs. Baker, think (*they thought ...*).

References to the author's own experience occur in several other places in the book, e.g.:

What happened to Mrs. Baker has happened to *hundreds of other clients* once they were shown how to think different (*Calm Down*, p. 21).

In this example, once again, experience ascribes higher status to the proposition

stated by the author as opposed to the activity the 'clients' are supposed to engage in. Based on his vast experience the author has *shown* the clients how to think differently, while clients just *think*, like Mrs. Bakers - mistakenly, not rarely. The high status of direct observation is perhaps most clear in scientific research. Hunston (1993a: 99) argues that in scientific research 'the status of utterances becomes less certain as researchers travel farther along the road from direct observation to theoretical conclusion'. Findings or results from direct observation, therefore, have a higher status than interpretations, discussions or conclusions based on the findings. This is so because direct observation somehow 'speaks for itself', and is thus supposed to be closer to 'reality' than an interpretation or a discussion of what has been observed.

A second strategy used by Hauck to establish his credentials as a counselor, and thus to give weight to his teachings, materializes through the use of narratives, which in his preface he refers to as 'case material'. This is a sort of expansion of the previous strategy. Out of the 37.000 words that make up Hauck's *Calm Down*. 11,189 occur in narrative stretches. These reported case histories are assumed to derive 'naturally' from the author's direct observation. They are supposed to be selected cases among the *hundreds of patients* that have consulted with the author. As such, narratives stand high in the status scale because they are assumed to represent a range of true facts known by the author. In so far as they offer the certainty associated with direct observation, they are undeniable. Experience of a large quantity of such case histories thus enhances the authority of the counselor. Altogether, the cases further substantiate the higher status of the meaning encapsulated in *knowing* than in *thinking*.

A third evaluation strategy used in the specification and maintenance of self-help authors' credentials is reference to institutionalized knowledge. In the specific case of *Calm Down*, the author refers to two important types of institutionalized knowledge: 'the latest psychological findings' and Dr Albert Ellis's 'rational-emotive therapy'. I will comment on these next. Reference to the *findings* - a nominalization of status - occurs four times (pp. 10, 21, 40, and 55) in the book. Below are three of these occurrences: (Notice that the author feels able to make definite statements about the future reactions of his readers):

Mrs. Baker was no different from you, the reader, will be as you discover some of *the latest psychological findings*. *These findings* are so unusual your first reaction to them will be denial. You will not be able to swallow all the *advice* I will give to help you overcome your hatred, resentment, or anger. Only after thinking about my advice for a long time will you be able to use my counseling and make the new

psychology work for you. Before that happens, however, you will simply go through the debating and questioning Mrs. Baker went through (p. 10. added emphasis).

In the following pages you will be informed of *the latest psychological findings* on the subjects of anger, resentment, fury, and hate, and how to control and rid yourself of all of them. Your life can change enormously by making you more easygoing, nicer to be with, and more patient, and you will be helped in your role as parent, spouse, or employee (p. 21)

The latest psychological findings are showing us that we become upset by thinking in upsetting ways, not by encountering frustrating situations. In other words, depressing thoughts bring on depressed feelings, scary thoughts make you feel afraid, and thinking angry and punishing thoughts brings on angry and vengeful feelings (p. 40).

Interestingly, the major points of the argument in *Calm Down* included under the high status super-ordinate *findings* make up the book's central theme. It is thus as if now and then the author reminded the readers that what he is teaching as a whole is part of such findings and, therefore, constitutes scientific knowledge.

Reference to Ellis occurs later in *Calm Down*, and Hauck acknowledges that he has drawn substantially on this author. The first time Hauck mentions Ellis (p. 54), he specifies that he as an *authority* in the field of therapeutic counseling. On page 95, Ellis is mentioned as 'the founder of rational-emotive therapy, whose philosophies underlie this book.' References to Ellis in the professional literature confirm that he is a recognized name in cognitive-behavior therapy, specifically associated with rational-emotive therapy. Thorpe and Olson (1990: 75), for example, state that Ellis is an 'important figure in cognitive-behavior therapy whose work on theory and techniques has enriched the field'. Ellis' main work is published in the book *Reason and emotion in therapy* (1962, New York: Lyle Stuart) which, according to Thorpe and Olson, 'has its roots in philosophy rather than in psychoanalysis' (p. 76). Quite clearly these general references are intended by Hauck to expose his community or institutionally-derived authority and thus to reassure the readers that his credentials grant him the right or classify him as able to give advice about the subject matter at hand. The strategic use of general, unspecific references to *hundreds of clients*, *latest psychological findings*, and *founder of rational-emotive therapy* in the textual environment where they occur adds a seemingly scientific tone to the text and by so doing gives the impression of added certainty about the conveyed information.

By drawing from supposedly recognized - though indefinite - sources of knowledge, the author pushes the status of his propositions up and gathers support for his argument. Based on such a persona he can encourage readers to take his 'advice seriously', similarly to Mrs. Baker, as reported in the very first sentence of the counseling text properly in *Calm Down*:

It was during the third session with Mrs. Baker that she finally took my advice seriously and decided I might have something worthwhile to offer her, though it sounded mad.

The status of the advice is therefore modified by the persona of the possessive. Lexical constructions such as *my advice* in the context of this example acquire higher status not because of their intrinsic meaning but because of the persona the writer develops and maintains throughout the text by means of rhetorical strategies such as the ones I have discussed. On the one hand, rhetorical strategies help create the persona. On the other hand, the persona guarantees that linguistic devices in the text will have a certain status and a certain meaning. This circularity is part of the nature of argumentation, of texts themselves and of the processes we use to make sense of them.

5. Final remarks

One of the most important features of the ideational and interpersonal metafunctions of texts (Halliday 1994) is that through them authors explicitly and implicitly attempt to impose some classification upon given stretches of the world. Explicitly and implicitly, people evaluate the world around them and argue for specific ways of seeing 'reality'.

Using discourse analysis and drawing on philosophical principles, in this paper I looked into evaluation as an argumentative strategy used by the author of a typical exemplar of self-counseling books to motivate his readers to accept his argument. I gave emphasis to the notion of *status evaluation* in order to account for the contrast between the verbs *to think* (attributed to case study characters and prospective readers) and *to know* (attributed to the author). The analysis indicates that by using explicit and implicit evaluative strategies Hack positively evaluates and classifies his argument and advice as having higher status than the counter-arguments of characters portrayed in case histories and potential readers of such texts. This way the author implements one aspect of the motivation component of the self-help book as a hortatory genre, and encourages readers to adopt new forms of conceptualizations and conduct. In addition, the analysis demonstrates that besides favoring his own claims and thus his side of the

argument, the self-help writer studied in this paper makes use of evaluative strategies to establish his credentials as a counseling persona. These credentials in turn also contribute to the high status of the author's propositions and to the argumentative character of the self-help genre, the ultimate aim of which is to influence readers' conduct.

In spite of their popularity, self-help counseling texts have not been extensively analyzed either as text or as discourse and a form of contemporary social practice (see Meurer 1998). Though limited to the study of only one self-help manual, it seems that the findings reported in the present paper also apply to self-help counseling books in general. This, however, needs to be further investigated. The analysis of strategies such as the ones discussed in this paper is important for our understanding of how hortatory genres work as text and discourse. All together this is part of our better understanding of human interaction and reflexivity (Giddens 1991) in contemporary society and of human beings' socio-psychological needs.

NOTES

i. The analysis of propositions like these ones can also be carried out in terms of the notion of modality, i.e., 'the speaker's judgement of the probabilities, or the obligations, involved in what he is saying' (Halliday 1994: 75). As Halliday explains, a proposition 'may become arguable by being presented as likely or unlikely, desirable or undesirable - in other words, its relevance specified in modal terms' (ibid.). Looking at speakers' judgements as different types of evaluation as proposed by Hunston, however, seems to be more enlightening for the type of analysis carried out in this paper. Notice that Hunston does use the notion of modality, but as one of the devices realizing status evaluation. One reason to use Hunston's approach, then, is that it is more encompassing than the Hallidayan concept of modality.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Science And Rationalism In Warranting Assent: Examination Of Congressional Environmental Arguments



In 1994, the new Republican majority in Congress began an effort to shift America's environmental policy. The Republicans offered Americans a "Contract With America" (CWA), a list of legislation the Republican's vowed to pass. The "Contract" offered among other things, promises of a balanced budget, a scaling down of bureaucratic regulations and most important to this project, an alteration in environmental policy (Gosselin, 1995; Phillips, 1995). Republicans argued that rollbacks in environmental legislation were made in order to offset the waste of governmental over-regulation (Byrne & Rebuffoni, 1995, p. 1A). It was proposed "that local people are better stewards of the land, that environmentalists care more about nonhumans than humans and that cutbacks would help balance the budget" (Byrne & Rebuffoni, 1995, p. 1A). Regulatory reform was argued as a way to loosen environmental regulations and cut cleanup aid, in order to stimulate economic growth and control governmental spending (Rebovich, 1995).

The purpose of this essay is to analyze the argumentative strategies of the environmental debate in the 104th Congress. It will examine how the Republicans used the concept of "Sound Science," as a catalyst for environmental reform. Specifically, two questions are posed:

(1) What role does "Sound Science" serve in altering environmental legislation. Specific attention will be paid to how "science" as a rational enterprise serves to justify environmental rollbacks and decenter environmentalists' claims.

(2) What role does "definition" play in public argument.

In making these arguments, this project examines Republican's rhetoric in the

Congressional Record from November 1, 1995 to 1996 - the beginning of the use of "Sound Science" to the end of the 104th session of Congress. This study will first discuss the role of definition in argument. It will then turn to a detailed examination of how the term "Sound Science" was rhetorically constructed and employed in environmental debate during the 104th Congress. It will be argued that "Sound Science" was a justification for repealing environmental legislation. Finally, some important theoretical explanations for argumentation scholars will be suggested.

1. The role of definition in public argument

The purpose of this section is to reveal how definitions are used and their implications in public argument. The intent is to focus on how definitions become epistemological, creating and maintaining public knowledges. Additionally, this section will evaluate how definitions serve to legitimate and marginalize particular perspectives.

There are several implications to the study of definition in public argument. Initially, definition provides a way of knowing. Herrick (1995) posited that: "To define is to advance a meaning or classification for a word, person, object or act" (p. 143). However, the complexity of symbolic meanings extends beyond the act of individuals attributing meaning. Edelman (1964) explained that: The meanings, however, are not in the symbols. They are in society and therefore in men [sic]. Political symbols bring out in concentrated form those particular meanings and emotions which the members of a group create and reinforce in each other. There is nothing about any symbol that requires that it stand for only one thing. (p. 11) Our knowledges become integrally intertwined with the terminology that we use. Insofar as we can shift our term usage, we would correspondingly shift our orientation and knowledge toward an object or action.

Moreover, we assume that definitions will increase clarity in public argument. The idea of advancing clear and precise meaning to increase the understanding of the terms is to increase the quality of the debate (Capp & Capp, 1965; Vedung, 1995). Furthermore, definitions provide an understanding of specific historical contexts. Argumentative contexts not only suggest the appropriateness of definitions, but also the appropriateness of how definitions come into play. Cox (1981) argued that definitions function as context-specific 'rules' for actors' judgments and actions. These rules lead to a level of understanding of the definitions depending on the context in which they occur. In regards to the

definition of “wetlands,” Schiappa (1996) argued:

It is assumed that there is sufficient overlap in the competing definitions that no harm results from a lack of strict uniformity. Besides, normally no one in academic settings has the authority to declare one specific definition to be that which everyone in a given discipline must follow. Public laws, on the other hand, are aimed at precisely this sort of denotative conformity. (p. 212) Denotative conformity is the ability of terms to be defined in a clear and precise manner where a common understanding is achieved. In other words, the ability of Congressional Representatives to define terms in a clear and precise manner is not only beneficial, but should be expected. Adding further to the level of preciseness of denotative conformity in the legislative process is the issue of scientific expertise. Caution should also be raised concerning who is defining the terms, as competing definitions can be made to serve different political interests.

This section has examined definition as a way of knowing. The section focused on definition not only as a part of an argument but as an argument itself. Specifically, the role that definition plays in public argument was examined. It was argued that definition serves to delimit argument by shifting the focus away from one issue toward another. Definitions help to keep the meanings of terms and symbols known. By increasing the clarity of terms, definitions lead to a common understanding of the terms; thus increasing the common ground for those involved in the argument. In addition, a lack of an understanding and implications of specific terms implicates the audience evaluating the discourse. Moreover, definitions alter social situations and historical contexts. There are differences between definitions that focus on what “ought” to count versus what “is.” Misconceptions often are the result of vague and ambiguous definitions of terms. Moreover, vague and ambiguous definitions shift the focus from issues central to argument to the definition of terms. Ultimately, definitions function as social influence and control, thus possessing the ability to change our understanding of the world.

