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• IN THIS ISSUE •

“THIS IS THE FIRST opportunity I have had to write a ‘credo,’ where I do not need to go into theoretical explanations,” notes Alfred Korzybski in his *What I Believe*. He gives us clear and reader-friendly insights into his life’s work in this article originally written for the Symposium, *The Faith I Live By*, compiled and edited by Krishna M. Talgeri.

We offer three articles demonstrating the value of general semantics in the classroom. Katherine Liepe-Levinson and Martin H. Levinson suggest techniques for addressing bullying, a serious and growing problem in American schools, in *A General Semantics Approach to School-age Bullying*. In *Evaluating with Cartoons*, Evelyn Stagg recounts her experiences using cartoons and comics to teach children the skills of inference detection and abstraction awareness. And David Maas bemoans how students try to evade responsibility by *Short-Circuiting Achievement and Performance with Elementalistic Pseudo-Bifurcation*.

Another trilogy of articles introduces us to 21st century concepts with thought-provoking connections to general semantics. In *The Medium is the Moblog*, Gary Mielo traces the latest Internet communications fad to its roots in McLuhan's global village. Nora Miller tells us that a community of Internet users has deliberately chosen to blur the lines between writing and reading, in *Wikipedia and The Disappearing "Author."* And *Time-Binding in the Information Age*, by Brad Reed, warns 20th century business owners of possible paradigm problems when facing the need to manage 21st century knowledge workers.

Communication follows certain patterns and the metaphors of music can provide us with a different way of understanding those patterns, according to Ray Gozzi in this issue's *Metaphors in Action* feature. Milton Dawes agrees, although in a somewhat different vein, in his article *Our Lives as a Complex of Rhythms*.

Korzybski told us "Those who rule the symbols, rule us." With this *ETC*, we introduce a new feature, *Calling out the Symbol Rulers*, with reporting, commentary and correspondence on up-to-the-moment issues that concern us all. Each quarter, this feature will focus the lens of general semantics on an aspect of recent world events and offer a variety of perspectives on how language and thought habits influence our daily lives. In this introductory edition, devoted to the recent Presidential election, Gregg Hoffmann ruminates on the 2004 conventions of the two major parties in *Political Conventions, Images, and Spin*, while Nora Miller offers *Anti-Spin: Using Internet Resources to Unwind Political Claims*, an overview of non-partisan Internet resources that emerged in reaction to the widely-perceived need for "fact-checking." And in *Correspondence*, two readers write to tell us their reactions to the use and abuse of language during the campaigns.

A GENERAL SEMANTICS APPROACH TO SCHOOL-AGE BULLYING

KATHERINE LIEPE-LEVINSON AND MARTIN H. LEVINSON*

SCHOOL-AGE BULLYING, from elementary to high school, is a major problem not only in America but throughout the world. Research indicates that school-age bullying is not confined to any national, religious, or ethno-cultural group.

Statistics show the extent of the problem in the United States:

- According to the U.S. Department of Justice, one out of every four children will be bullied by a peer in school this month.
- The American Association of School Psychologists reports that over 160,000 children miss school for fear of being bullied every day.
- A recent book states that teasing, bullying, and rejection tops the list of triggers in childhood attempted suicides. (Middelton-Moz and Zawadski, p.xi.)

This article uses ideas and techniques from general semantics that support the internationally recognized “Olweus Method” for bully prevention and in-

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tervention. It offers a concise theoretical framework for these strategies and then a number of practical suggestions for bully prevention and intervention. The authors have conducted numerous anti-bullying workshops for teachers, students, and administrators.

PART I:

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK — UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM ROLES OF “BULLY,” “TARGET,” AND “BYSTANDER”

General semanticists pay close attention to how labels are used to identify people in our society. For example, some educators refer to children who have reading problems as “learning disabled,” and children who take honors classes as “gifted.” A general semanticist would find both of these labels too broad, since children with reading difficulties may be very able learners in other areas, and since it is doubtful that all honor class students would be good at everything. Instead, a general semanticist would make an effort to cite the students’ specific abilities and learning challenges. Similarly, a general semanticist would avoid labeling an individual a “bully,” preferring instead to look at specific bullying behaviors manifested by that individual.

However, Barbara Coloroso, an expert in the field of bully prevention, suggests that labels may actually be useful if we employ them as identifiers of certain roles that people may play at different times. She uses the terms “the bully,” “the bullied,” and “the bystander” to serve as descriptors for how a child may be acting at the moment, rather than to define or permanently label that child. In using these terms, the goal is to gain a clearer understanding of how the bully, the bullied, and the bystander roles operate. (Coloroso, p.4.) The Olweus bully prevention method prefers the use of the term “target” for “the bullied” role. The term “target” suggests that while a person may find themselves in the sights of a bully, it does not inevitably follow that the bully will be able to score a direct “hit.” Let us look more closely at these roles.

The Role of the Bully

Because bullying cuts across all national, cultural, ethnic, and religious groups, etc., bullies are not distinguishable by appearance or group identification, but by how they *act*. Bullies “bully” — a conscious, deliberate hostile activity intended to terrorize and harm others through the threat of further aggression. (Coloroso, p.13.) Once this terror is created, the bully is able to act without fear of recrimination or retaliation, because the target often feels so powerless that he or she will rarely fight back or tell anyone about the bullying.

Bystanders often remain silent or even “egg on” the bully, so the pattern of violence is easily sustained in the school environment.

Why do bullies bully? Research shows that children (and adults) take on bully roles largely due to the treatment they receive from authority figures in their lives, including parents and other relatives. As a result, bullies are taught to rely on only one belief and strategy to cope with daily challenges — bully or be bullied.

Bullies bully in three basic and often overlapping ways. Verbal bullying, the most common form, is favored by both boys and girls. It accounts for 70 percent of all reported incidents of bullying and includes name-calling, taunting, belittling, teasing, and using racist slurs and sexually abusive remarks. Verbal bullying is easy to get away with — it can even be murmured in the presence of adults or peers without detection or undo notice. If verbal bullying continues to be permitted or tolerated (which is generally the case), it becomes normalized and the target dehumanized. Once such a pattern is established, the targets are frequently excluded from playground games and other social activities — because no one wants to hang out with a “loser.” Verbal bullying is often the precursor to the two other basic types of bullying.

Physical bullying is the most visible of the three types, but it accounts for less than one-third of all incidents reported by children. It can take the form of punching, kicking, biting, choking, scratching, pinching, spitting, tickling, and destroying the property of the target and the target’s family. Bullies who use physical violence often attempt to rationalize their behavior when caught with statements such as: “I just wanted to shake him up”; “I didn’t mean to break his arm, we were just fooling around”; “It’s her fault. She made me do it”; “She started it, she gave me a haughty look.” Those who engage in physical bullying are usually the most troubled of all the bullies, and the most likely to progress to even more serious criminal acts. More boys than girls engage in physical bullying.

More girls than boys engage in relational bullying (or relational aggression). Bullies who use relational aggression attempt to demolish the target’s self-esteem through tactics such as ignoring, isolating, excluding, taunting, gossiping, writing notes, and spreading rumors. These kinds of behaviors can also include aggressive gestures such as stares, rolling eyes, sighs, frowns, sneers, and other hostile body language. Relational aggression is often the most difficult form of bullying to spot from the outside. It is most potent at the onset of adolescence, when young teens are trying to figure out who they are and how they fit into their peer group. When a target confronts a bully who uses relational abuse, the bully usually dismisses the target’s grievances with statements such as, “What’s your problem? You’re just too sensitive.”

The Role of the Target

Targets of bullies can be “large,” “small,” “bright,” “not so bright,” “attractive,” “not so attractive,” “popular,” “unpopular,” etc. What they all have in common is being the target of bullies. In addition to suffering the behavior of bullies, targets also suffer from certain injurious societal assumptions. Topping the list of these assumptions is the notion that most targets of bullies are frail, non-conformist, or insecure individuals — who therefore ultimately deserve to be blamed for the bullying. Being blamed for the bullies’ inappropriate and irrational behavior can add to the distress experienced by the targets. Over time, targets subjected to continual abuse can change emotionally and physically so that they do become frail and insecure — or bullies themselves.

The guilt, shame, and sense of failure felt by a target unable to cope with the brutalization contribute to the destruction of his sense of well-being. As he becomes more isolated from his peers, has trouble concentrating on schoolwork, and develops survival strategies instead of social skills, his life changes radically. (Coloroso, p.46.)