In the environmental debate, the use of the terms “sound science” has profound implications. The next section will evaluate how “sound science” reconfigures the public debate over the environment. Specifically, it will be argued that the lack of an explicit definition of “Sound Science” allowed for the delimitation of argumentative grounds in the environmental debate. As a result of some of the Republican Controlled Congress’s use of “Sound Science,” significant environmental legislation has been repealed.

2. The republican's use of sound science

The environmental debate in Congress centered around several issues. It politicized ecological issues to the extent that the debate was no longer concerned with questions of ecology but instead, focused on political issues. "Sound Science" ceased to exist as an ecological issue and entered the debate as a political concern. The Republicans, in politicizing these terms shifted what should have been an environmental debate, into the realm of political concerns.

Some Republicans in the 104th Congress have employed the term "Sound Science" as a strategy in the environmental debate. "Sound Science" implies a science that is an "all knowing refutable claim" that can be proved or disproved (Eisenberg, 1984; Lyne, 1990). An examination of how "Sound Science" was employed in Congressional debate illustrates how vagueness and ambiguity can limit the argumentative ground. If a definition is never offered, the ability to refute an argument based upon "Sound Science" diminishes.

To evaluate Republicans' argumentative strategies this project will evaluate the term "Sound Science" and those terms used in conjunction with the "Sound Science" theme.

Sound Science as Rational

The descriptive terms cluster around "Sound Science" offer insight into what the term encompasses. The terms associated with "Sound Science" have three general themes. First, "Sound Science" can be examined through its association to the "type" of data used. Second, "Sound Science" is associated with terms that concern the validity of the treatment, testing procedures, or the objectives of the procedures. Third, "Sound Science" has been associated with terms that suggest that there is a preferred type of reasoning that should underlie making a decision. "Sound Science" is often associated with the terms "accuracy," and "hard evidence." "Accuracy, consistency and predictability are often considered 'scientific' values" (Kuhn, 1977, p. 331). "Sound Science" gains argumentative strength through connection with these terms. For example, when "Sound Science" is associated with the term "credible," it implies that there are certain identifiable standards that have to be met, and implies that current "science" is not meeting them.

The focus on data also suggests that any errors could be within the data. For example, regarding the data used to estimate insect outbreak, Representative Cunningham (R-California) in the House Resolution 175 (1995) stated:

The USDA [United States Department of Agriculture] must rely on a sufficient amount of credible, hard data before a change is to be made. Never before has the USDA been responsible in designing a system of this type or scale. Therefore, before such an undertaking is to occur, I believe that the science must be sound. (E2119) Cunningham is suggesting that a quantifiable level of hard data determine "Sound Science." According to Berthold (1976) an indirect connection can be made "through mutual relationships to third terms" (p. 303). By stating that the data must be credible and hard, the Representative implies criteria for "designing the system." Therefore, the evaluation of the data is needed in order to measure and test for "Sound Science," which at this point has no "hard" definition. By confusing what constitutes "Sound Science," Republicans opposed to pro-environmental legislation can claim that the science used to determine that legislation was based on a science that was less than "sound."

Accurate information has been associated with "Sound Science" numerous times in the environmental debate. For example, the planning and implementing of a general permit for the Energy and Water Development Act was argued on the House floor. Representative Riggs (R-California) stated that "it should be based on accurate information and sound science" (H. Res. 110, 1996). In this instance accurate information is linked with "Sound Science." The importance of "Sound Science" is enhanced by its close connection to accurate information. Science based on information that is less than accurate would be considered "unsound."

Although making the association between accurate information and "Sound Science," the Republicans who use the term fail to define how to determine "accuracy." They claim that legislation should be based on "Sound Science," which presumably means accurate information, but do not provide criteria concerning how to assess either. In failing to offer such criteria, Rigg's suggestion remains vague and unclear. Thompson (1971) argued that a clear understanding of the terms helps in reducing or avoiding confusion, and ensures that the debate will focus on the issues. If "Sound Science" remains unclear or undefined the focus will shift from the issues surrounding the environment to what constitutes "Sound Science."

The terms associated with "Sound Science" indicate that it requires some questioning of the objectives, treatment and testing involved. These questions can be seen as an attempt by those opposed to environmental legislation, to control the debate by questioning the science used by the other side. It suggests that current methods of testing procedures used for environmental legislation be based on a science imprecise.

Monitoring and evaluating results have been argued as elements of "Sound Science" and the validity of the results has been questioned. Senator Gorton (R-Washington) argued that, "project recommendations shall be based on a determination that projects are based on sound science principles." He also explained "recommendations should have a clearly defined objective and outcome with provisions for monitoring and evaluation of results" (S. Res. 112, 1996). Gorton's discourse implies that "Sound Science" should have some "clearly defined" objective; that there should be some attainable end. Connecting project recommendations with "Sound Science" makes this association. If project recommendations are to be based on "Sound Science" then they should incorporate the use of "clearly defined objectives. According to Gorton, "Sound Science" is able to monitor and evaluate results.

Another component of "Sound Science" is appropriate treatment and testing. Former Senate majority leader Dole (R-Kansas) argued that the amount of legislation concerning drinking water "enhances important public health priorities by using 'sound science' and appropriate treatment and testing technologies" (S. Res. 189, 1996). Again "Sound Science" is used to connect to another term. Appropriate treatment and testing technologies are linked with "Sound Science" indicating that if the science is "sound," then the treatment and testing technologies will be sound as well. Unfortunately, Dole fails to indicate how much testing and treatment would constitute an "appropriate" amount.

"Sound Science" has been associated with terms that suggest making a decision based on some form of reasoning. Terms that have been used are "foresight," "reason," and "discretion. These terms imply that there is some form of logic or reasoning to guide decisions, thus, "Sound Science" should be based on some form of logic or reasoning.

The amount of power or validity imbued by association can be illustrated through other arguments addressing "Sound Science." The term "Sound Science" gains rhetorical strength through its implication of a science that is credible. Terms used with "Sound Science" suggest that scientific research is rigorous and follows a strict logic. Representative Chenoweth, from (R-Idaho) stated "We all want to promote the wise use of America's natural resources, but the driving force behind our current policies have [sic] little to do with sound science, foresight, or reason" (S. Res. 110, 1996). This association of "Sound Science" to foresight and reason suggests that a "logical" element must be present. Foresight implies that there is, or should be, some way to make accurate and appropriate predictions concerning environmental policies. By tying "Sound Science" to foresight, Representative

Chenoweth suggests that current policies fail to make such predictions. Reason is tied to some logical thought process. If the reasoning chain is clear there should be no questioning of scientific methods used. If we accept Chenoweth's definition, "Sound Science" has the ability to make logical predictions concerning the phenomena being studied. If the science is "sound," it should contain foresight as well as reason.

"Sound Science" as Common Sense

Initially, Republicans supported rollbacks of environmental legislation in the name of "regulatory reform." Recently, it has been argued that there is a need for a "common sense" approach to environmental concerns. This section, will examine how some Republicans of the 104th Congress have clustered "Sound Science" with "common sense." "Common sense" by contrast is based on a less strict standard of validity. It will be argued that the association of "Sound Science" to "common sense" implies that the science used should be easily understandable, and that it should make sense to a lay person.

By forging a link between "Sound Science" and "common sense," advocates offer standards that can be in direct opposition to one another. "Sound Science" would seem to be based on a critical methodological approach to knowledge, suggesting a set standard or criteria against which claims can be measured. In contrast, "common sense" suggests that all one has to do is evaluate a situation determining whether it makes sense to a lay person. By appropriating both "Sound Science" and "common sense" the Republicans are free to use either as grounding in the environmental debate. The result is an effective two-pronged assault on the science used in environmental protection.

The association of "common sense" to "Sound Science" has several implications for the environmental debate: First, the association is used to suggest problems in the regulatory process. Second, the association implies that progress can be viewed as money spent properly.

Clusters have been made associating "Sound Science" to the regulatory process. Representative De Lay (R-Texas), argued on the Senate floor that "these riders [cuts to environmental legislation on appropriation bills] are about common sense, sound science, and flexibility, they're about making sure that we get real benefits out of our regulatory requirements so that the burden we place on Americans and on our businesses make sense" (H. Res. 178, 1995). The association of "Sound Science" to "common sense" indicates an ability of "sounding right," or "making sense" to the lay person. By explaining science in

terms that “sound right,” the assumption is that anyone can examine science and if it “sounds” good to them, then it is “sound.” Thus, science is taken out of the hands of scientists and placed into the hands of the public.

“Sound Science” can be used to make the regulatory process more effective. De Lay stated: “That is why we are including this package in this bill, the provisions that make up this package are widely supported by a majority of both houses, and signify a return to common sense, sound science, regulatory flexibility, and a more effective regulatory system” (H. Res. 177, 1995). “Sound Science” is not only clustered with “common sense” but also with regulatory flexibility. This is significant because it suggests that there be some flexibility in the regulatory process.

Senator Bond (R-Missouri) spoke of the significant strides the country has made on environmental progress. Bond stated “I think we have come to the point now where we demand that the progress be on the basis of ‘common sense,’ of justifiable actions, of using sound science, of not duplicating efforts, and making sure that the dollars we spend on the environment...are spent properly” (S. Res. 151, 1995). It is implied that progress must be based on “common sense” and “Sound Science.” In this instance, progress refers to the legislative choices made on the environment. If progress is based on “common sense,” one would expect to see regulations and standards that would “just seem right.” Thus, “Sound Science” must have the ability to “sound right,” and “make sense” to a lay person.

Oppositional Terms to “Sound Science”

The terms opposed to “Sound Science” can be grouped in two ways. First, “emotion” and “speculations” are opposed to “Sound Science.” Emotional disputes differ from common sense in that emotional forms of persuasion center on the tragedies of the environment. An emotional argument put forth by environmental advocates would be an easier argument to win, as often times environmental hazards that affect wildlife are easier to portray.

Republicans opposed to environmental legislation wanted to keep emotions out of the debate in order to avoid losing the debate based on this emotional appeal. Whereas, a common sense approach to environmental legislation stems from the difficulty in which scientific information is inherently hard to understand. Common sense arguments focus mainly on whether or not the argument, or logic makes sense. Second, the opposition of “Sound Science” to urgency and political expediency creates an impression of a science determined or influenced by politics. These opposition clusters help illustrate what “Sound Science” is not.

In discussion concerning the National Educational Amendment Act (NEAA), the use of “Sound Science” implies that the Act should be based on science not emotion. The responsibility of the NEAA of 1996 was to ensure that environmental education was not one-sided or heavy-handed. Senator Inhofe (R-Oklahoma) stated: “Environmental ideas must be grounded in sound science and not [in] emotional bias. While these programs have not been guilty of this in the past, this is an important safeguard to protect the future of environmental education” (S. Res. 117, 1996). In this instance emotional bias is used in opposition to “Sound Science,” signifying it as a devil term. This illustrates the strategy of moving the environmental debate into the political arena. While emotions are valid criteria for political decisions, they should not effect science. In the next sentence the Senator contradicts himself by observing that “these programs have not been guilty of this in the past,” and thus, answers a problem he admits never existed.

Another key term that has been used to oppose “Sound Science” is media attention. Senator Faircloth (R-North Carolina) argued that, “...in the past, regulations have been aimed at issues identified through media attention rather than sound science” (S. Res. 115, 1995). This contrast between “Sound Science” and media attention implies that the media has an ability to control which issues gain attention. Issues that gain the media’s attention are those that are most important and relevant. “Sound Science” should not be what the media reports, rather, it should focus on the issues that are relevant and most important to the environment.

Politics and political gain have also been used in opposition to “Sound Science.” Senator Burns (R-Montana) commented, “the bill establishes an Endangered Species Commission which will ensure sound science, not politics, drives our decisions” (S. Res. 167, 1995). The Senator argues that “Sound Science” should “drive” the decisions. This contrast implies that science not concerned with politics is “Sound Science.” Thus, “Sound Science” entails a sense of what is best for the environment regardless of the politics involved.

Republicans also argued that “Sound Science” should be separated from political influences.

Senator Kempthorne (R-Idaho) spoke of the Endangered Species Conservation Act (ESCA) suggesting that science and politics should be separated. The emphasis he stressed was how it must be reformed or else it will collapse due to the enormous pressure of the regulations that it has enacted. Senator Kempthorne in Senate Resolution 167 (1995) stated:

Let me go over the major provisions of the ESCA: This bill effectively separates science from politics, it is designed to actually conserve species while recognizing the rights of private property owners, the current act's mandate to recover every species regardless of cost or consequence is changed to allow us to prioritize our Nation's needs and to conserve species in the process. (15850)

The issues that are raised in this excerpt are three-fold. First, Kempthorne is trying to separate science from politics. Unfortunately, he acknowledges that it conserves some species and at the same time it protects the rights of private property owners: a distinctly political concern. Second, the mandate is changed in order to re-focus its priorities. Finally, the Senator offers that it changes the mandate from "recovering every species regardless of cost or consequences" to making cost and consequences a concern. This moves from conserving all of the species to only the ones that the process would catch in prioritizing the "Nation's" needs. The literal translation of the statement appears to be true in that the bill effectively separates science from politics. It is as if politics ignores science, and legislation completely ignores the science of conservation.