Neil Marr and Tim Field, in their book *Bullycide, Death at Playtime: An Exposé of Child Suicide Caused by Bullying* coined the term “bullycide” to describe the situation in which targets choose to kill themselves rather than face one more day of being bullied. Bullied children can also kill others. The Columbine high school shootings were committed by two students who left video tapes indicating that at least one member of the football team had verbally bullied them on an on-going basis.

The Role of the Bystander

“How bystanders respond to both the bully and the target have a tremendous influence on how emboldened the bully becomes and/or how weak the target gets.” (Coloroso, p.46.) Bystanders support bullies through acts of omission and commission. Bystanders take on bully roles themselves when they directly support other bullies. One study that examined the role of peer behavior in urban playground bullying episodes revealed that bystanders were involved in either teasing the target or egging on the bully in 85 percent of the incidents. (Coloroso, p.66.) However, in bullying incidents overall, bystanders usually do nothing, which can be equally problematic because it encourages the bullies to continue their behavior. “Doing nothing” also saps bystanders of self-respect because they have abandoned their ethical and moral responsibility

to their peers and school. The four most cited reasons for “do nothing” bystander behavior are:

- The bystander is afraid of being labeled a tattle-tale.
- The bystander is afraid of getting hurt or becoming a new target for the bully.
- The bystander is afraid of doing something that will make the situation worse.
- The bystander does not know what to do.

In the next section, we will examine “what to do” to prevent the character of the bully from taking over our schools.

PART II:
THE OLWEUS WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO
BULLY PREVENTION USING GENERAL SEMANTICS

The Basics of the Olweus Model’s Whole School Approach

According to the Olweus model, effective bully prevention and intervention needs to include the following steps:

1. Removing the veil of secrecy that enables most bullies to operate unchallenged in our schools. Creating, in its place, an atmosphere in which children and adults feel secure to help both the bullies and the targets by “telling.”
2. Replacing the standard either/or method for dealing with bullies — fight’em or ignore’em — with new scripts and ways to talk to bullies that challenge the bullies’ privileged position within our schools.
3. Teaching effective self-management/anger management techniques to children and adults.
4. Providing empathy training for children and adults.

Using General Semantics to Support the Olweus Model

In his book for elementary and middle school children, *Bullies Are a Pain in the Brain*, Trevor Romain describes bullies as “Self-Esteem Vampires,” who drain the life’s blood and spirit from their schools as well as their targets. Most bullies operate undercover — that is, they will publicly humiliate their targets

only in front of small groups and almost never in front of adults, unless an adult has given them a clear signal that their behavior is acceptable. But, as with the mythological vampires, the best way to deter bullies is to expose them for their specific negative actions — to hold their behavior up to the light of day for all to see. If you simply punish one bully privately, or even publicly, you will most likely get another bully to replace the first — and so on. But if a school focuses on exposing the bullies' strategies and tricks — and offers counseling, amends-making opportunities, anger management, and empathy training in addition to traditional disciplinary actions — the fully exposed and addressed bully problem, like the vampire, will begin to disintegrate.

Step One.

Removing the veil of secrecy by using specifics instead of generalities:

We begin our workshops in the schools for faculty, staff, administrators, and students by sharing some of our personal experiences and stories involving bullies. We then divide the participants into pairs or small groups and ask them to share their own stories in which they played the role of the bully, the target, or the bystander (without mentioning any real names). Following the group-share exercise, we use the various stories to discuss and process the basic steps of the Olweus method and the general semantics ideas and techniques that support it.

Focusing on specifics rather than on generalities: When students, teachers, administrators, and other school staff discuss their own bully experiences with one another, they move beyond the common but ineffective strategy of employing generalities and slogans (e.g., “bullies are bad,” “we should all get along,” “we should all respect one another,” etc.). Having as many people as possible share the details of their bully stories (whether as targets, bullies, bystanders, or a combination) exposes the specific tactics and tricks by which bullies operate. At the same time, the group-share strategy helps the current targets to feel less isolated, because it underscores the fact that a great many people have had to cope with school bullies. Encouraging the entire school community to discuss the bullying problem through specifics, rather than through generalities, lifts the veil of secrecy associated with it. It encourages students and adults to view themselves as multifaceted human beings acting and reacting within a complex environment.

Indexing: To further assist students and educators in recognizing how bullying behavior may vary, and how important it is to be flexible in one's responses to the variations, we introduce them to the general semantics concept of “indexing.” Bully₁ who uses verbal abuse, is not bully₂ who engages in physi-

cal abuse, is not bully₃, who engages in relational abuse. Indexing underlines the fact that different strategies may be needed to deal with different forms of bullying: one can learn how to control the conversation with verbal abusers; one can enlist the aid of adults and other authority figures to protect oneself and one's peers against physical abusers; and one can defuse relational abuse by seeking friendships outside the circle of abuse.

Step Two.

Replacing the old either/or “fight ’em or ignore ’em” method:

The research conducted by the Olweus group clearly indicates that the standard either/or approach to bully prevention is actually the least effective set of strategies to use to address a climate of violence in the schools, or to help school-age bullies and targets individually. Resorting to fighting can turn targets into bullies, which often results in physical harm to both parties, and sometimes to bystanders as well. The strategy of attempting to ignore bullies usually gives bullies a green light to continue their reign of terror — and sometimes to even try harder to get a rise out of their targets.

Moving beyond two-valued thinking: The Olweus model suggests that after exposing the details of the bullies' tactics and tricks through personal stories, and discussing the specifics of those stories in small groups and larger assembly programs, the single most effective strategy to use in the complex environment of our schools, is to firmly and unequivocally tell the bullies “NO” in as many ways possible every time they exhibit an inappropriate behavior. This repetitive, consistent, but varied chorus of “NO more bullying” messages (described shortly) needs to be carried out by all members of the educational community (e.g., teachers, teacher aides, counselors, parents, administrators, cafeteria workers, other students, etc.). This approach lets bullies know there is no safe haven and there will be no acceptance of such behavior from any quarter.

To make a school's “NO more bullying” messages as effective as possible, we suggest that teachers, parents, and students create their own series of different “NO” statements or scripts. Students can practice their statements and scripts in the classroom and on their own, and then put them to use when confronted by bullies. Classroom rehearsals of the students' work can be set up as “rescue” or “hero” scenes in which the characters of targets and bystanders successfully stand up to bullies in a safe environment. It is both gratifying and productive for a class to watch a child, who has taken on a bully role in real life, enthusiastically play the role of a bystander-hero who rescues a target, or a target-hero who stands up to a bully.

Developing an “Extensional Orientation”: In general semantics, an “extensional orientation” means that one focuses, as much as possible, on “factual information.” Its counterpart, an “intensional orientation,” involves employing a subjective world-view that relies on abstract and general verbal definitions. Not surprisingly, those who develop an extensional orientation to meet life’s challenges are more effective problem-solvers than those who rely on an intensional orientation.

An important goal in all of our bully prevention workshops is to help participants develop a more extensional orientation by paying attention to the words they use to describe other people and situations. Students and adults are asked to refrain from turning their “NO more bullying” messages and scripts into personal attacks against the bullies. Targets and bystanders who “get personal” (intensional) in this way run the risk of acting like bullies. Describing bullies or bullying behaviors to other children with words such as “mean” or “bad” can also backfire — because some children (and even adults) regard “mean” and “bad” as terms equivalent to “powerful” and “cool.”

To circumvent such problems, students are directed to keep their statements and scripts as neutral and factual (extensional) as possible. Their goal is to send the message that bullying is an “irrational” behavior — a behavior that is “not normal” to rational human beings. We recommend the use of such provisional phrases for the simple reason that terms like “irrational behavior” or “behavior that is not normal” to rational human beings, avoid making the character of the bully look “cool.” Finally, such phrases also avoid equating bully behavior with the person as a whole, underscoring that change and growth are possible (i.e., a child can choose to relinquish a bully role and start behaving rationally again, or to ask for help to gain the skills to do so).

When confronting bully characters in “real life,” students are directed to calmly and firmly state their various NO messages and then to purposefully walk away with heads held high to give the bully a time out. It makes no sense to attempt to have a conversation with someone who is acting irrationally. If a bystander sees another child being bullied, that bystander states her or his NO message to the bully and then purposefully escorts the target away from the bully.

Below are a few examples of extensional “NO more bullying” statements that children and adults have created to prevent bully characters from taking over their schools.

- That’s only bully talk — I (or we) don’t listen to bully talk because it’s not rational.
- Bullying is not allowed in our school — so cut it out.

- We can't play with you if you bully other children. Stop it so we can play together.
- Bullying is not normal behavior for rational human beings — cease and desist!
- Bullying is irrational. We don't want you to get into any more trouble by acting irrationally, so don't do it.
- Bullying causes problems for everyone in our school, including you — stop it now so we can work things out.

Learning how to handle bullies through take-charge verbal interactions is the first choice of response. However, if a bully shows any sign of becoming physically violent, students are instructed to leave the scene as quickly as they can, to run away proudly if they must, and to take protection by finding and remaining with a group of people (preferably adults) until they are sure that the present danger has passed. This is the intelligent, extensional choice under the circumstances. It makes no sense to fight or attempt to reason with someone who is not acting normally. Once the targets and/or bystanders have reached a place of safety, they are instructed to immediately notify as many adults as necessary to take care of the situation — by calmly and firmly stating that so and so is acting irrationally and needs immediate help because so and so did or threatened such and such.

Step Three.

Teaching self-management/anger management techniques to children and adults:

Bullies delight in getting a rise or a “knee jerk reaction” from their targets. Self-management and anger management techniques teach targets and bystanders how to avoid overreacting to the bullies' irrational behaviors. They protect targets from internalizing the abuses of the bullies. And they encourage bullies to address the underlying reasons for their inappropriate behaviors so they can learn to modify them. We also use general semantics ideas and techniques in our self- and anger-management workshops to defuse the bully problem in schools.

Learning to delay one's reactions: General semanticists advocate using the technique of “the delayed reaction” to consciously engage one's higher brain functions, and delay one's impulsive or signal reactions. Impulsive reactions interfere with our ability to evaluate challenging situations or problems effec-

tively. Most self- and anger-management programs proclaim that one should stay calm in the face of difficult situations, but very few of these programs actually explain how to do so — other than counting to ten or taking several deep breaths, which may not be practical given the circumstances.

Psychologist Albert Ellis pioneered a specific technique to help his clients delay their reactions and manage their emotions and behavior. Ellis's technique, the “‘ABC’s’ of Rational-Emotive-Behavior-Therapy,” is based on the ancient adage, “People are not disturbed by things, but by the view they take of them,” as well as general semantics formulations.

According to Ellis's “ABC’s,” our emotional and behavioral reactions are the result of the following sequence:

- A.** We first experience an **ACTIVATING** Event (e.g., someone calls us a “bad” name).
- B.** We have **BELIEFS** or Thoughts about that Event (that person should not say things like that — it's terrible that person called me a name — how embarrassing!, etc.).
- C.** We experience the Emotional **CONSEQUENCES** of our beliefs and thoughts (I hate that person! I feel depressed/angry/scared! I want to crawl into a hole! I want to get back at that person!), which often leads to Behavioral **CONSEQUENCES** (withdrawal, fighting, crying, etc.).

Ellis's clear, simple model is particularly helpful to those who hold the mistaken belief that one's first response to any outside stimuli is always emotional. Professional actors, whose trade is based on reproducing and controlling emotions, are well aware that this is not the case. Actors learn to quickly control and reproduce such strong emotions as anger by how they think — such emotional recall, sense memory, and using one's imagination are, in fact, forms of critical thinking and self-talk.

We can learn to stay calm and make better choices for ourselves in the face of challenging situations by becoming aware of how our thoughts or self-talk can exacerbate or defuse our emotional response to a situation. For example, if we talk to ourselves about difficult activating events (e.g., bullying) using terms such as “should,” “have to,” and “must” (which are demands), or over-the-top descriptors such as “terrible,” “awful,” and “horrible,” chances are that we will be more upset than if our self-talk contains terms such as “prefer,” “would like to,” and “it would be better if” (which are preferences and wishes), and more temperate descriptors such as “irrational,” “annoying,” and “distasteful.”

One can experience the difference in these two methods of self-talk by speaking the following set of statements out loud:

“That person SHOULD’N’T talk to me that way! It’s really terrible and embarrassing!”

As opposed to,

“I would prefer if that person did not talk to me that way. It’s distasteful and annoying.”

Avoiding “allness statements”: Another way to improve one’s self-talk and to remain calm when dealing with life’s challenging activating events is to avoid the use of “allness statements” (e.g. “I will *never* be able to solve my bully problems.” “I will *never* have any real friends,” etc.). Allness statements are, from the outset, inaccurate because such statements cannot account for all occurrences. We ask students to carefully examine their self-talk for any allness statements that may lurk there and then to reframe those statements according to the facts. Thus, one could rewrite the first allness statement in the example above to read: “I find bully problems hard to deal with, but if I use general semantics ideas and techniques, research evidence shows that it will help improve the situation.”

Dating: Another general semantics practice that encourages students to focus on the facts, rather than on inferences and generalities, is the technique of “dating.” Dating involves attaching actual dates to one’s evaluations of people, objects, and situations as a reminder that “things change.” We ask students to “date themselves” over a four year period (e.g., Mary₂₀₀₁, is not Mary₂₀₀₂, is not Mary₂₀₀₃, is not Mary₂₀₀₄). Under each name and date, students write a short factual description of some of the things they enjoyed doing that year. This exercise provides a powerful reminder for students who worry they will always be targets of bullies that time is on their side, that things will change.

The IFD Syndrome: Teaching students and educators about the “IFD syndrome” offers additional relief for targets and bystanders who may become despondent over the bullying problem in their schools. Wendell Johnson originally coined the term in his general semantics classic *People in Quandaries*. The IFD syndrome describes a condition in which idealistic people, who are constantly bombarded by “unfairness,” cruelty, and other frustrations, move from a state of Idealization to Frustration to Demoralization. Typically those who suffer from the IFD syndrome quickly become hopeless and develop a “what’s the use” attitude. Learning about the IFD syndrome, and remembering its concise formula, can help targets and sensitive bystanders remain calm and

hopeful so that they can make more accurate assessments of their bullying problems and the actions they need to take.

Step Four. **Teaching empathy training:**

Dr. Ross Greene, in his book *The Explosive Child*, calls empathy the access code to a child's brain (and for that matter to an adult's brain as well). Even when a student (or an adult) is "acting out" or "clearly in the wrong," the fastest way to calm them down, so one can create a teachable moment or have a rational conversation, is to offer them empathy first and correction or discipline second. The two key operative words in empathy training for children and adults are *I understand*: "I understand how you feel — I've felt that way myself," "I haven't had your exact experiences, but I believe I've had similar ones," "I think I can understand how you feel," etc. When the offer of empathy has been accepted (usually indicated by a person's immediate change in body language and behavior or by a verbal acceptance such as "thank you") one can proceed to corrective or disciplinary action.

In our empathy training workshops for students, we stress the general semantics idea that we only see things as they are interpreted by our individual nervous systems. Since everyone's nervous system is unique, it takes real effort and concentration for one nervous system to understand another.

Some additional ways for adults to help students develop greater empathy for others include:

- Modeling empathy and firm respectful discipline to children.
- Teaching students to expand their thinking/feeling vocabularies and express themselves more clearly by replacing curse words and non-verbal displays of frustration and anger with specific feeling words such as "angry," "jealous," "hurt," etc.
- Establishing a making-amends program, in which students learn to say they are sorry by doing something positive for others.
- Encouraging students to examine different points of view on a particular topic through role-plays in which students research and act out characters from different cultures, religions, nations, etc.

CONCLUSION

During the past fifty years numerous studies have demonstrated that general semantics instruction has positive effects on student attitudes, behavior,

and learning. These effects include increased critical thinking, enhanced creativity, improved composition writing, improved personality adjustment, decreased prejudice, and decreased alienation. (Levinson, p.153.) The positive feedback that we have received from students, teachers, and parents on our bully prevention workshops indicates that this is yet another area where general semantics training has proven beneficial in an educational setting.

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*We must begin to realize our potentialities as humans,
then we may approach the future with some hope.*

WHAT I BELIEVE

ALFRED KORZYBSKI*

I AM DEEPLY HONORED to participate in the Symposium, *The Faith I Live By*, compiled and edited by Krishna M. Talgeri, and to contribute this paper particularly written for the contemplative audience of Indian readers. (1) This is the first opportunity I have had to write a ‘credo,’ where I do not need to go into theoretical explanations.