What level of science is needed to achieve the most "realistic assessment" is often questioned. The claim is that the assessment used should be based on the best science available. Senator Domenici (R-New Mexico) stated in Senate Resolution 118 (1995): My good science amendment was a specific remedy in one law.

But I believe that there is an urgent need for realistic and plausible exposure scenarios and sound science in all risk assessments. I am pleased, therefore, that the Dole bill requires that risk assessments be based only on the best available science, a basic requirement which has been sorely needed for far too long. (10395) In this instance "Sound Science" is associated with the "best available science" through the use of the mutual third term "risk assessments." The argument is very similar to the notion that science changes. When associating "Sound Science" to the best science available, the focus shifts to the currency of science. That implies that it is possible for risk assessments to use science that is considered outdated or not current. Unfortunately the Senator does not provide an explanation as to what constitutes the "best science." In not explaining the "best science," environmental advocates are left to guess what constitutes the "best science."

In the final section, the association of "Sound Science" to cost benefit analysis will be examined. The following examples examine those instances where there is a direct link to costs or money. The importance of examining costs associated to the

science used in environmental regulations will help illustrate the claim that the costs should not exceed the benefits. It has often been argued that the cost associated with protecting the environment has been too high.

Representative Lewis (R-California), argued "If you believe that [the] EPA should base decisions on proven sound science, risk assessment, and thorough cost-benefit analysis, by all means join with us in perfecting this bill" (S. Res. 152, 1995). The association of cost-benefit analysis to "Sound Science" implies that there should be concern as to where the money is spent in environmental protection. Furthermore, the cost that would be required for industries to comply with the regulations of the EPA should also be considered. The implication of "Sound Science" and cost-benefit analysis to "perfecting this bill" implies that the bill needs to be perfected, and the way to perfect it is for the EPA to consider the costs and benefits. Unfortunately, it leaves out who gets to assess the costs and who receives the benefits. Representative McIntosh (R-Indiana) stated in the House Resolution 124 (1995) that:

This bill calls upon [the] EPA to reevaluate its rule - making activities in order to set priorities for the expenditure of public funds - to limit regulations only to those that serve a compelling public need, are based on sound science, and are cost effective... The bill is a clarion call for rational and realistic regulations that are based on sound science and subjected to risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis, regulations that are tailored to the magnitude of the problem addressed, and regulations that not only seek to achieve worthwhile goals, but also allow regulated sources to pursue the most effective means to those ends. (7938)

In his statement the representative maintains that money will only be allocated to regulations that "serve a compelling public need." Unfortunately, there is no explanation as to what constitutes the public need. Furthermore, if the public is unaware of the environmental harms, or if there is no threat posed to the public, then the EPA should not be concerned with it. The implication is that only when the public is concerned spending for those regulations will be enacted. There would be no consideration to instances that effect the environment itself or the wildlife it contains.

A cost benefit analysis will help in ensuring that the funds for environmental regulations are prioritized. The Senator explains the criteria for how funds for environmental regulations should be spent from Missouri. Senator Bond (R) explained the allocation of funds stated in Senate Resolution 34 (1996): After passage of this legislation, if sound science indicates that a significant risk needs

to be addressed, then, of course we must support sensible and cost-effective regulations. That is what this is all about. Making sure that we get regulations focused on the design to get rid of those risks...We have said that we are making funds available to be allocated on the basis of need, on the basis of sound science. If that, in fact, is such a need and sound science requires it, then money will go there...So we put the money into State revolving funds, we put the money into programs where it will be allocated on the basis of sound science, where it will be allocated on the basis of how much danger is posed. That is how the money should be allocated. (1907)

The association of "Sound Science" to need suggests that in order for the science used to be considered "sound," it must fulfill some need. Another basis for how the funds are allocated is that they must be based on "how much danger is posed." This implies that if the harm does not affect or "pose" a threat than there is no need for funding. The use of "danger posed" is ambiguous. Danger has two possible implications or interpretations. First, it could be interpreted as danger towards people. Second, danger could be directed towards species or an animal becoming endangered. By not addressing this ambiguity the Senator allows the term to be vague and ambiguous.

Republicans of the 104th Congress did not define the term "Sound Science" they operationalized it in their rhetoric. Balance and change were associated with "Sound Science" indicating how both science and nature possess the ability to change or evolve. The essay also examined the connection of "Sound Science" to "common sense." This association illustrated the need for the science to sound right or make sense to the lay people. The terms used in opposition to "Sound Science" provided further insight in the strategic use of the term. Terms such as emotion and speculation suggested that science cannot be concerned with emotional appeals and that it should be proven. Politics was used in opposition indicating that science used in determining environmental outcomes should not be tied up in political influences. Finally, the association of "Sound Science" to cost benefit analysis and risk assessment was examined. It was implied that there needs to be a "realistic" risk assessment process but "realistic" was not defined. Furthermore, assessments should be made based on the best science available. The examination of "Sound Science" in conjunction with cost benefit analysis indicated that money should be spent based on the existence of a public need or a posed threat.

Through the strategic the use of "Sound Science," Republicans opposed to environmental legislation masked the real issues of the environmental debate.

The argument that the EPA and environmental advocates fail to use “Sound Science” in the regulations and legislation they put forth was articulated. In successfully shifting the argument away from environmental issues to the term “Sound Science,” Republicans opposed to environmental legislation limited the argumentative ground of environmental advocates. Thus, the argument shifted from the reasoning why environmental concerns are important and relevant, to whether or not the science used in determining the standard for environmental legislation was “sound.”

3. Implications for public argument

This study offers several implications for public argument. First, it consolidated some of the previous research regarding definitions in argument. Past studies focused on how definitions promoted understanding in argument. However, these studies ignored the role that definition can play in masking issues by removing them from discussion. In the case of the environmental concerns of the 104th Congress, the use of “Sound Science” masked such issues as the need to protect air and water quality or endangered species. Conceptual ambiguity resulted in a lack of focused discussion. Vague and ambiguous terms are not clearly defined, thus their meaning can only be based on assumptions operationalized in their use. Furthermore, discussion may focus on the meaning of the ambiguous term, potentially avoiding the issues more relevant to the argument.

This study found that ambiguity in defining a term could function to limit meaningful debate by restricting the argumentative grounds of dialogue. More importantly, leaving key terms ambiguous allows proponents to shift focus from the issues central to the argument, to the definition of the term itself. One of the defining characteristics of definitional argument is the ability to delimit argumentative grounds. The associations employed by some Republicans of the 104th Congress aimed at establishing “Sound Science” as a standard for science used in environmental legislation. Keeping the meaning of “Sound Science” vague and ambiguous forced environmental advocates to answer critiques concerning the type of science used and kept policy concerns muted. In shifting the focus of the argument, opponents of environmental legislation were able to stall and even impede the passing of more stringent legislation. More importantly, by keeping “Sound Science” vague and ambiguous they were able to focus the debate on issues that were beneficial to their agenda.

Public argument “is publicized, made available for wide consumption and persuasion of the polity at large” (Fisher, 1989, p. 71). When environmental cuts

were openly debated on the House and Senate floor, they were defeated. The attachment of riders to appropriation bills suggested that the Republicans opposed to environmental legislation sought to avoid public scrutiny concerning their claim of regulatory reform.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Denying The Argument Of Indifference: Reclaiming The Possibility Of Intimacy In Discourse



Contrary to the cliché, technology has been successful in making the world a much larger place. Technology has opened up places and interfaces where, literally and figuratively, no person has gone before. From collaboration within multi-cultural task forces, to empowering the oppressed through education, to debating the succession of the next Dali Lama, we are inundated with intriguing information and we have relatively informed opinions about what we know. In turn, the way we “read” each other, our skills in relationship and our competence in conflict become more and more crucial to productive, if not always peaceful progress. We are, individually and as social groups, involved in more and various critical situations than we have ever been before.

As the future promises more opportunity for diverse interaction and as technology falsely promises to bring us closer together simply because we have greater access to one another, it is up to us as social and political beings to work out how that access will transfer (or not) to intimacy, and conflict to productivity. The task that obviously follows such opportunities and challenges is one of argument: How do we communicate what we believe is best and respond productively, in turn, to the conflicts that such beliefs engender? One branch of argument theory has tended to overlook the quality of relationship between interlocutors in its attempt to reduce such relationships to formal logic – overlaying a mathematical function on the face of humanity. Another branch of argument theory (following the lead of other academic scholarship) has given itself over to a postmodern ethic where any notion of objectivity is simply the fool of subjectivity’s reigning court and competing ideals and truths are no more than socially constructed opinion.

Relying upon formal logic, conflict is simply an error; using the postmodern ethic to inform argument studies, conflict is all that’s possible. The problem here is that our theory often leaves us unwittingly empty handed. Argument theory that attempts to allow real solutions to real problems emerge, must do more than figure or tolerate; it must, by definition, be discontent with passive disagreement.

I would like to make a case for the possibility of intimacy in argument – one that affirms the possibility of knowing the other in meaningful, if imperfect ways. I suggest that we adopt an epistemological model that rejects the false dichotomy which characterizes knowing the other as either impossible or inevitable. We might embrace, instead, intimacy, or a willingness to fully engage the other, even (or especially) in conflict. This model of knowing would recognize the other as an integral, autonomous member of a community of fellow truth seekers, willing and

capable of the intercourse of productive dialogue. Intimacy requires that we recognize that we are in relation, and yet also in relationship.

At the time I began to study argument in earnest I also began an intensive study of Paulo Freire's theories of education. Freire devised a method of teaching illiterates in the North East of Brazil based upon his philosophy that, in learning to read and write, students and teachers could become active participants in their education by thinking and acting as subjects of their own existence, not objects of someone else's. Freire describes a "culture of silence" of the dispossessed, and he challenges students to think critically about their selfhood and the social situation in which they find those selves.

While studying Freire's pedagogy, I was simultaneously engaged in implementing, to the best of my ability and knowledge, some of the Freirean philosophy of "liberatory pedagogy" in my own composition classroom, a classroom which was centered around written argument. So influential was the Freirean model (critical reflection paired with action, or praxis, as the basis of all learning) to my training as a teacher, that I was, in fact, largely unaware of the theory that informed my practice until I began a course of study out of the core texts of the "radical teaching" movement. We were, quite naturally, reading Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, several pieces by bell hooks, Ira Shor's *Critical Teaching and Everyday Life* and C.H. Knoblauch and Lil Brannon's *Critical Teaching and the Idea of Literacy*, among others. It was perhaps by way of this parallel and intensive study of argument theory and liberatory pedagogy that I began to be irritated, and then frustrated, and then indignant and finally curious about a very peculiar and yet very prevalent characteristic of the Freirean philosophy, at least in its American interpretation: It was impossible to argue with the theory. In addition, the ethos of the piece, and I am thinking specifically of the Knoblauch and Brannon now, was so belligerent as to be forbidding.

I think it is important to note right up front that my distrust of the Freirean philosophy did not immediately present itself. Critical teaching would seem to be a model of intimacy in education - a respectful, dialogic, reflective and critically aware approach to learning - but reading the core texts of the movement proved otherwise. It was not until reading Knoblauch and Brannon's manifesto that I became painfully aware of my personal frustration with the argumentative content (and the ethos) of the piece. Not unlike Karl Popper's experience with Marxism, psychoanalysis and individual psychology which he relates in the landmark *Conjectures and Refutations*, I began to closely examine not only my

own reaction to the work, but the implications of the theory to the wider world. As Popper relates:

The study of any of [these explanatory theories] seemed to have the effect of an intellectual conversion or revelation, opening your eyes to a new truth hidden from those not yet initiated. Once your eyes were thus opened you saw confirming instances everywhere: the world was full of *verifications* of the theory. Whatever happened always confirmed it (Conjectures 1968: 34-5).