It happens that I come from an old family of agriculturists, mathematicians, soldiers, jurists, and engineers, etc. When I was five years old my father, an engineer, gave me the feel of the world’s most important scientific discoveries of the nineteenth century, which prepared the groundwork for the scientific achievements of the twentieth century and remain fundamentally valid today. The *feel* of the differential calculus, as well as non-euclidean and four-dimensional geometries, which he conveyed to me at that time, shaped the future interests and orientations of my life, and became the foundation of my whole work.

My observations and theoretical studies of life and mathematics, mathematical foundations, many branches of sciences, also history, history of cultures,

* Alfred Korzybski introduced general semantics in his book *Science and Sanity* in 1933. This article is reprinted from his book *Manhood of Humanity*, Second Edition, published by the International Non-Aristotelian Library Publishing Company, available from the Institute of General Semantics.

anthropology, 'philosophy,' 'psychology,' 'logic,' comparative religions, etc., convinced me that:

1. Human evaluations with reference to themselves were mythological or zoological, or a combination of both; but,
2. Neither of these approaches could give us a workable base for understanding the living, uniquely human, extremely complex (deeply inter-related) reactions of Smith₁, Smith₂, etc., generalized in such high-order abstractions as 'mind,' or 'intellect'; and,
3. A functional analysis, free from the old mythological and zoological assumptions, showed that humans, with the most highly developed nervous system, are uniquely characterized by the capacity of an individual or a generation to begin where the former left off. I called this essential capacity 'time-binding.' This can be accomplished only by a class of life which uses symbols as means for time-binding. Such a capacity depends on and necessitates 'intelligence,' means of communication, etc. On this inherently human level of interdependence time-binding leads inevitably to feelings of responsibility, duty toward others and the future, and therefore to some type of ethics, morals, and similar social and/or socio-cultural reactions.

In the time-binding orientation I took those characteristics for granted as the empirical end-products of the functioning of the healthy human nervous system.

It was a fundamental error of the old evaluations to postulate 'human nature' as 'evil.' 'Human nature' depends to a large extent on the character of our creeds or rationalizations, etc., for these ultimately build up our socio-cultural and other environments.

I believe that our approaches to the problems of humans have been vitiated by primitive methods of evaluation which still often dominate our attitudes and outlooks. With a time-binding consciousness, our criteria of values, and so behavior, are based on the study of human potentialities, not on statistical averages on the level of *homo homini lupus* drawn from primitive and/or un-sane semantic (evaluational) reactions which are on record. Instead of studying elementalistic 'thinking,' 'feeling,' 'intellect,' 'emotion,' etc., a misleading approach implying the inherited archaic, *artificial*, divisions or schizophrenic splits of human characteristics which actually cannot be split, I *investigated functionally and therefore non-elementalistically the psycho-biological mechanisms of time-binding* — how they work.

By induction we pass from particulars to the general. However, this method is not reliable enough. We have to build a deductive system and verify empirically whether the general applies to the eventual random particular, which then would become the foundation for predictability. This, after all, is the main aim of all science. So far what we 'knew' about 'man' were statistical averages gathered inductively, and so our human world picture was rather sad, distorted, if not hopeless. The human understanding of time-binding as explained here establishes the deductive grounds for a full-fledged 'science of man,' where both inductive and deductive methods are utilized. I believe that this very point of inductive and deductive scientific methods with regard to humans tangibly marks a sharp difference between the childhood and the manhood of humanity. In other words, we try to learn from the study of the individual the main characteristics of the *phylum* (the human race). Now with the time-binding theory, for the first time to my knowledge, having accumulated data by induction (statistical averages), we can start with what we have learned about the *phylum* and analyze the individual from the point of view of human potentialities *as a phylum*. I may be wrong, but perhaps this may become the turning of a page of human history.

I could not use, in my further studies, the older 'organism-as-a-whole' approaches, but had to base my analysis on the much more complex 'organism-as-a-whole-in-an-environment.' I had to include neuro-linguistic and neuro-semantic (evaluational) environments as environments, and also had to consider geographic, physico-chemical, economic, political, ecological, socio-cultural, etc., conditions as factors which mould human personalities, and so even group behavior. This statement is entirely general, and applies to highly civilized people as well as the most primitive.

*I had to concentrate on the study of two extremes of
human psychological reactions: a) reactions at their best
... and b) reactions at their worst,*

Common sense and ordinary observations convinced me that the average, so-called 'normal person' is so extremely complex as to practically evade an over-all analysis. So I had to concentrate on the study of two extremes of human psychological reactions: a) reactions at their best, because of their exceptional predictability, as in mathematics, the foundations of mathematics, mathematical physics, exact sciences, etc., which exhibit the deepest kind of strictly human psychological reactions, and b) reactions at their worst, as exemplified by psychiatric cases. In these investigations I discovered that physico-math-

ematical methods have application to our daily life on all levels, linking science with problems of sanity, in the sense of adjustment to 'facts' and 'reality.'

I found that human reactions within these two limits do not differ in some objectified 'kind,' but only in psycho-biological 'degrees,' and that the 'normal' person hovers somewhere in between the two extremes. Nobody is as 'insane' as the composite picture a textbook of psychiatry would give us, and nobody is as sane as that which a textbook of sanity would give, the author included. The mechanisms of time-binding are exhibited in most humans except those with severe psychobiological illnesses. However, some *inaccessible* dogmatists in power, particularly dictators of every kind, have blocked this capacity considerably. Clearly police states of secrecy, withholding from the people knowledge of, and from, the world, or twisting that knowledge to suit their purposes, 'iron curtains,' etc., must be classified as saboteurs among time-binders, and certainly not a socio-cultural asset to the evolution of humanity.

Linguistic and grammatical structures also have prevented our understanding of human reactions. For instance, we used and still use a terminology of 'objective' and 'subjective,' both extremely confusing, as the so-called 'objective' must be considered a construct made by our nervous system, and what we call 'subjective' may also be considered 'objective' for the same reasons.

My analysis showed that happenings in the world outside our skins, and also such organismal psychological reactions inside our skins as those we label 'feelings,' 'thinking,' 'emotions,' 'love,' 'hate,' 'happiness,' 'unhappiness,' 'anger,' 'fear,' 'resentment,' 'pain,' 'pleasure,' etc., occur only on the *non-verbal*, or what I call *silent levels*. Our speaking occurs on the verbal levels, and we can speak *about*, but not *on*, the silent or un-speakable levels. This sharp, and inherently natural, yet thoroughly unorthodox differentiation between verbal and non-verbal levels automatically eliminates the useless metaphysical verbal bickerings of millenniums about 'the nature of things,' 'human nature,' etc. For many metaphysical verbal futile arguments, such as solipsism, or 'the unknowable,' have been the result of the identifications of verbal levels with the silent levels of happenings, 'feelings,' etc., that the words are merely supposed to represent, never being the 'reality' behind them.

Such psycho-logical manifestations as those mentioned above can be dealt with in a unified terminology of *evaluation*, with the result that an empirical general theory of values, or general semantics, becomes possible, and, with its roots in the methods of exact sciences, this can become the foundation of a *science of man*. For through the study of exact sciences we can discover factors of sanity. Different philosophical trends as found in disciplines such as Nominalism, Realism, Phenomenalism, Significs, Semiotic, Logical Positivism, etc., also become unified by a methodology, with internationally applicable tech-

niques, which I call ‘non-aristotelian,’ as it includes, yet goes beyond and brings up to date, the aims and formulations of Aristotle.

Whatever we may say something is, obviously *is not* the ‘something’ on the silent levels. Indeed, as Wittgenstein wrote, ‘What *can* be shown, *cannot* be said.’ In my experience I found that it is practically impossible to convey the differentiation of silent (unspeakable) levels from the verbal without having the reader or the hearer pinch with one hand the finger of the other hand. He would then realize organismally that the first order psycho-logical direct experiences are not verbal. The simplicity of this statement is misleading, unless we become aware of its implications, as in our living reactions most of us identify in value the two entirely *different* levels, with often disastrous consequences. Note the sadness of the beautiful passage of Eddington on page 1v [see page 25, in this *ETC*]. He seems to be unhappy that the silent levels can never be the verbal levels. Is this not an example of unjustified ‘maximum expectation’?

There is a tremendous difference between ‘thinking’ in verbal terms, and ‘contemplating,’ inwardly silent, on non-verbal levels.

I firmly believe that the *consciousness of the differences between these levels of abstractions*; i.e., the silent and the verbal levels, is the key and perhaps the first step for the solution of human problems. This belief is based on my own observations, and studies of the endless observations of other investigators.