Again, like Popper's ambivalent interest in the work of Marx, Freud and Alder, I began to mistrust Knoblauch and Brannon; and in the same way, I began to see that a body of knowledge that I had previously admired began to self destruct under the weight of what it seemed to consider its own best strength - irrefutability. It is impossible to argue with a Freirean precisely because their theory has, to use Popper's language, inoculated itself against counter argument. If, for instance, one were to oppose the mission of "radical teachers" as "dogmatic fidelity to leftist ideology," (which Knoblauch and Brannon consider as a possible criticism) those espousing the theory would answer (as Knoblauch and Brannon do) that their opponents are simply unknowing victims of the same oppressive system which they, in full knowledge, are resisting (26-7). By claiming that any belief system that conflicts with theirs is delusional or naive, Knoblauch and Brannon adopt the stance of a Marxist wielding "false consciousness" or a Freudian theorizing "repression:" whatever argument may be put forward is simply further evidence of delusion.

This rhetorical move, this coopting of the interlocutors argument as part of the rhetor's own, serves to completely insulate the theory from criticism, protecting the claim even before any dissension can possibly be raised. It disallows criticism by intercepting any possible objections and claiming that such criticism are only further proof that the rhetor is, in fact, correct. Because this rhetorical move demands the end of argument and the ethos is one of sweeping indifference toward, and dismissal of, the other, I suggest that we begin to recognize the move as *argumentative insouciance*. As is the hallmark of argumentative insouciance, any instance of criticizing a liberatory pedagogy or the radical teaching movement itself becomes proof of the interlocutor's own implication in the system of oppressive teaching.

I have borrowed the idea of such insouciance from the work of Reed Way Dasenbrock who locates "methodological insouciance" within the work of certain literary theorists who have "changed our notion of admissible evidence" by

proclaiming that any counter argument is irrelevant because any counter argument is only evidence that the theory in question applies with special force (547). Like Popper, Dasenbrock identifies this particular type of irrefutability with Freudian repression when he demonstrates that Harold Bloom's work on influence contains the hallmark of insouciance: "the notion that we are often unable to articulate feelings of, say, hostility but our very inability to articulate such feelings may be evidence of their existence and depth. This does away with the possibility of any corroborating evidence whatsoever" (547-48). Knoblauch and Brannon employ just such evidence manipulation when they insist that anyone who disagrees with them is delusional (on the grounds that their insecurity makes them depend on false notions like canonical literature, aesthetic discernment or social cohesion [19]), naive (on the grounds that they just haven't heard "both stories" [27] or "remain unconscious of their ideological dispositions" [24]), or implicated in maintaining oppressive forces (on the grounds that "the economic self interest ...gives way here to a broader...alarming, ethnocentrism" [20]).

The critical teaching movement's explicit exigency ("radical social change"), which "presumes that American citizens should understand, accept, and live amicably amidst the realities of cultural diversity - along axes of gender, race, class, and ethnicity (Knoblauch and Brannon 1993: 6), must be seen as admirable goals that should be pursued with vigor. However, it is the delicate task of transferring theory to methodology that is crucial to most endeavors. Because the warrant behind Knoblauch and Brannon's argument is universally acceptable (living amicably amidst the realities of cultural diversity is desirable), the burden of proof is to convincingly demonstrate to a critical reader that what they believe to be the best pedagogical strategy to achieve these ends is, in fact, liberatory pedagogy or "radical teaching." It is at this juncture - where the Brazilian pedagogical philosophy for illiterates meets the American academy - that the need for practicing argument ethically, dialogically, and intimately becomes crucial. However, Knoblauch and Brannon disallow any challenging voice by employing the tactic of argumentative insouciance, while their own theory claims to champion freedom, community and dialogue. The irony is devastating here.

Knoblauch and Brannon begin by isolating four arguments about literacy:

1. the argument for functional literacy
2. the argument for cultural literacy

3. the argument for literacy- for-personal-growth and
4. the argument for critical literacy.

The authors aim to demonstrate how the view of literacy that they advocate is superior to the others by the method of discrediting the other three until only “critical literacy” is left standing. This may at first seem a classical argumentative practice until we look closer at the method by which Knoblauch and Brannon meet this challenge. Taking the functionalist perspective as their first opponent, the authors describe this “representation of literacy” as a pragmatic epistemology carried out with utilitarian ethics. Knoblauch and Brannon sprinkle their description of the benefits of this perspective with sarcasm (“the advantage of...appealing to concrete needs rather than...self improvement...or the possibility of changing an unfair world” [18]) and tongue-in-cheek praise (“The functionalist argument has a more hidden advantage as well...it safeguards the status quo” [18]). Knoblauch and Brannon imply that any practitioner working through a functionalist perspective, say, is guilty of suppressing real learning for the sake of enforcing an oppressive social order. This use of argumentative insouciance denies any possibility of intimacy, the rhetorical move denotes a refusal to see the other as integral and autonomous, and interdicts the possibility of engagement and productive dialogue.

Next, cultural literacy is shot down for its paranoia and self interest (“popularly sustained as well among individuals and social groups who feel insecure about their own standing and future prospects when confronted by the volatile mix of ethnic heritages and socioeconomic interests that make up American life”). Literacy for personal growth is discarded because of its naivete, its delusional beliefs and its affected sincerity (“it borrows from long-hallowed American myths of self-determination, freedom of expression and supposedly boundless personal opportunity...Using the rhetoric of moral sincerity”). It is most important here to recognize that these pseudo-arguments suffer both in ethos and ethics, as they attempt to characterize not the opponent’s position, but the opponent herself. Having effectively stripped their prey of all legitimacy, Knoblauch and Brannon deliver the death blow: these other practitioners aren’t even aware of their own ideological dispositions. Apparently, once the functionalists, culturalists and expressivists are able to reach the level of self awareness and critical consciousness that Knoblauch and Brannon must be capable of, they too, will choose liberatory pedagogy as the right path. Besides the implications that the

aggressive ethos, the ad hominem attacks, the marshaling metaphors and the sarcasm had already had for the authors' ethos, I began to sense a conspiracy theory coming on.

Knoblauch and Brannon's rhetorical stance as an act of communication can only be recognized as pseudo-argument because it denies the one universally accepted element of real argument: discourse with a known interlocutor. Argumentative insouciance precludes the possibility of discourse; it is self absorption taken to a monastic extreme. In order to employ this rhetorical move and form this pseudo-argument, the writer denies any possibility of merit in counter argument and in doing so, denies the value of the other's beliefs and perspectives. As such, argumentative insouciance can only be successful in demonstrating a certain ideology. Not unlike Marxism, liberatory pedagogy relies upon a politically sound warrant to justify the forcefulness of a welcomed, yet prescribed, ideology which can only serve as a substitution for the oppressive police force of the dominant class. Any argument that denies the possibility of dialogue also signals the end of productive conflict, and the end of conflict is the end of freedom as well. It could be that liberatory pedagogy is the best methodology to use to empower students as they seek their own education and their own consciousness.

However, in arguing that this belief is best, Knoblauch and Brannon have abandoned the spirit of the Freirian philosophy in favor of the error of irrefutability necessary for a powerful ideology. It is this error of irrefutability, manifesto masquerading as argument, which, once turned to methodology and advocated by a practitioner, becomes argumentative insouciance.

Intimacy is, rather, the hallmark of productive argument. Argument must be an act of intimacy to produce useable results. If we are to consider how we best communicate what we believe - the best pedagogical method in this example - we must not only assert our own position, we must fully engage with the opposed other. Intimacy in argument is discursive with a real, autonomous, integral other and it encourages dialogue. I am not interested here in naming errors that can be considered flaws, or "fallacies" which occur in what would otherwise be sound positions. Rather, I would like to suggest that we begin to isolate those arguments that are unproductive and even unethical in a more wholesale way; specifically, those moments in discourse which abbreviate, ignore, diminish or recompose the interlocutor in such a way as to make the relevant audience strangely irrelevant. Because I identify argumentative insouciance with an unwillingness and an inability to identify and engage with a discourse partner, I would like to consider

Plato's *Symposium* as one source for the conditions and potentials of intimacy. I do not find, however, that the *Symposium's* notions of Love will offer us a model of peaceful resolution but rather, an acknowledgment of conflict and an insistence upon dialogue.

Plato's Socrates points out that Love (the quality that I am identifying with "intimacy" here) is "neither fair nor good," (192) but "a mean between the two" (193). This is so, according to the character Socrates, because Love desires the "fair and the good" and "he has no desire for that of which he feels no want" (195). The character Socrates uses another example that is relevant to our discussion here to illustrate his point; it is that of the mean between wisdom and ignorance, which he calls "right opinion:"

...which, as you know, being incapable of giving a reason, is not knowledge (for how can knowledge be devoid of reason?) nor again, ignorance (for neither can ignorance attain the truth), but is clearly something which is a mean between ignorance and wisdom (193).

As rhetors, we must first recognize that what we offer is neither pure ignorance nor pure wisdom. What we offer is hypothesis - "right opinion" - that does not deny Truth, in fact it aims directly toward Truth, but at the same time it is always subject to rigorous testing, retesting and redetermination in a community of fellow truth-seekers. It is important to understand the implications of such a "mean" here. It is believing that the virtues of the ideal of objectivity are possible while at the same time recognizing the constraints of sure subjectivity. As the character Socrates points out in Plato's *Symposium*, "that which is always flowing in is always flowing out," and Love, or intimacy, being the progeny of Poverty and Plenty, is "never in want and never in wealth...a mean between ignorance and knowledge" (194).

Recognizing our beliefs as hypothesis and valuing our interlocutor as one worthy of love, allows us to accept intimate communication (dialogue) as the "... intermediate between the divine and the mortal... He [Love] interprets between gods and men... the mediator who spans the chasm which divides them, and therefore in him all is bound together (193)." In such a way, dialogue, which includes the quality of necessary otherness along with a longing for intimacy, is "dialectical objectivity" in practice.

We understand that to solve real-world problems - the only actual value of argument theory - we must discover a road between the all-or-nothingness of pure logic and pure subjectivity. But how do we do that? How do we hold, what

seem to us contradictory views, both in our minds at the same time? I believe we must begin by creating a paradigm shift that values intimacy equally with logic, and reinventing the sense of the Aristotelian mean imbedded in the notion of "right opinion." George Levine writes of such endeavors that "It requires an extraordinary and perhaps impossible balance, a tentativeness that keeps all aspirations to knowledge from becoming aspirations to power as well"(72). It is just this "extraordinary and impossible balance" that I have come to believe must become the central issue for theorists who study argument and that must inform the serious and conscientious application of argument theory to common problems from all disciplines.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Argumentational Integrity: A Training Program For Dealing With Unfair Argumentational Contributions



1. Introduction

In this contribution we look at the topic of 'argumentation' from an ethical perspective. In our research project 'argumentational integrity in everyday communication' (funded by the German Research Association since 1988) we are concerned with the conditions, under which people evaluate argumentative speech acts as 'fair' or 'unfair' as well as with the cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions to unfair contributions in argumentative discussions. After 10 years of basic research we are now working on a training program based on the results of this research. In our contribution we would like to sketch the main problem dimensions of argumentational (un-)fairness and present the basic concept of the training program.

To start with, let us first illustrate the main problem dimensions by presenting an authentic argumentational episode, which has been recorded and transcribed from a TV-Talkshow. Mr. Krause is a member of the nonsmoker-association, Dr. Troschke is a physician and author. Dr. Troschke and Mr. Krause are discussing, whether smoking is an addiction or not.

Troschke: I try to differentiate the problems in so far, as they can be reasonably discussed. There is a part of smokers who are dependent on the effect of nicotine and who can be labeled as addicted in a very broad sense. This is a relatively small part of smokers who need help to deal with this dependent behavior. The majority of smokers, however, cannot be regarded as addicted, what is simply demonstrable by the fact that, the worldwide most successful method to quit smoking is to decide from one day to the next: I quit smoking.

Krause: For the fifth, tenth, twentieth time!

Troschke: Well, I think, it is extremely difficult to discuss matters on a level where

people have different levels of competence and one claims to be able to talk about things one does not know anything about. I do not know, what you really know about addiction problems, about drug addiction or anything else.

Krause: I'm sure, you understand more than I do.

2. Elaboration of problem dimensions

By means of this example we want to illustrate six problem dimensions, which we take up in our training concept.

(1) Is this conversation an argumentation? What are the defining characteristics of an argumentative exchange? What is meant by fair or unfair contributions to argumentative discussions?

(2) We assume that participants in argumentative discussions have to consider certain rules of fair argumentation. In our example one of these rules is violated by Dr. Troschke's contribution: 'Well, I think it is extremely difficult to discuss matters on a level where people have different levels of competence and one claims to be able to talk about things one does not know anything about.' We reconstruct this rule violation as a specific form of discrediting of others, that is the denial of competence. Which rules of fair argumentation have to be considered in general, and what type of rule violations have to be distinguished in natural argumentative discussions? (3) If Dr. Troschke really violates one of the rules of fair argumentation, would we reproach him with this violation in any case? Imagine Dr. Troschke was highly emotionally aroused or provoked. Would you still reproach him? How do we come to an adequate evaluation of intentionality and moral blameworthiness? Are there perhaps guilt increasing or guilt decreasing circumstances which have to be taken into account?

(4) Imagine Dr. Troschke indeed violates a rule of fair argumentation. How does the rule violation become manifest at the surface level of the language system? Does Dr. Troschke's language use tell us, whether he violates the rule intentionally? For example, if we arrive at the conclusion that Dr. Troschke is a highly competent speaker, it appears unlikely that he violates the rule by mistake.

(5) As mentioned before, Dr. Troschke discredits Mr. Krause by his utterance: 'I do not know what you really know about addiction problems, about drug addiction or anything else.' Imagine you were the addressee of this utterance: What would have been your reaction? In our example, Mr. Krause chooses an ironical return: 'I'm sure, you understand more than I do'. With this reaction he addresses the rule violation indirectly. Are there reactions which would have been more effective and adequate?

(6) Leaving the example apart one can raise the fundamental question: Why should contributions to argumentative discussions be fair? This question leads us to the theoretical basis of our training concept which we will present in the following.

3. Overview of the training concept

In our training program, we deal with the problem dimensions just mentioned. The general goal of the training is to raise the awareness of different manifestations of argumentational unfairness and to build up a variety of (fair) reactions to unfair contributions. The training consists of six core units, which are preceded by three introductory steps and followed by one final step. In the following we will concentrate on the core units, which are elaborated as short-, long- and extension-modules. These modules can be combined in a flexible way according to individual needs, expectations and time resources of the participants. The units of our training concept are summarized as:

Introductory steps

- (I) Warming up
- (II) Elaboration of the problem dimensions
- (III) Selection of modules

Core units

- (1) Concept of 'argumentation' and conditions of argumentational integrity
- (2) Characteristics of argumentational unfairness and standards of argumentational integrity
- (3) Blameworthiness and moral evaluation of unfair contributions
- (4) Manifestations of argumentational unfairness
- (5) Reactions
- (6) Justification of argumentational integrity

Final step

- (IV) Feedback and evaluation

In the first training dimension we elaborate in cooperation with the participants a definition of 'argumentation' and point out, that the term 'argumentation' can be used in a descriptive and a prescriptive manner. We consider the prescriptive use of the term 'argumentation' as the more typical one in everyday communication. In the descriptive usage, an argumentative discussion is conceptualized as a conversation type, which is defined by four characteristics: In an argumentative exchange participants attempt to find a solution to a controversial issue (that is

the requirement) by means of a partner-/listener-oriented exchange (that is the process), which is based on reasons for a position and made acceptable to all participants; giving reasons for a position and making it acceptable to all participants are considered to be the goal characteristics of an argumentation. In a prescriptive sense, the reasons should be good reasons and the acceptance should be reached in a cooperative manner. These two goal characteristics, rationality and cooperation, are the basis of an ethical evaluation of contributions in argumentative discussions and can be summarized as 'generalizability' (Perelman 1979). In order potentially to reach a rational and cooperative solution to an argumentative discussion contributions should conform to these four conditions which were formulated on recourse to the literature of argumentational theory (for a comprehensive explication see Groeben, Schreier & Christmann 1993; Schreier, Groeben & Christmann 1995):

Conditions of argumentational integrity

- (1) formal validity
- (2) sincerity/truth
- (3) justice on the content level
- (4) procedural justice/communicativity

We have defined the keeping to these conditions as fair, their conscious violation as unfair argumentation (Groeben, Schreier & Christmann 1993). We assume that persons who are engaged in an argumentative exchange know at least intuitively about the prescriptive dimensions as well as the argumentative conditions. That means, when people take part in an argumentative discussion, they implicitly expect, that other participants meet the argumentative conditions. In the training, the participants have the opportunity to explicate and eventually elaborate their implicit expectations by means of various exercises and by means of group discussions and short lectures.

In the second training dimension, the four argumentative conditions are further elaborated. In a first step we specify four characteristics of (un-)fair argumentation, which can be regarded as the 'negative' of the four argumentative conditions; on a more concrete level, these characteristics are specified by 11 classes of argumentational rule violations, which have been derived empirically by a classification of 35 rhetorical strategies representatively chosen from the popular rhetorical literature (Schreier & Groeben 1996; see Appendix). In the present context, it is important to note that it was empirically demonstrated that

violations of the standards of integrity are conspicuous and are negatively evaluated both by participants and by neutral observers; that is the standards of argumentational integrity have proven to be empirically valid (e.g. Schreier, Groeben & Blicke 1995; Schreier & Groeben 1996). The goal of this training dimension is to sensitize participants for the 11 standards of fair argumentation and to enable them to correctly identify and label the respective rule violations. For this purpose we have prepared various tasks such as working on written episodes and texts, role playing, group discussion and so on which we will refer to later.

According to our definition of argumentational unfairness as conscious rule violation, the presence of a violation as such may not be sufficient for a personal reproach. Therefore, in the third dimension we focus on the question of blameworthiness and moral evaluation of violations of argumentational integrity. In our basic research, we have conceptualized the unfairness evaluation in analogy to German criminal law which distinguishes between two types of 'facts': 'objective facts' representing observable features of an action (e.g. to damage a car or to kill another person) and 'subjective facts' relating to the actor's state of awareness in bringing about an offence (e.g. intentional, by negligence, unknowingly). We have transferred this model to the field of argumentative discussions; hence we have conceptualized the evaluation of unfairness as an interplay between the severity of 'objective facts' (argumentational rule violations such as 'distortion of meaning', hindrance of participation' etc.) and the degree of subjective awareness in committing a rule violation (Groeben, Schreier & Christmann 1993). The relevance of these two components for the diagnosis and evaluation of argumentational unfairness has been demonstrated in several empirical studies (e.g. Groeben, Nüse & Gauler 1992; Christmann & Groeben 1995; Christmann, Sladek & Groeben 1998). With regard to the example at the beginning of our contribution, it has to be examined, whether the discrediting contribution of Dr. Troschke was committed intentionally or not. As the degree of awareness cannot be observed, but must be inferred, we have specified several indicators of intentionality, which may help to judge the question of intentionality (Christmann, Schreier & Groeben 1996; Schreier 1997); we shall return to this point in the next training dimension. But even considering both, objective and subjective facts, may not be sufficient for a personal reproach. In the same way as in the criminal law -which pronounces a non-guilty verdict if the act is justified - evaluation of argumentational contributions should also consider possible justifications and excuses. A rule violation might be justified if a speaker pursues

positive goals by his contribution (e.g. to stir somebody) and it might be excused if the speaker is in a highly aroused state or low in rhetorical and argumentational competence. The empirical results of our research provide evidence that people do, in fact, consider possible guilt decreasing justifications and excuses in their evaluation process, and that an unfairness verdict can be modified in certain circumstances (Nüse, Groeben, Christmann & Gauler 1993; Christmann, Sladek & Groeben, 1998). In this training dimension, the participants explicate their (rather implicit) structures of evaluation by means of our empirically validated conceptualization of the evaluation process; the explication and elaboration of the respective cognitions may help to substantiate the moral evaluation of unfair contributions in everyday communication and may prevent a rigorous condemnation of any argumentational rule violation.

After having introduced the core training dimensions, we will sketch the other dimensions briefly. In the fourth dimension we will focus on the question of how argumentational rule violations are typically realized in everyday language and how the degree of subjective awareness can be inferred by linguistic indicators on the content level, the interactional level and the argumentational level. In doing so, we refer to the results of our pragmalinguistic analyses, which led to different indicators of these three levels of discourse (Schreier & Groeben 1995). The goal of the fifth training dimension is to strengthen the competence of participants to react adequately to violations of the integrity standards and build up a broad repertoire of different reactions to unfair utterances; we regard appropriate reactions to unfair argumentational contributions as an important protection against manipulation. Referring to the example at the beginning, Krause replies to the Troschke's discrediting contribution by the following: "I'm sure, you understand more than I do". This can be interpreted as an ironic agreement. Apart from this reaction, many other reactions are possible, ranging from cooperative ignoring, through indirect or direct response, up to confrontative, unfair or even breaking-off reactions. Altogether we differentiate between 11 reaction categories, which have been derived from empirical studies (Christmann & Groeben 1993; Schreier, Groeben & Mlynski 1994). In the training we introduce these reaction categories, practice different kinds of reactions by using role-playing techniques and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the reactions with regard to specific situational circumstances. In the sixth dimension we turn to the question, how the demand on argumentational fairness can be justified and why violations of the argumentational conditions, and of the

standards of argumentational integrity, can be criticized from an ethical point of view. By focussing on the justification and legitimacy of argumentational fairness, we sketch appropriate concepts of 'rationality' and 'cooperation' and we point out how individual bounds of rationality can be overcome by a dialogical principle of rationality. Besides this value-oriented point of view, we discuss possibilities of legitimation under a purpose-oriented perspective and illustrate these possibilities by examples of everyday communication.

4. Instructional design and exemplification

In developing the instructional design we attached great importance in realizing a flexible variety of instructional methods in order to meet the different needs and interests of individual training groups. In accordance with theoretical drafts by Ausubel (1963) and Hermann (1973) we distinguish between four instructional classes:

1. deductive reception learning,
2. inductive reception learning,
3. deductive discovery learning and
4. inductive discovery learning.

We realize these classes by means of a variety of instructional methods (Gudjons, Teske & Winkel 1991) with different ranges (Schulz 1965; 1981; 1996):

- (a) instructional concepts (e.g. elements of the Cognitive Apprenticeship approach (Collins, Brown & Newman 1987), traditional teacher-centered instruction),
- (b) settings (learning alone, with a partner, in groups or in plenum) and
- (c) instructional actions (e.g. short lecture, role play, video analysis, case method, discussion).

We apply these instructional methods according to different instructional functions (Gage & Berliner 1986). The short modules, for example, generally aim at a condensed impartation of basic and often well structured content. In this case, we see no reason to discard from traditional instructional methods of reception learning, like expert modelling or short lectures given by the training team. For a deeper understanding and for an application and transfer of the acquired knowledge and skills we take recourse to instructional methods of discovery learning like role play, case method or stage-management (realized in particular in long and extension modules). With these methods we also account for principles of modern constructivist approaches, e.g. cooperative and authentic

learning, multiple perspectives and multiple contexts (Collins, Brown & Newman 1987; Spiro, Feltovich, Jacobson & Coulson 1991; Gerstenmaier & Mandl 1995). Of course we support the instructional methods by current methods of moderation and media-presentation (Seifert 1993). The whole training method realizes a considerable variety of selectable content and instructional methods. In the following section we give you a brief description of the training dimensions 2 and 5.

In dimension 2 we try to improve participants' competence with respect to the identification of unfair contributions in argumentative discussions. For this purpose, we treat the 11 standards of argumentational integrity and the corresponding strategies of unfair argumentation. For each of the 11 standards we offer a short, a long and an extension module. For an illustration we present the modules of standard 8 (discrediting of others). A violation of this standard can be found in our introductory example where Dr. Troschke denies Mr. Krause's competence. Standard 8 has been formulated as follows: "Do not, even by negligence, discredit other participants." Within this standard we distinguish the following nine strategies of discrediting:

1. argumentum ad personam,
2. ridiculing one's opponent,
3. denying the opponent's competence to argue the issue (this is the strategy Dr. Troschke realizes in our example),
4. calling the moral integrity in question,
5. devaluing the opponent's self-respect,
6. argument by reproaching the opponent with past mistakes,
7. affectation of failure to understand backed by prestige,
8. "psychologizing" and
9. insinuation. At the end of the training, the participants should be able to recognize these strategies in everyday discussions immediately and precisely.

For this purpose we have prepared several instructional versions for the short, long and extension modules. In the short module we provide for two versions. In the first version, the training team gives a compact survey of standard 8 and the respective strategies. The second version has been elaborated in the form of a quiz (see Appendix). First the participants are introduced to an argumentational situation. Then they are asked to generate discrediting utterances which they subsequently have to classify according to the 9 strategies distinguished within the standard 'discrediting of others'. In the long module, the participants

generally consolidate and further elaborate their knowledge, often supported by a practical training of diagnostic competences. In the case of standard 8, the participants analyze and discuss a fictitious argumentative discussion. The extension module generally provides for more complex topics to advance application and transfer. In this case, the participants analyze the video record of an authentic discussion on TV. In all modules of dimension 2 the participants have the opportunity to bring in personal experiences with unfair contributions to argumentative discussions. This will probably lead to questions concerning possible reactions to unfair contributions.

Reactions to argumentative unfairness are the subject of dimension 5. In the following section we give a brief description of this dimension. In dimension 5 we first want to convey a variety of possible reactions to unfair utterances on a cognitive level. In doing so, we will account for interactive, personal and speech characteristics. Subsequently, the participants have the opportunity to practise different reactions in role plays.