There is a tremendous difference between ‘thinking’ in verbal terms, and ‘contemplating,’ inwardly silent, on non-verbal levels, and then searching for the proper structure of language to fit the supposedly discovered structure of the silent processes that modern science tries to find. If we ‘think’ *verbally*, we act as biased observers and project onto the silent levels the structure of the language we use, and so remain in our rut of old orientations, making keen, unbiased, observations and creative work well-nigh impossible. In contrast, when we ‘think’ without words, or in pictures (which involve structure and therefore relations), we may discover new aspects and relations on silent levels, and so may produce important theoretical results in the general search for a similarity of structure between the two levels, silent and verbal. Practically all important advances are made that way.

So far the only possible link between the two levels is found in terms of relations, which apply equally to both non-verbal and verbal levels, such as ‘order’ (serial, linear, cyclic, spiral, etc.), ‘between-ness,’ ‘space-time,’ ‘equal-

ity' or 'inequality,' 'before,' 'after,' 'more than,' 'less than,' etc. *Relations, as factors of structure, give the sole content of all human knowledge.*

It has been said that 'to know anything we have to know everything.' Unfortunately it is true, but expressed *in the above form* 'knowledge' would be impossible. Mathematicians solved this impasse simply and effectively. They introduced postulational methods, thus *limiting* the 'everything,' out of which the *limited* 'anything' follows.

The identification (confusion) of verbal with silent levels leads automatically to the asking of indefinitely long arrays of verbal 'whys,' *as if* the verbal levels could ever possibly cover all the factors and chains of antecedents of the silent levels, or ever 'be' the silent levels. This is why in science we limit our 'why' to the data at hand, thus avoiding the unlimited metaphysical questioning without data, to which there cannot be an answer. Mathematicians solved these inherent dilemmas by stating explicitly their undefined terms in their postulational systems, terms which label nothing but occurrences on the silent levels. Metaphysicians of many kinds or many creeds since time immemorial tried to solve the same perplexities by postulating different 'prime movers' or 'final causes,' beyond which the further 'why' is ruled out as leading to the logically 'verboden' 'infinite regress.' Originally religions were polytheistic. Later, in the attempt for unification, perhaps to strengthen the power of the priesthood, and also because of the increasing ability of humans to make generalizations, monotheisms were invented, which have led to the most cruel religious wars. Different rulers, dictators, 'fuehrers,' etc., have followed similar psycho-logical patterns with historically known destructive or constructive results. The above statements are limited by the historical contexts.

*If we are supposed not to separate elementalistically
'emotion' and 'intellect,' we have to take into consideration
organismal longings spread over continents for millenniums,
which find their proper expression according to the date of
the specific human developments, at a date.*

In our human evolutionary development the structures of religions and sciences, because all man-made, do not differ psycho-logicaly. They all depend on fundamental assumptions, hypotheses, etc., from which we try to build some understanding of, and/or rapport with, this world, ourselves included. Some of these involve archaic and false-to-fact assumptions, etc., others, such as sciences, involve modern, potentially verifiable, assumptions and hypotheses. In brief, any religion may be considered 'primitive science' to satisfy human *un-*

conscious organismal longings; and modern science may be considered 'up-to-date religion,' to satisfy *consciously* the same human feelings. If we are supposed not to separate elementalistically 'emotion' and 'intellect,' we have to take into consideration organismal longings spread over continents for millenniums, which find their proper expression according to the date of the specific human developments, at a date. Religions and sciences are both expressions of our human search for security, and so predictability, for solace, guidance, feelings of 'belonging,' etc., culminating in self-realization through a general 'consciousness of abstracting,' the main aim of my work.

The progress of modern science, *including the new science of man as a time-binder*, has been due uniquely to the freedom of scientists to revise their *fundamental assumptions*, terminologies, undefined terms, which involve hidden assumptions, etc., underlying our reflections, a freedom prohibited in 'primitive sciences' and also in dictatorships, past and present.

As to the space-time problem of the 'beginning and the end of the world,' I have 'solved' it for myself effectively by the conviction that we are not yet evolved enough and so mature enough as humans to be able to understand such problems *at this date*. In scientific practice, however, I would go on, in search for structure, asking 'why' under consciously *limited* conditions. Probably in the future this problem will be shown to be no problem, and the solution will be found in the disappearance of the problem. By now science has already solved many dilemmas which at first seemed insoluble, as exemplified, for instance, in the new quantum mechanics.

Another important point which clarifies the problem of the 'unknowable,' religions, etc., is that we humans have a capacity for *inferential knowledge*, which is not based on sense data, but on inferences from observed happenings. All modern sciences on the submicroscopic, electro-colloidal, etc., levels are of this 'as if' character. In fact, inferential knowledge today leads to testing in unexpected fields, and so is very creative. Epistemologically the fundamental theories must develop in converging lines of investigation, and if they do not converge it is an indication that there are flaws in the theories, and they are revised. Inferential knowledge today in science is much more reliable than sense data, which often deceive us. In religions we also translate the *still unknown* into inferentially 'known,' which become creeds, but based on primitive or prescientific assumptions. The most primitive religion in which the savage believes, or the more generalized and more organized religions in which the 'man in the street' believes, represent non-elementalistically his *inferential* 'knowledge,' which involves his 'feelings,' wishes, desires, needs, fears, and what not, as combined inseparably in living reactions with his 'intellect.'

I firmly believe that the still prevailing archaic, split, schizophrenic orientations about ourselves, which without a modern science of man are practically impossible to avoid, are an extremely hampering influence to any understanding of the potentialities of 'human nature.' These outlooks, inherited from the 'childhood of humanity' and perpetuated linguistically, keep our human reactions and so our cultures on unnecessarily low levels, from which we try to extricate ourselves through violence, murder, rioting, and in larger expressions of mass sufferings, through revolutions and wars. This is in sharp contrast to the peaceful progress we have in science, where we are free to analyze our basic assumptions, and where we use a language of appropriate structure.

I firmly believe that an adequate structure of language is fundamental for human adjustment to the silent levels of happenings, 'feelings,' etc. Thus, the non-elementalistic Einstein-Minkowski space-time, instead of the split, elementalistic newtonian 'space' and 'time,' revolutionized physics. The non-elementalistic psycho-biology of Adolf Meyer, instead of 'psychology' and 'biology,' marks the sharp difference between humans and animals. Non-elementalistic *psychosomatic* considerations, instead of the older 'psyche' and 'soma,' revolutionized the whole of medicine and rescued it from being merely glorified veterinary science. Etc., etc. I give these specific examples to indicate the general practical value of structural linguistic innovations which express and convey to others our new structural outlooks.

*All through history man has been groping to find
his place in the hierarchy of life, to discover, so
to say, his rôle in the 'nature of things.'*

I am deeply convinced by theoretical considerations and empirical data that the new (historically the first to my knowledge) formulation of time-binding throws enormous light on our understanding of 'human nature,' and will help to formulate new perspectives for the future of time-binders. This new functional definition of humans as time-binders, not mere 'space -binders,' carries very far-reaching scientific, psycho-logical, moral and ethical beneficial consequences, which often remain lasting, today verified in many thousands of instances. It explains also how we humans, and humans alone, were able to produce sciences and civilizations, making us by necessity *interdependent*, and the builders of our own destinies.

All through history man has been groping to find his place in the hierarchy of life, to discover, so to say, his rôle in the 'nature of things.' To this end he must first discover himself and his 'essential nature,' before he can fully realize

himself — then perhaps our civilizations will pass by peaceful evolutions from their childhood to the manhood of humanity.

It is a source of deep satisfaction to me that similar notions about the circularity and self-reflexiveness of human knowledge are taking root in our orientations as expressed by other writers. In 1942 in *Monograph III* published by the Institute of General Semantics, in my foreword with M. Kendig, we wrote:

‘It should be noticed that in human life self reflexiveness has even “material” implications, which introduce serious difficulties. Professor Cassius J. Keyser expresses this very aptly: “It is obvious, once the fact is pointed out, that the character of human history, the character of human conduct, and the character of all our human institutions depend both upon what man *is* and in equal or greater measure upon what we humans *think* man is.” This is profoundly true.