In the short module, the participants first generate possible reactions to rule violations. We then present eleven reaction categories, which have been derived from factor analytical studies and replicated in further empirical studies:

1. cooperative ignoring,
2. observant consideration,
3. active clarifying,
4. self protection/defence,
5. defensive ignoring,
6. indirect response,
7. direct response,
8. confrontative discussion,
9. unfairness,
10. inner breaking off,
11. overt breaking off.

We also explicate the three corresponding dimensions of evaluation:

1. continuing vs. leaving,
2. direct-emotional vs. indirect-controlled,
3. problem-centered/cooperative vs. person-centered/confrontative.

Additionally we discuss criteria for the evaluation of individual reactions. To illustrate these criteria, remember our introductory example. With his

utterance: "I'm sure, you understand more than I do" Mr. Krause realizes an indirect response. This indirect response can be evaluated as a clever reaction for two reasons: On the one hand Mr. Krause indicates that he is not willing to ignore Dr. Troschke's unfair contribution. On the other hand he shows that he is not interested in risking the discussion at all. In other cases an indirect response might be a too weak reaction, that is, it might not work, e.g. if participants in an argumentative discussion ignore the indirect response and continue to make unfair contributions. In this case a stronger reaction would be necessary.

The long module provides for role plays to practice the different reaction categories. The participants are enabled to compare and to evaluate the different reaction categories according to the three criteria of evaluation and additionally with regard to the guilt increasing and guilt decreasing circumstances which have been elaborated in dimension 3.

The extension module allows a further discussion of advantages and disadvantages of the reaction category 'indirect response' and a discussion of the problem of 'delayed reactions'.

5. Evaluation

Our training concept will be evaluated under two aspects: (1) Evaluation of the overall effectivity ('product effectivity'), and (2) evaluation of single training dimensions during the training process ('process evaluation').

To evaluate the overall effectiveness we compare the results of the participants in the training with the results of a group of untrained subjects in a pre-post-design. As the training should improve the diagnosis of unfair contributions and the reactions to unfair contributions, the overall effectiveness is assessed on the level of identification and correct labeling of argumentational rule violations as well as on the level of reactions. For both evaluation levels, we have developed and validated standardized instruments, so we are able to evaluate the overall effectiveness according to criteria demanded in psychological methodology.

The evaluation of single training dimensions is carried out at the end of each dimension by means of standardized exercise-sheets. These exercise-sheets have multiple functions: They serve to recapitulate the main content of the training dimension and give feedback to the participants about their personal success on the respective training dimensions. Last but not least the standardized exercise-sheets serve to evaluate the training dimensions from a process-oriented perspective and give valuable information about the contribution of each training

dimension to the overall effectiveness.

At the present stage we are testing and improving the training concept which we have developed. The improved training concept will be carried out in administration- and in business-contexts. We hope that the training concept will help to improve argumentational practice and to find solutions to controversial issues which conform to the goal characteristics of rationality and cooperation.

APPENDIX

Standards of Argumentational Integrity

I. Faulty arguments

1. Violation of stringency: Do not intentionally present your arguments in a non-stringent fashion (e.g.: “proof by inconsequent argument”).
2. Refusal of justification: Do not intentionally avoid giving any or intentionally give insufficient reasons in support of your assertions (e.g.: “appeal to mere authority”).

II. Insincere contributions

3. Pretence of truth: Do not make such assertions out to be objectively true which you know to be either false or merely subjective (e.g.: “making false statements”).
4. Shifting of responsibility: Do not intentionally deny, claim, or transfer responsibility to others (persons or institutions) without justification (e.g.: “shifting one’s competence onto someone else”).
5. Pretence of consistency: Do not consciously present any arguments which are not or are only seemingly congruent with what you otherwise do or say (e.g.: “discrepancy between words and actions”).

III. Unjust arguments

6. Distortion of meaning: Do not repeat contributions made by others, your own contributions, or facts in such a way as to intentionally distort their original meaning (e.g.: “changing the meaning of a term during an argument”).
7. Impossibility of compliance: Do not, and be it only by negligence, demand anything of others which you know they will not be able to do (e.g.: “making two mutually exclusive demands”).
8. Discrediting of others: Do not, and be it only by negligence, discredit other participants (e.g.: “denying the opponent’s competence to argue the issue”).

IV. Unjust interactions

9. Expression of hostility: Do not intentionally act towards your adversary in the matter at hand as though he were your personal enemy (e.g.: "attempt to intimidate by being rude").
10. Hindrance of participation: Do not intentionally interact with others in such a way as to impede their participation (e.g.: "pressuring the others to act").
11. Breaking off: Do not break off the argumentation without justification (e.g.: "pretending that the issue is really irrelevant").

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - Emotional Appeals In The Film '12 Angry Men'



What is the legitimate role of emotion in argument? Surely something as fundamental as human emotion has an important part to play. Would we bother to argue at all if we did not have some feelings about things and events? Could we be critical thinkers at all if we didn't care deeply about clarity, precision, fairness, accuracy and other intellectual standards? It's not that emotions have no legitimate part to play, but that all alone they cannot be the sole basis for an argument. Their roles must be either a supportive one or make a positive contribution to the goal of critical dialogue. Some critical thinking textbook authors view the emotions as lacking truth value, arguing that they are neither true nor false even when they are sincerely or intensely felt. Sincerity and intensity, they hold, are aspects of only the personal dimension of an argument; evidence and truth alone belong to the objective, public dimension. But this presents an oversimplified view; it assumes that arguments are only about facts rather than sentiment, or that the two can

always be clearly distinguished. While emotions, considered by themselves, may be thought of as having no truth value, in the context of certain types of dialogues, appeals to emotion can play legitimate and important roles. To support this view, a brief discussion of current argument theory is needed to form the theoretical foundation for the distinction between legitimate and illegitimate emotional appeals that this paper defends.

According to argumentation theorists van Eemeren and his academic colleague Grootendorst (1984), as well as Walton (1992), who follow the pragma-dialectic framework, an argument is seen as a dynamic exchange, a sequence of pairs of speech acts carried out by the participants in a dialogue. A dialogue is an exchange of speech acts between two or more arguers in turn-taking sequence aimed at a collective goal. A type of dialogue discussed by Walton that is particularly applicable to the film "12 Angry Men" is the "critical discussion" dialogue. This is a type of persuasion dialogue, in which the goal of each party is to persuade the other party to accept some designated proposition, using as premises only propositions that the other party has accepted as commitments. The goal of a critical discussion is to resolve a conflict of opinions by means of rational argumentation. A legitimate appeal to emotion, then, is one that contributes to the proper goals of a dialogue. Contrary to the common assumption that arguments based on emotion are not rational, the view advocated here is that an emotional appeal can be reasonable and appropriate if it furthers the legitimate goals of the discussion. This can be accomplished, for example, by its revealing an arguer's unanalyzed presumptions or by its opening up a new and valuable line of argumentation that prompts critical questioning that steers the argument in a constructive way. On the negative side, in an illegitimate appeal to emotion, there is typically an attempt to arouse, say, fear or pity, and then to use these emotions to obscure or short-circuit reason.

When an illegitimate use of emotions occurs in argumentation it is commonly called an "emotional appeal", and given a traditional label, such as the bandwagon argument, appeal to pity, *ad baculum*, or the *ad hominem*. While there are many other types of emotional appeals, we shall limit our consideration of illegitimate emotional appeals to the four just mentioned and give some examples of these from the film. When a legitimate use of emotions occurs, as we said above, it plays a supportive role or furthers the goal of the dialogue. We shall point out some examples of these in the film as well.

"12 Angry Men" is an exciting, suspenseful drama of 12 jurors trying to reach a

verdict in a murder trial. Henry Fonda heads the all-star cast of actors which includes Lee J. Cobb as his main opposition, Ed Begley as a hateful bigot, E.G. Marshall as a somewhat cold, logical stockbroker, Jack Warden as a baseball fanatic, and Jack Klugman as a sympathetic former slum dweller. What makes the film suspenseful and intriguing is the wonderful intertwining of outbursts of emotion and key moments of insight derived in part from logical analysis and in part from keen observation. These critical elements are provided primarily by the architect, played by Fonda, and the retired old man, played by Joseph Sweeney. As we shall argue, sometimes the display of emotion helps the deliberative process and sometimes it gets in the way.

1. Bandwagon Arguments in the Film

At the start of the jury's deliberation process, a decision is made to take a preliminary ballot to see where everyone stands. Eleven jurors raise their hands to indicate that they believe the defendant guilty; only one raises his hand to indicate a not-guilty vote. Even at the beginning of their deliberation one senses the jurors are tired and want a quick, unanimous vote so they can go home and be done. When they become aware that the vote isn't unanimous, one juror reacts angrily and in a frustrated voice repeats the following comment, "Boy oh boy, there's always one!" While not the only possible interpretation, this remark is most plausibly construed as an illegitimate emotional appeal, commonly called the bandwagon fallacy. Under this interpretation, the juror casting the dissenting ballot receives a disdainful response from one of the group members because the vote is apparently seen as a frivolous and unjustified dissent from the otherwise unanimous view.

An even clearer example of this same fallacy occurs when the one juror turns to the dissenting juror who wants to talk more about the case and remarks, "Well what's there to talk about? Eleven men in here think he's guilty. Nobody had to think twice about it except you."

People are, of course, emotional beings and are strongly influenced by their emotions - by fear, anger, hate, pride, and so forth. Thus, an effective way to make a claim or conclusion more persuasive is to associate it with any of these strong emotions. What many fallacious emotional appeals have in common is the attempt to get a claim accepted or rejected by linking it to an emotion rather than supporting it with good reasons. The operative emotion used in the bandwagon fallacy is the fear of being left out, of being excluded or ostracized. Being social creatures, people feel the need to be accepted by the group with whom they live

or work. We fear rejection and isolation from others.

Advertisers, well aware of the power of this emotion, frequently promise membership in a group to get consumers to buy a product that has a familiar name without giving supportive evidence for the truth of the claim or the quality of a product. "Join the Pepsi generation" or "I'm a Pepper, you're a Pepper. Wouldn't you like to be a Pepper too?" are examples.

This need to be recognized and accepted, a need which exists in all of us to some extent, can be used appropriately or inappropriately depending on the reason and the context in which the appeal to unity and solidarity is made. In an advertising context, the actual quality of a product is one thing, the fact that most people buy a product is another. People buy things for a variety of reasons. Many people buy a car, for example, not because of its quality or because it is the best buy for the money, but because it's the most inexpensive or the best advertised or easiest to obtain.

The popularity of a belief is rarely connected in any important way to the merits of the belief. More important than the mere number of people who hold a belief is the reason why they hold the belief. Most people do not have the time or the ability to investigate or justify their beliefs, so they depend on others who have the time and the necessary intellectual training to give a foundation for their beliefs. Most people, for example, fear contact with a dead body or animal, but living persons are more likely the source of a contagious disease, as biologists will tell you.

In a critical discussion context, a factor more important than the mere fact that the majority holds a certain belief is the reason why they hold the belief. If the mere fact that one stands alone were used as a reason why one should join the group, then that would be a case of illegitimate emotional appeal for solidarity. If, however, good reasons have been provided for a belief and then, out of mere obstinacy a dissenter refuses to change his or her view, an emotional appeal for solidarity would be legitimate. Just such an appeal occurs near the conclusion of the film when the vote for not guilty stands at eleven to one. One juror remarks, "It's eleven to one." All the jurors stare at the dissenting juror while Fonda remarks, "Well, what do we do now?" There is a long pause. Turning to the sole dissenting juror, Fonda says in a solemn tone, "You're alone." The dissenting juror replies, "I don't care whether I'm alone or not. It's my right!" This is arguably a legitimate emotional appeal for solidarity because it seeks in a reasonable way to achieve a unanimous vote, the goal of the critical discussion.

2. A Legitimate Appeal to Pity in the Film

Hurley defines an appeal to pity fallacy as one that “occurs when one an arguer attempts to support a conclusion by merely evoking pity from the reader or listener” (1997:122). The following dialogue from the film seems to exemplify an appeal to pity, but not necessarily a fallacious one.

In an attempt to justify to his fellow jurors why he voted not guilty, Henry Fonda, the architect on the jury, is speaking about the defendant, a young man who is on trial for allegedly killing his father. Fonda says, “Look, this kid’s been kicked around all of his life. You know, born in a slum, mother dead since he was nine. He lived a year and a half in an orphanage while his father was serving a jail term for forgery. That’s not a very happy beginning. He’s a wild, angry kid and that’s all he’s ever been. And you know why? Because he was hit on the head once a day, every day. He’s had a pretty miserable eighteen years. I just think we owe him a few words, that’s all.”

Notice that in this argument it’s not a belief that being offered for acceptance (Fonda is not claiming that the boy is innocent because he’s been abused all his life), but a plea for action, that they give more consideration to the case, especially in light of the fact that someone’s life is at stake. Of course, every defendant is entitled to a through and impartial hearing, but Fonda is also making the additional point, and it seems appropriate, that his fellow jurors should have empathy for this young defendant who’s had a particularly unfortunate childhood. Thus the appeal to pity, like the bandwagon argument discussed above, can be made in an appropriate and inappropriate way. When someone through no fault of their own hits on bad times and comes to someone for charity, they are implicitly hoping their audience will have sympathy and conclude that they are obligated to assist them. This appeal to pity is legitimate and commits no fallacy.

If, in the example just discussed, the architect was attempting to get his fellow jurors to accept the conclusion that the defendant is not guilty of murdering his father because of his unfortunate childhood, then this would be a clear example of the appeal to pity fallacy. The young man’s unfortunate childhood of which Fonda reminds his fellow jurors, while true, is, of course, irrelevant to the question of whether he committed the crime. It appears, however, that this is not the purpose of Fonda’s argument. He’s uncertain about the defendant’s innocence but given the defendant’s unfortunate rearing Fonda believes he is owed more careful consideration than his fellow jurors are willing to give his case. On this interpretation, this would seem a legitimate appeal to pity.

By way of summary, an inappropriate appeal to pity occurs when someone

attempts to evoke sympathetic feelings from another person which are not based on any genuine reason why someone needs help or special consideration. These feelings of pity may then be used to get another person to accept a conclusion that is not supported by any relevant evidence. An appropriate appeal to pity, on the other hand, occurs whenever an arguer supplies good reasons why someone needs special help or consideration. The feelings aroused in this case are legitimate ones since they support the good reasons provided.

3. A Legitimate Ad Baculum Appeal in the Film

As Walton argues, "Appeal to the threat of force or fear as a move in a critical discussion, where both sides are critically examining the pros and cons of an issue in polite conversation, seems so radically out of place...that surely it should be categorically condemned as fallacious" (1992:143). While this is usually the case, in some contexts of dialogue, it can be a nonfallacious move, particularly in what Walton calls "a negotiation dialogue". Generally most textbooks writers see the function of argumentation itself as a nonviolent way of resolving disagreements and conflicts, so the appeal to force seems to be an obvious violation of the function of a critical discussion. But in a diplomatic negotiation between two hostile countries, to use Walton's example, if one country contemplates a military move, the defending country may make a direct appeal to force, and give a clear warning of a military response should such an attack be made. The conclusion that the defending country wishes the attacking country to draw is that if such an action occurs the consequences will bring a heavy toll to the attacking country. Such an appeal, while an ad baculum, is not a fallacy because the appeal to force is not used to distract the other arguer from more relevant considerations but, on the contrary, is appropriate to the context.

Walton claims that for a genuine ad baculum fallacy to occur not only must the threat of fear or force exist but it must be used to persuade a respondent to do something or accept a conclusion in a manner that is inappropriate for the context of the dialogue that is taking place.

Several appeals to force occur in the film "12 Angry Men". The following example, while an ad baculum is arguably not fallacious. The defendant's guilt in the story hinges primarily on the testimony of two alleged eyewitnesses. One of these witnesses is an elderly man who occupied the apartment below where the crime took place. While discussing the credibility of this eyewitness, one juror suggests that the real motive behind the testimony was the witness's wish to be thought

important and get his name in the newspapers. When this suggestion is made, another juror ridicules the suggestion that the old man would lie just to get attention. Another juror (the house painter) comes to the defense of the older juror and says, "A guy who talks like that to an old man oughta really get stepped on, y'know. You oughta have more respect, mister. If you say stuff like that to him again, I'm gonna lay you out."

The threat to force in this case was to defend the older juror from intimidation and protect his legitimate right to take part in the dialogue. The ridicule that his suggestion received about the real motives of the alleged eyewitness was inappropriate and if left unchallenged may have blocked this juror from making important contributions to the goal of the dialogue. Thus, the *ad baculum* appeal made on his behalf seems justified and in this context is not a fallacy, although some would argue that the threat of physical violence is always out of place in a jury room.

4. A Legitimate Ad Hominem in the Film

The *ad hominem* fallacy occurs whenever one attacks the appearance, personal habits or character of a person, instead of dealing with the merits of his or her arguments. As Walton points out, "The introduction of an *ad hominem* argument into a dispute represents the personalization of the dialogue. Quite expectedly and characteristically, therefore, the use of the *ad hominem* leads both to an intensifying of personal involvement in a discussion and to a heightening of emotions" (1992:192). Despite the dangers of personalizing an argument, it is not always the case that the use of this strategy is inappropriate, one that always gets out of control

and derails a reasonable discussion. On the contrary, as Walton points out, in many cases personalization may be helpful to critical discussion. In some cases, it is used as a prod to get those involved in a dialogue to take their responsibilities as critical thinkers seriously. Several examples of legitimate *ad hominem*s occur in "12 Angry Men." The following is one of the most striking. The vote among the jurors at this point in their deliberations has become tied, six for not guilty, and six for guilty. Exasperated by this turn of events, juror #7 decides to break the tie, not however out of conviction, but only because he wants to end the discussion so that he can attend a baseball game. The following dialogue takes place.

Juror # 7: I don't know about the rest of them. But I'm getting a little tired of this yakkety yakkin back and forth. Its getting us nowhere, so I guess I'll have to

break it up. I change my vote to not guilty.”

Juror #11 responds angrily to him: “What kind of man are you? You have sat here and voted guilty with everyone else because there are some baseball tickets burning a hole in your pocket. And now you have changed your vote because you say you’re sick of all the talking here.

Juror#7 responds: “Now listen buddy...”

Juror #11, interrupting him says: “Who tells you you have the right to play like this with a man’s life? Don’t you care?”

Juror #7 responds: “Now wait a minute! You can’t talk like that to me!”

Juror #11 (passionately) says: “I can talk like that to you! If you want to vote not guilty then do it because you are convinced the man is not guilty and not because you’ve had enough! And if you think he is guilty, then vote that way. Or don’t you have the guts to do what you think is right?”

As Walton points out, the articulation of the personal position of a participant in a critical discussion can be an occasion for the dialogue to give birth to personal insights that can deepen one’s understanding of one’s own position of an issue. In some contexts, then, the ad hominem can play a maieutic function by giving birth to or revealing commitments not openly acknowledged by a participant in the dialogue. Such a personalization of the argument can thus, Walton argues, reveal and clarify an arguer’s deeper presumptions and in so doing help move the critical discussion more effectively to its goal. So using the ad hominem, however, Walton warns, requires judgment and restraint lest the dialogue deteriorate into a quarrel the goal of which is to “hit out” verbally at a participant, and if possible, to humiliate a participant, and in the process destroy the goal of the critical dialogue.

In conclusion, the four emotional appeals we have briefly examined in the film “12 Angry Men”, the bandwagon appeal, the appeal to pity, the appeal to force, and the ad hominem, are not always fallacious but can, as we have seen, in appropriate contexts, make important contributions to the goals of a critical dialogue. Instead of dismissing these appeals as fallacious wherever they occur, one needs to examine them carefully and judge each use on its merits.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 - The Most Powerful Engine Of Cold War Argument: The Munich Analogy



The ubiquity of the Munich Analogy in Cold War argument is easily demonstrated. It is used by commentators of all political persuasions except perhaps Communists, and the conventional wisdom is that it swept all before it. In this paper I want to inspect a rare occurrence: an event where the analogy was effectively attacked, and the attackers won a significant engagement, even though they lost the war.

The event to which I refer was the construction by the Truman Administration of a so-called blueprint for the Cold War, NSC 68, which was not just a single document but a series of constantly-revised documents best known for the version delivered to Truman in April 1950, not declassified until 1975.

The conventional wisdom has it that NSC 68 was a consensus product adopted with no great opposition. My contention is that it was not only bitterly disputed, but that the dispute was not fully resolved, so that the final document in the NSC 68 series, delivered to the Eisenhower Administration in January 1953, was a confused amalgam incorporating watered-down versions of both adversaries. The principals in the long-drawn-out drama of the NSC 68 series were: (1) for the alarmist position, depending on the Munich Analogy (that the Soviet Union was programmed to destroy the United States) Dean Acheson and Paul Nitze. (2) For the moderate position (that Stalin was not Hitler, that the Soviet Union did not want war but would expand wherever it found a soft spot) George Kennan and

Charles 'Chip' Bohlen.

To those who boggle at my classification of Dean Acheson as an alarmist, or of Kennan as a moderate, let me assure you that these depictions are warranted. Acheson was pilloried by McCarthyites, hence many casual observers assume him to have been at least somewhat lukewarm about the Cold War. This is an error. As for Kennan, those who know him only as the anti-Soviet author of the "X" article, be assured that in the trenches of State Department warfare, Kennan fought against militarization of containment and did not believe the USSR was programmed to take over the world.

Use of analogies in public affairs argument is often attacked as irrational. Ernest May, in *Lessons of the Past*, believes use of some analogies causes many bad decisions. (May 1973). Since there is no scientific way of determining parallelism in two situations being analogized, the critic is dependent upon narrative/descriptive judgment, which judgment can never achieve the mechanical certainty of the syllogism.

One must begin an analysis of the application of the Munich analogy to Cold War argument by inspecting what happened at Munich, and why it was significant. Mine of course will be a bare-bones explanation; Telford Taylor's landmark book of 1,084 pages is definitive enough, but Taylor qualifies everything. (Taylor 1975). I can only hope that my simplifications are not misleading.

At the Munich Conference of 29 September 1938, Hitler, Mussolini, Chamberlain and Daladier settled the fate of the Czechoslovak Republic. Hitler had been agitating for cession of the Sudetenland, a border area at that time in Czechoslovakia but largely inhabited by ethnic Germans. It appeared to the British and French, who were guarantors of Czech independence, that if Hitler did not get the Sudetenland by agreement with the Western powers he would go to war. The British and French gave in, and Chamberlain returned to London claiming that he had gotten "peace in our time." Since all the Czech defenses were in the Sudeten area, Hitler simply moved in when he was ready and absorbed all of Czechoslovakia. The falsity of Hitler's promise that the Sudetenland would satisfy Germany's territorial ambitions soon proved false; the partition of Poland and World War II soon followed.

Most historians dealing with Munich believe that "giving in" to Hitler, or appeasement as it is called, was wrong. The well-armed Czechs had been ready and willing to fight; had they done so, they would have taken many a German

Wehrmacht division out of action, making Hitler's conquest of the rest of Europe more difficult. This is a controversial judgment, but Hitler's plan for world conquest is not denied by anyone, and giving Hitler the Sudetenland did not appease his appetite one bit. A fair statement of the lesson of Munich might be "Appeasing aggressive dictators is useless; it only postpones the inevitable."

I move now to 1950. Soviet Russia had replaced Nazi Germany as a threat to the Western democracies. There were constant crises, in Iran, in Greece, in the Balkans, in Poland and the Soviet Satellites, in Berlin. These crises led to the Truman Doctrine (aid to Greece and Turkey), the Berlin Airlift, constant efforts to establish democratic influence in Eastern Europe, the Marshall Plan, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Hostility toward the USSR increased steadily. In 1949, two events raised American anxiety to a high level: the Soviet Union exploded an atomic bomb before expected, and Mao Tse-tung's Communists defeated the Chinese Nationalists and established the People's Republic of China. The American response to these events was immediate. On 31 January 1950 Truman ordered the Atomic Energy Commission to pursue development of a hydrogen bomb to be 1,000 times more powerful than the bombs that destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki; and he ordered the Secretaries of State and Defense to "undertake a reexamination of our objectives in peace and war and of the effect of these objectives on our strategic plans, in the light of the probable fission bomb capability and possible thermonuclear bomb capability of the Soviet Union." (FRUS 1950 I:141). This was the mandate for what eventually became the NSC 68 series of documents calling for vastly increased military strength to contain and ultimately overthrow the Soviet Government.

As of 1 January 1950, George Kennan, who had headed the State Department Policy Planning Staff for two and a half years, yielded that position to Paul Nitze. Kennan's motivation for leaving was primarily the increasing militancy of the Administration. Kennan had strongly opposed developing a new generation of nuclear weapons; had opposed American plans to incorporate Germany in a military alliance; opposed the universalistic language of the Truman Doctrine speech; opposed continued American pretense that the rump Chinese Nationalist Government on Taiwan was the government of China; opposed American support of French determination to reassert colonial rule in Vietnam. In the vernacular, Kennan was a dove.