‘Professor Arthur S. Eddington describes the same problem in these words: “And yet, in regard to the nature of things, this knowledge is only an empty shell — a form of symbols. It is knowledge of structural form, and not knowledge of content. All through the physical world runs that unknown content, which must surely be the stuff of our consciousness. Here is a hint of aspects deep within the world of physics, and yet unattainable by the methods of physics. And, moreover, we have found that where science has progressed the farthest, the mind has but regained from nature that which the mind has put into nature.

“‘We have found a strange foot-print on the shores of the unknown. We have devised profound theories, one after another, to account for its origin. At last, we have succeeded in reconstructing the creature that made the foot-print. And Lo! it is our own.”

‘Dr. Alexis Carrel formulated the same difficulty differently, but just as aptly: “To progress again man must remake himself. And he cannot remake himself without suffering. For he is both the marble and the sculptor.”’

Those self reflexive and circular mechanisms are *the uniquely human types of reaction* which made our human achievements possible. With the new formulations, the consciousness of this special capacity with its profound implications has become generally teachable on all levels, that of uneducated people and children included, and this consciousness may now mark a new period in our evolution.

History, anthropology, and general semantics establish firmly that the enormous majority of humanity so far lived and live on the animal biological level of mere subsistence, without the opportunity to realize their potentialities. For time-binders are not merely biological organisms, but psycho-biological, and this introduces incredible complexities, which so far we did not know how to handle. The old notions about ‘man’ have hitherto led to a generally sick and

bewildered society. We cannot be psycho-logical isolationists and try to be constructive time-binders, or we are bound to be bogged down in an asocial morass of conflicts.

The theory of time-binding and extensional methods of general semantics have been tested in many scientific, educational and managerial fields. Even on the battlefields of World War II they were applied by American physicians, officers and men in thousands of cases of 'battle fatigue,' with telling results. Today the new methods are taught in many schools and universities, and there are study groups on all continents.

To conclude, I may quote from my new preface to the third edition of *Science and Sanity*: 'We need not blind ourselves with the old dogma that "human nature cannot be changed," for we find that it *can be changed* [if we know how]. We must begin to realize our potentialities as humans, then we may approach the future with some hope. We may feel with Galileo, as he stamped his foot on the ground after recanting the Copernican theory before the Holy Inquisition, "*Eppur si muove!*" The evolution of our human development may be retarded, but it cannot be stopped.'

ALFRED KORZYBSKI
LAKEVILLE, CONNECTICUT, U.S.A.
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NOTE

1. This was originally written in 1948 in response to an invitation from Mr. Krishna Mangesh Talgeri, M.A. of 26, Atul Grove, New Delhi, India, to contribute to a symposium entitled, *The Faith I Live By*. It is to be published soon, and includes such international contributors as Gandhi, Nehru, Montessori, John H. Holmes, Radhakrishnan and others. I admit that without Mr. Talgeri's invitation, and the most valuable assistance of Miss Charlotte Schuchardt, which I wish to gratefully acknowledge, I would never have undertaken the difficult task of formulating such a condensed summary of life studies and experiences which any 'credo' would require.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The time-binding theory was first propounded in my *Manhood of Humanity: The Science and Art of Human Engineering*, E. P. Dutton, New York, 1921, second edition, with additions, to be published in 1950 by International Non-aristotelian Library Publishing Company, Institute of General Semantics, Distributors. It was further elaborated in my 'Fate and Freedom,' *Mathematics Teacher*, May 1923, reprinted in *The Language of Wisdom and Folly* by Irving J. Lee, Harper, New York, 1949, 'The Brotherhood of Doctrines,' *The Builder*, April 1924, in my papers read before the International Mathematical Congress in Toronto in 1924, before the Washington Society for Nervous and Mental Diseases in 1925, and before the Washington Psychopathic Society in 1926, when I was studying at St. Elizabeths Psychiatric Hospital in Washington, D.C. It culminated, after extensive studies of the mechanisms of time-binding, in *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-aristotelian Systems and General Semantics*, The International Non-aristotelian Library Publishing Company, first published in 1933, second edition 1941, third edition 1948, distributed by the Institute of General Semantics. In this book, with a physico-mathematical approach, I introduced for the first time the new appropriate scientific methodology for the time-binding theory, which I called 'extensional method,' with principles of essential simplicity.

A.K.



THE MEDIUM IS THE MOBLOG

GARY MIELO*

MOBLOGGING, a blend of the words *mobile* and *weblogging*, involves using a PDA or cell phone camera “in the field” to post words and pictures to a personal or business web site. Based on an inherently nomadic medium, moblogging merges the instantaneousness of electronic journalism with the personal point-of-view attributes of journals, diaries, scrapbooks, and soapboxes.

If Marshall McLuhan were alive today, might he have quipped that this newest electronic form of street journalism facilitates “all the news that’s fit to Sprint”? He certainly would have itemized the ways in which this new medium is now affecting patterns of human perception.

Given his proclivity to season observations about the media with literary references, McLuhan might have chosen T.S. Eliot’s J. Alfred Prufrock to epitomize a moblogged man whose central nervous system was extended and projected — McLuhan called this extension “outered” — by the “profound or-

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Coining of the term *Moblogging* is attributed to American writer and information architect Adam Greenfield, who organized the First International Moblogging Conference in Tokyo in July 2003. The word is generally pronounced MOBlog, (rhymes with Bob) giving stress on the first syllable, out of deference to the ideas discussed in Howard Rheingold's seminal book *Smart Mobs*. (Source: *The FreeDictionary.com* at <<http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Moblog>>)

Moblog host sites can contain highly personal scrapbook-type snapshots as well as genuinely journalistic up-to-the-minute moblog photographs. Representative examples of these sites include: *EasyMoblog*, "an open-source platform for the publishing of personal Web logs and moblogs," <<http://www.easymoblog.org/>>; *MoblogUK*, a "moblog community and personal photoblog that enables users to post images, audio and video to [their] own moblog, today," <<http://moblog.co.uk/>>; and *Fotopages*, an online photo log Web site that allows mobloggers "to create entries via e-mail, from a mobile phone equipped with a camera or any e-mail program," <<http://www.fotopages.com/>>.

ganic character of new electronic technology" (McLuhan *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p.269), which literally and metaphorically "threw [his] nerves in patterns on a screen." (Eliot, p.6.) In fact, Prufrock's dilemma is curiously similar to McLuhan's point in *War and Peace in the Global Village* that "We have been rapt in the 'artifice of eternity' by placing our own nervous systems around the entire globe." (McLuhan *Global Village*, p.177.)

McLuhan's notion of "outring" as it relates to moblogging and its text counterpart blogging is best explained by Mark Federman, Chief Strategist for McLuhan Management Studies at the University of Toronto's McLuhan Program in Culture and Technology. According to Federman, blogging "outers," or makes public, the private mind. A digital personality or "digiSelf" interacts with others without the conventional impediments of time or space. (Federman interview.)

Blogs are an instance of 'publicity' — the McLuhan *reversal* of 'privacy' — that occurs under the intense acceleration of instantaneous communications ... Blogging is an 'outring' of the private mind in a public way (that in turn leads to the multi-way participating that is again characteristic of multi-way instantaneous communications). Unlike normal conversation that is essentially private but interactive, and unlike broadcast that is inherently not interactive

but public, blogging is interactive, public and, of course, networked — that is to say, interconnected. (Federman “Blogging and Publicity.”)

Moblogging has become the medium of choice for many journalists covering wars, riots, and other visually newsworthy crises because it has three essential elements that members of the press revere. It is portable, uncomplicated, and instantaneous. All one needs is a cell phone camera endowed with wireless Internet access. With the flick of a wrist, a Pulitzer prize-winning “decisive moment” might be captured and directly transmitted to a publication virtually anywhere in the world. In this respect, journalists now enjoy much more autonomy.

When asked what his father would have said about moblogging, Eric McLuhan replied that,

Electric technologies of all kinds make obsolete all of our old bureaucratic institutions, which relate to the world of print and heavy industry. No more is knowledge or information contained in books or buildings: we live every moment in an environment of global information and are ourselves translated into information. (Eric McLuhan e-mail interview.)

Prophetically, moblogging complements Marshall McLuhan’s decades-old notion that, “One of the paradoxical features of substituting software information for hardware machinery is total decentralization.” (McLuhan *Global Village* p.184.) Additionally, moblogging illustrates his portrayal of electronic technology as having the capacity to “store and to translate everything; and for speed, that is no problem. No further acceleration is possible this side of the light barrier.” (McLuhan *Understanding Media* p.58.) In an electronic environment, McLuhan reminds us that “in terms of the movement of information, it is the *sender* who is *sent*.” (McLuhan *Media Research* p.105.)

Senders love to send in the moblog community. In answer to the question “What would McLuhan say about moblogging,” moblog guru Howard Rheingold, author of new media books like *Smart Mobs*, *The Virtual Community*, and *Tools of Thought*, posed a similar question, namely “What would Marshall McLuhan say about mobile telephony, texting, the mobile web, and the always-on world of wireless devices?” (Rheingold e-mail interview.) The question and its answer appeared in his moblogging site “The Feature.” The article was titled “It’s All About the Mobile Internet.” Rheingold proposed to “take a long leap at the retrieval question and say that in some way, the mobile telephone is reviving the oral dimension that McLuhan claimed was supplanted by print literacy, which was supplanted by ‘electric’ literacy of simultaneous,

image-heavy, quickly changing, multi-mode information.” (Rheingold “McLuhanizing Mobile Media.”)

However, “image-heavy, quickly changing, multi-mode information” has drawbacks. Simply put, “the quality of image produced by most photo phones still sucks,” according to Steve Outing, Senior Editor for The Poynter Institute as well as columnist with *Editor & Publisher*. Nevertheless Outing is optimistic that higher-resolution camera phones will soon replace “the first-generation junk.” (Outing e-mail interview.)

More importantly, Outing points out a distinctive aspect of moblogging, namely that it has created a:

... trend toward ‘everyone’s a journalist’ — that is, the interactive nature of online/digital media moves citizens into the realm of journalism, participating and contributing to the world of ‘journalism’ alongside professional journalists. I see citizen and professional journalists as coexisting and complementing each other. Moblogs are an example [of a medium] where there’s cross-over; either citizen or pro can publish moblogs, and either’s work can be of value to the public. (Outing e-mail interview.)

Ironically, Outing’s concept of “citizen journalism” reiterates McLuhan’s notion that “once any new technology penetrates a society, it saturates every institution of that society.” (McLuhan “*Playboy Interview*.”) This saturation was conspicuously demonstrated a few months ago during the Democratic and Republican conventions. In fact, acceptance of credentialed bloggers, which first took place at the Democratic National Convention, forced corporate giants like the Associated Press, CNN and the National Journal to inaugurate their own weblogs to compete with the “citizen journalists.” Rheingold’s media savvy “Smart Mobs” put the fear of blog into corporate media organizations. This is vividly recollected in Mark Glaser’s July 31 article, “Blogsplotation: Big Media try to Steal Bloggers’ Thunder at the DNC” archived in the Online Journalism Review web site. (Glaser “Blogsplotation.”) A hubbub ensued between citizen journalists and professional reporters.

These convention confrontations exemplify the scramble “to find new environments in which it will be possible to live with our new inventions.” (McLuhan *Massage* p.124.) The key element about moblogging and its visually challenged counterpart blogging is that these new media fulfill a McLuhan insight, namely that electronic media decentralize both information and communication. In other words, we are propelled “Back to the Future” into an increasingly shrinking global village.

Decentralization is central in an electronic environment. Witness McLuhan's straightforward statement that "the instant nature of electric-information movement is decentralizing — rather than enlarging — the family of man into a new state of multitudinous tribal existences." (McLuhan "*Playboy Interview*.") Eric McLuhan enlarged on this idea, noting,

Like knowledge, learning too is now decentralized in space and in time. Everyone is a student from cradle to grave. To remain relevant, institutions of learning might now issue diplomas or degrees to registrants on entering and require that they stay for the four years to engage in conversation and dialogue and research. Training ought to move away from courses and subjects and turn instead to training of skills and of perception and sensibility, the sort needed by investigators and explorers. (Eric McLuhan e-mail interview.)

This means that electronic technology transforms information and learning, making the notion of the "classroom without walls" not only a reality, but one that threatens to defoliate the proverbial Ivy Tower. In the past decade, decentralization of education, as evidenced by the increasing numbers of accredited schools, colleges, and universities offering distance learning, parallels the decentralization of reporting. While reporters moblog their information, educators weblog with their students, providing updated news, information, opinions, and articles of interest. A blog may include journal entries, observations, assignments and links to reading material, and suggestions assembled by the user.

The shift from hard copy compositions and notebook-style journal entries to web-based blogging is taking place in and out of schools. "I teach at a DE [Distance Education] school in BC [British Columbia] and we are in the process of forming a partnership with Trinity Western University," reported Graeme Wilson, member of the board of directors for the Marshall McLuhan Center on Global Communications, and Marshall McLuhan Distinguished Teacher for BC and Canada. "They have developed a community that has students blog rather than send e-mail. We hope to initiate that in our school [Fraser Valley Distance Education School] shortly." (Wilson e-mail interview.)

It is evident that new media create new environments, ones that can radically reprogram our central nervous systems.

Electronic circuitry profoundly involves men with one another. Information pours upon us, instantaneously and continuously. (McLuhan *Massage* p.63.) [Such an environment may lead to sensory overload] because all media, from the phonetic alphabet to the computer, are extensions of man that cause deep and lasting changes in him and transform his environment. Such an extension

is an intensification, an amplification of an organ, sense or function, and whenever it takes place, the central nervous system appears to institute a self-protective *numbing* of the affected area, insulating and anesthetizing it from conscious awareness of what's happening to it. (McLuhan "*Playboy Interview*.")

With moblogging and blogging, more and more media-savvy individuals like the above-mentioned "Smart Mobs" and "Citizen Journalists" can be roused from this self-protective numbing. The wide awake, the observant, will hold "a possible stratagem for understanding our predicament, our electrically-configured world." (McLuhan *Massage*, p.52.) Otherwise, media-battered somnambulists might, like Eliot's Prufrock, find themselves going through life "Till human voices wake us, and we drown." (Eliot, p7.)



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QUOTES

We must discriminate between the extent and variety of creation, and the paucity of language. The number of unassociated sights is very small, if we estimate them by the number of words which name such sights. They are, however, far more numerous than this mode of estimating will imply. The word *star*, for instance, names an unassociated sight, (a sight not associated with any feel, &c. ;) but the word which thus seems to name but one sight, names a great number of sights, that differ in magnitude, brilliancy, colour, shape, &c. I state this, to enable you to perceive, that verbal designations are an inadequate means of estimating the variety and number of natural existences. (p.49)

We mistake the unintelligibility of a word or proposition for a mystery of nature. Language permits us to frame propositions which possess a very ambiguous meaning, and sometimes no meaning. "Of the substance and essence of either mind or matter we know nothing, and can know nothing." Here, then, are two words, which are assumed to name something, but we know not what. If, however, we neither know what they name, nor can know, we neither know nor can know that they name any thing. Our knowledge of their significance cannot exceed our knowledge of what they signify. But because language permits us to thus frame propositions which are unintelligible, we attribute the defect to a mystery of nature, though it is truly nothing but a misuse of language. (p.288)

ALEXANDER BRYAN JOHNSON, *A TREATISE ON LANGUAGE*.

WIKIPEDIA AND THE DISAPPEARING “AUTHOR”

NORA MILLER*

WHAT DOES it mean to author a piece of writing? For many generations, humans inscribed clay tablets and recorded information on papyrus but only rarely included their own names in the documents they produced. Many of the most famous works of antiquity come to us as accounts of words spoken by someone else.

Only after the development of movable type and modern publishing methods did authorship acquire a legal and universal meaning. Copyright laws established the right of the person who penned a work to profit from it and control its publication. By the 20th century, the idea that authors “own” their work dwelled so deep in our cultures that even unpublished authors, even grade-school children recognize and accept the notion without question.

Then came the Internet. Initially designed to connect researchers at various campuses and military installations around the country, it rapidly evolved into the now-famous World Wide Web. The technology underlying the web pro-

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vides some previously unimaginable tools for authoring and disseminating information. Even with movable type, many documents only existed in small quantities. If your local library didn't have a copy and you couldn't afford to buy one, you simply didn't read it. On the web, a single copy of a document becomes available to any person able to connect to the Internet — still not universal access, of course, but the ratio of books to readers has changed by several orders of magnitude.

Beyond increasing availability however, the technology of the Internet has begun to challenge the very concept of authorship and readership, in ways that seems particularly of interest to the general semantics community. One web page on the subject of writing put it this way:

...in cyberspace, reader/responder and author/writer often merge, voices collapse and multiply, often belonging to no single source — or even to a person, and familiar notions of textuality and especially of where meaning resides are all called into question.