Even though Kennan gave up the Policy Planning Staff post, he retained the position of Counselor to the Department, a prestigious title that generally gave

him access to Acheson. Before leaving on a tour of the much-neglected Latin American area in February, 1950,

Kennan wrote his version of a reexamination of American objectives and strategy. This was an eight-page memorandum dated 17 February, addressed to Acheson, though it never reached him. This document shows clearly .

The most significant aspect of Kennan's demarche is the absence of any variant of the Munich Analogy. He recognized the profound hostility of the Soviet Union to those countries it could not control, but there was no Hitlerian program for military conquest. The danger from Russia was political, and while in occasional instances (Korea would be one) American arms would be necessary to convince the Soviets not to expand their empire, the basic American task Kennan phrased this way: *Because the Russian attack, ideologically speaking, was a global one, challenging the ultimate validity of the entire non-communist outlook on life, predicting its failure, and playing on the force of that prediction as a main device in the conduct of the cold war, it could be countered only by a movement on our part equally comprehensive, designed to prove the validity of liberal institutions, to confound the predictions of their failure, to prove that a society not beholden to Russian communism could still "work". In this way, the task of combating communism became as broad as the whole great range of our responsibilities as a world power, and came to embrace all those things which would have had to be done anyway - even in the absence of a communist threat - to assure the preservation and advance of civilization. That Moscow might be refuted, it was necessary that something else should succeed. (FRUS 1950 I:160-67). After that overview, Kennan dealt with the contemporary development that seemed to many to validate the Munich Analogy:

There is little justification for the impression that the "cold war", by virtue of events outside of our control, has suddenly taken some drastic turn to our disadvantage.

Recent events in the Far East have been the culmination of processes which have long been apparent. The implications of these processes were correctly analyzed, and their results reasonably accurately predicted, long ago by our advisors in this field. . . Mao's protracted stay in Moscow is good evidence that our own experts were right not only in their analysis of the weakness of the [Chinese] National Government but also in their conviction that the Russians would have difficulty establishing the same sort of relationship with a successful Chinese Communist

movement that they have established with some of their Eastern European satellites. [These Soviet difficulties] are not only *not* of our making but would actually be apt to be weakened by any attempts on our part to intervene directly.

...

The demonstration of an “atomic capability” on the part of the USSR likewise adds no new fundamental element to the picture. . . The idea of their threatening people with the H-bomb and bidding them “sign on the dotted line or else” is thus far solely of our own manufacture.

These, and other themes in Kennan’s valedictory were all directed to subvert the idea that Stalin was another Hitler, that the Soviets had a timetable for world conquest, and that attempts to accommodate to their legitimate demands, such as the continued prohibition of German rearmament, were not appeasement. Because this Kennan agenda was so calm and unexciting, it does not appear in Cold War discourse. The Left, particularly, remembers only Kennan’s attempt to convince Americans in the afterglow of World War II that Russia was not a democracy playing by our rules. Not one of Kennan’s detractors can produce a policy agenda articulated in 1950 showing the foresight and realism of this 17 February memorandum.

While Kennan was writing this memorandum and traveling in Latin America, the task Truman assigned to the secretaries of State and Defense of examining our objectives and strategy was delegated to Paul Nitze, Kennan’s successor as head of the DOS Policy Planning Staff. Nitze was a hard liner, a Cold Warrior par excellence, one of those who interpreted Stalin’s election eve speech in 1946 as a declaration of war against the United States. Nitze had headed the United States Strategic Bombing Survey’s analyses of the air war in Japan, and come up with two unusual conclusions, one wholly fraudulent, the other highly suspect. The most consequential conclusion to come from Nitze’s pen was the claim that on the basis of “all the facts,” the Japanese would have surrendered probably by 1 October 1945 even without the atom bombs, Russian entry in the war, or an invasion. When the USSBS documents became available on microfilm at the National Archives in early 1990, researchers found that Nitze had no facts at all for such a conclusion; the Japanese officials whose testimony he claimed to have based this conclusion on unanimously agreed that Japan would have fought on indefinitely without the atom and Soviet entry. (Newman 1995).

Nitze’s other questionable conclusion bears on the efficacy of nuclear weapons also. Nothing happened to Hiroshima and Nagasaki that could not have been

achieved by a fleet of 210 B-29s dropping conventional explosives. "For instance, in Nagasaki, the railroads were back in operation forty-eight hours after the attack. Most of the rolling stock in the city had been destroyed, but the tracks suffered relatively minor damage." (Nitze 1989:42). As to people, even elementary shelter protected them from blast and radiation. Thus for Nitze, the Bomb was not the Absolute Weapon, just another big explosive.

Deprecating the atom did not mean Nitze was indifferent to the American nuclear arsenal; we should have any weapon, better and in greater quantity than the Soviet Union, and we should be prepared to use it to preempt a Soviet ground attack that could overrun Western Europe. Kennan thought a "no first use" pledge was the most essential and basic principle of our nuclear policy; Nitze thought such a pledge would signal our allies and enemies that we were not serious about opposing Soviet expansion. Toward the end of the Truman Administration, when Nitze was under heavy attack from moderates (especially Charles "Chip" Bohlen) for painting the Soviet Union as a Hitlerite juggernaut dedicated to conquering the world, Nitze rather lamely claimed that he had never said Stalin had a "timetable" for conquest. (FRUS 1951 I:174). It is true that the word "timetable" does not appear in the Nitze-dominated output of the committee working on NSC 68 and its successors, but a fair reading of their scenarios for Armageddon shows a belief in inexorable Soviet aggression, which must be opposed by overwhelming counter-force everywhere.

Nitze's committee to reexamine American strategy worked through February and March 1950, presenting a document entitled "United States Objectives and Programs for National Security" to the President as NSC 68 on 7 April. The table of contents of this scare-mongering document gives an overview of how Nitze and crew saw the world. There was a "Present World Crisis," "The Fundamental Purpose of the United States" was in "Underlying Conflict" with "The Fundamental Design of the Kremlin." "Soviet Intentions and Capabilities" were compared with "U.S. Intentions and Capabilities," and as to possible courses of action, there were four: "Continuation of Current Policies" which were wholly inadequate to stop the Soviet Juggernaut; "Isolation," which was beneath contempt; "War," which we might need to instigate, and the preferred course, "A Rapid Buildup of Political, Economic, and Military Strength in the Free World." (NSC 68 1993).

In the 1990s, it is easy to ridicule the overheated language in Nitze's document, but it is so extreme that even in 1950 clear-headed observers in the government

knew and said that it was alarmist beyond reason. What else is one to say of rhetoric like this: "The issues that face us are momentous, involving the fulfillment or destruction not only of this Republic but of civilization itself.

They are issues which will not await our deliberations." Poor Nitze; he found himself still deliberating, three years later, how to convince a recalcitrant government to prepare immediately for the deluge. Sacred American texts were appealed to in this first version of NSC 68: the "more perfect union" can actually now be had, with a "firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our Fortunes, and our Sacred Honor."

Harry Truman, convinced as he was that the Soviet Union was a threat to the United States, was not taken in by this doomsday talk. He did not adopt NSC 68; he chose to bury it with studies. On 12 April he wrote James Lay, Executive Secretary of NSC, "I have decided to refer the report to the National Security Council for consideration, with the request that the National Security Council provide me with further information on the implications of the conclusions contained therein. I am particularly anxious that the Council give me a clearer indication of the programs which are envisaged in the Report, including estimates of the probable costs of such programs." (FRUS 1950 I:235).

Truman was acutely aware of the inflationary pressures that developed after wars; he was conscious of the massive American debt from WWII, and he was determined to balance the federal budget. The corporations that had grown fat on defense contracts were to be put on a lean diet. Defense expenditures for 1945 had been 38% of gross national product; by 1949, Truman had them down to 5.1%, and for 1950, 4.6%. (Gaddis 1982:23). In 1949 he appointed Louis Johnson Secretary of Defense largely because Johnson saw a tight-fisted budget as an asset to his expected run for the presidency. On 4 May, 1950, *a month after* receiving NSC 68, Truman told a press conference "The defense budget next year will be smaller than it is this year." The gluttonous monster later christened "Military-Industrial Complex" by Dwight Eisenhower was in spring 1950 nowhere in sight.

So in April 1950 the first version of NSC 68 was without presidential approval, without appropriation requests for its ambitious "rapid buildup of strength," a sitting duck likely to be nibbled to death by congressional committees and executive department budget balancers.

Had there been no Korean War; had Stalin not acceded, however reluctantly, to Kim Il-sung's determination to take over South Korea; NSC 68 would never have gotten beyond the stage of a bad Halloween spook. All during the process of

writing and rewriting, critical comments were plentiful and cogent; important officials such as Bohlen, Llewellyn Thompson, Philip Jessup, several Bureau of the Budget officials, Willard Thorp, and a half-dozen lower-level people panned it. A draft of an annex purporting to set forth "A Strategy of freedom" brought scathing criticism from American diplomatic officials on duty in Europe. The prize must go to William F. Schaub of the Budget Bureau, who pointed out the hypocrisy of calling the American-led camp a group of democracies, morally superior to the Soviet collection of authoritarians. The Indochinese were not in a democracy, nor were the Filipinos. (FRUS 1950 I).

In most organizations, such dissent would demand powerful rebuttal. In academia, such a devastating attack on a dissertation would send the candidate back to the drawing boards. In business, a board of directors hearing so profound a list of deficiencies would have taken a charge against profits and brought in a new manager. But this was government; Nitze was the boss' favorite. Secrecy was tight. There were no immediate changes, but the problems eventually overtook Nitze's rhetoric.

Korea convinced many doubters that the Soviet Union would resort to arms to whittle away at non-Communist areas. Nitze's group continued to reexamine U.S. objectives and strategies, moving from NSC 68 to NSC 114 to NSC 135. In 1951, Acheson brought Chip Bohlen home from Paris, to be Department Counselor. In this capacity, Bohlen gradually took over from Nitze leadership in updating the national security policy. One of Bohlen's first steps was a letter to Nitze 28 July 1951 complaining that the current version of NSC 68 perpetuated the old view of the Soviet Union as "a mechanical chess player, engaged in the execution of a design fully prepared in advance with the ultimate goal of world domination. The phrase 'world domination' is a misleading truth and tends to become related to the phenomenon of Hitler . . . a false assumption of Soviet intention in this field may lead to a very radical conclusion which is found in paragraph seven. This paragraph states flatly that if this alleged aim of the Kremlin, i.e., to disrupt Western armament, cannot be done by the soft method, then there is a strong possibility that the Soviets will resort to preventive war."(FRUS 1951 I:107). From then on to the end of the Truman administration, Bohlen fought Nitze to a draw, so that the final drafts of the NSC 68 series, now numbered NSC 135, waffled on the matter of Soviet intentions and hence on the applicability of the Munich syndrome. For the final draft, Bohlen and Nitze worked out language that both could live with, since both points of view were included, however

contradictory. This draft was one that Kennan could probably have lived with.

The conventional view, one supported by Nitze himself, is that NSC 68 sailed through all obstacles after Korea and heavily influenced American policy toward the Soviet at least until the time of détente. Much of this is false; the original did not “sail through”; Nitze himself acknowledged at the time what he now denies in his memoirs. On 14 July, 1952, Nitze wrote his superior, Deputy Undersecretary Matthews, complaining about the latest drafts:

1. I believe the new papers [NSC 135] tend to underestimate the risks which this country faces.
2. I believe they tend to underestimate U.S. capabilities.
3. I believe they hold forth inadequate goals for U.S. policy.
4. I believe they offer an inadequate strategy.
5. I believe they give inadequate, unclear, or mistaken guidance to those who must prepare specific national security programs.(FRUS 1952-1954 II:58-59).

In addition, Nitze wrote, “one of the difficulties is that they are internally inconsistent and that it is not entirely clear what they are trying to say.” Two and a half years of battle, and Nitze himself thinks his efforts have been in vain.

That is not how the conventional wisdom has it. According to Steven L. Rearden, Nitze’s hagiographer, Nitze’s “creative and enduring accomplishment” in producing NSC 68 was unique: “Never again would Nitze - or anyone else for that matter - be in such a key position to guide the development of a study that had as dramatic an impact on the nation’s destiny.”(Rearden 1984:33-34). We cannot know what influence NSC 68 - in its original, pistol-whipping exuberance - had on U.S. policy. Had it not been for Korea, the answer would be “none.”

But NSC 68’s apocalyptic view of the Soviet challenge served anti-Soviet hard-liners much as the Protocols of the Elders of Zion serve anti-Semites. The analogy with Hitler and his plan for world conquest dominated men’s minds, even as its purveyors lost the argumentative struggle within the government.

Kennan and Bohlen were voices of reason, out-shouted for a while by fanatics, but they saw the situation clearly and say it whole. Acheson and Nitze, peering through their Chicken Little lenses, saw only what they took to be the beginning of the Soviet plan to take over the world.

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