— *What Matters Who Writes?, What Matters Who Responds?*
Issues of Ownership in the Writing Classroom, Andrea Lunsford,
Rebecca Rickly, Michael Salvo, and Susan West.

<http://english.ttu.edu/kairos/1.1/features/lunsford/title.html>

This merging of roles came about initially because of the ease with which an Internet-aware author can send text to others and because of tools that allow the reader of that text to edit and augment the text before passing it on to the next "reader." This process began with electronic mail. I send an e-mail to my colleague with a few paragraphs regarding a subject of mutual interest. The colleague can easily excerpt my text and add comments or even make changes to my original. The result may come back to me or may go out to a broader audience. Perhaps writers, nearly all of which grew up in an educational system that emphasized "doing your own work," found this process acceptable largely because of the transient and even ephemeral quality of e-mail. (Although, of course, we now know that e-mail is anything but ephemeral. Lawyers routinely dredge up electronic evidence of collusion, contumely, and malfeasance by combing through backup tapes of "ephemeral" e-mail. In my days as information systems manager, I had to remind my users repeatedly that they could never predict who might ultimately see their e-mails, and thus to write accordingly.)

As the membership of Internet users widened, people looked for ways to expand and enhance this facility for sharing the production of a piece of writ-

ing. From these efforts has emerged the *wiki*, a new form of website specifically designed to enable information sharing and *collaborative writing*. The most ambitious of these sites, Wikipedia, has embarked on the development of an online encyclopedia, “designed to be read and edited by anyone.”

“The terms *collaborative writing* and *peer collaboration* refer to projects where written works are created by many people together (collaboratively) rather than individually.”

— From *Wikipedia*, the free encyclopedia.

<http://www.wikipedia.org/>

The idea of collaborative writing didn’t start with the Internet, of course, but this new form differs from typical collaborations of the last century. In the few hundred years that we have had laws that codified the rights of authors, western culture has generally required that written works carry specific information about who wrote them.

The idea that any reader can also add, change or even delete another writer’s document makes some writers uncomfortable. The educational system of the 20th century produced several generations of authors with a strong belief in the “self-evident” right of authors to own and control their works. Even when a work involved the efforts of several authors, the strictures of copyright prevailed. Every author’s name appears on the work, or the primary author includes an elaborate acknowledgement of the efforts of the others. So deep do these beliefs run that we have explicit and regularly enforced laws protecting the author from plagiarism, the unacknowledged presentation of another person’s writing as one’s own.

Wikipedia has no such concerns. Just as Newton acknowledged that he stood on the shoulders of giants, so wiki authors understand that the recording of information by any one of us really only builds on the efforts of all the other thinkers, readers, and writers who have gone before. It embraces the process nature of reading and writing, preferring the constantly-evolving-but-never-finitishing to the static and rapidly obsolescing “product.”

On a wiki site, anyone who reads a page can also edit it, borrow from it or even remove it. In fact, the wiki culture invites, almost compels readers to edit. A page on some particular topic might contain words highlighted with a special color indicating a related topic in need of an author. A writer has highlighted the word because it might add valuable perspective to the current topic, but either hasn’t had time or doesn’t have the interest or ability to provide the related explanation or background. A reader who views the page and feels able to con-

tribute something can click on the highlighted word and provide information or a link to other related pages.

The process does not take place completely anonymously. Every page has a history of changes, and every person who makes edits can enter a note explaining the reason for changes made. However, the wiki doesn't record this information to assert authorship *per se*. Rather, other readers use it to determine whether a page has changed since they last viewed it, or to discover the identity of a writer who perhaps introduced an error or a spurious comment. Just because anyone can make changes doesn't free a writer from responsibility for what they write.

For example, when I read the introductory Wikipedia page on general semantics, I noticed a reference to the name of Bob Pula. When I clicked on it, the wiki displayed an empty page with a set of editing tools and the suggestion that I could write something about Bob. So I did. When I saved the short biography I contributed, the wiki asked me to describe the reason for my entry. If the next reader of this page decides that I have entered invalid or incomplete information, they might add to, change or even delete my entry. When they make a change, they too enter the reason for the change. If I object, I can reassert my entry, or perhaps even negotiate with the other editor to determine the problem between our two views. In the eminently democratic world in which Wikipedia exists, another author/reader will volunteer to monitor sections of the site and arbitrate in such situations.

Those of us interested general semantics will interpret in our own way the transition from the view of writing as a product to the understanding of writing and reading as moments in a process of communication. In our terms, we no longer say we "are" authors. Instead we periodically author, read, and share information.

“While ‘old style’ management books that use techniques developed for the Manufacturing Age may still be relevant for many businesses, information age work requires a different mind-set and mapping of new territory.”

TIME-BINDING IN THE INFORMATION AGE

BRAD REED*

MANY (if not most) businesses (by this author’s estimation) are using organizational structures and management approaches that are not well suited for today’s (circa 2005) business challenges. The author has suffered through such organizations for more than two decades, has analyzed and pondered this situation, read numerous management books, only to return to Alfred Korzybski’s work to find a model to describe this phenomena to the people that are helplessly immersed in it.

Korzybski developed his theories of time-binding and the structural differential well in advance of the modern Information Age (1). His work has been applied to such topics as personal growth, communication, learning, management, and life skills. Korzybski’s theories may find their most significant contribution yet for information workers (2). While “old style” management books

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that use techniques developed for the Manufacturing Age may still be relevant for many businesses, information age work requires a different mind-set and mapping of new territory.

Managing information professionals has been described as “herding cats.” The popular Dilbert (3) cartoon depicts information professionals in impossible, no-win situations. While the metaphor in these cartoons may be humorous, there are organizations that come very close to living out these scenarios. To these organizations, the situation is hardly laughable. Perhaps, poking fun at these situations is a first step at acknowledging that our intellectual frameworks no longer match the situations we encounter.

There are many books discussing the Manufacturing Age (MA) and Information Age (IA). Very briefly, the Manufacturing Age is characterized by decomposing a repeatable process into steps that can be accomplished by individuals with minimal training. The “intelligence” of this “system” exists in the minds of a few people rather than in the many that are accomplishing the work. In contrast, in the Information Age, work is accomplished through the manipulation of information. Knowledge is distributed throughout the organization. This work builds upon itself and it seems closely related to Alfred Korzybski’s time-binding model (7).

*IA work is best accomplished by distributing the intelligence
across the many people engaged in the work.*

The MA is typified by repeatable process work. Repeatable process work requires little new information by the worker once the job is mastered. Often a single mind understands all the steps and processes carried out by multiple workers creating a given product. The role of management is to align a worker with the part of the organization’s “map” that pertains to his or her specific role. While this may still apply in many skilled trades that can be learned through apprenticeship, it simply does not work well for the dynamic complexity of IA work. While MA work presumes knowledge resides with management, IA work is best accomplished by distributing the intelligence across the many people engaged in the work. This shift from centralized organizational intelligence and control to distributed intelligence calls for an approach to management that might be better described as “collaborative leadership” rather than “management.”

The structural differential (6) provides a model for mapping a territory that cannot be described using the old MA maps. General semantics may be applied to most situations that involve the abstraction of language. The structural differential serves not only as a model for aligning employee abstractions with “correct” managerial or organizational abstractions, but also as an excellent model to show how and why truly empowered, collaborative teams are a much better match for the Information Age than “know-all,” “command-and-control” management structures.

The MA organization assumes there is one organizational map. Accomplishing more work then becomes a linear function of adding employees, as each contributes work within the same framework. The modern IA organization need make no such assumption. Each individual brings with them their map that may include many new “events” and abstractions. This function becomes exponential to the extent that each individual’s map considers “events” not referenced by the organizational map, yet whose abstractions are still relevant to bringing desired organizational outcomes.

Businesses involved in information age work will have a difficult time maximizing their potential (revenue, employee satisfaction, service levels, etc.) through the use of MA approaches (my prediction 2005). Using the MA map for IA work can lead to decaying employee morale, management frustration, poor teamwork, poor communication, loss of revenue, waste of resources, and even business failure. Imagine taking a method that presumes a manager can know every aspect of a job and applying this approach to an environment that is so complex and dynamic that no single person can possibly understand every aspect of the work. When management tries to run a three-dimensional organization with a two-dimensional map, a kind of organizational psychosis ensues.

Applying MA style management to IA work creates a number of symptoms that are easily misdiagnosed by people using manufacturing age maps. Table 1 describes an issue and the probable diagnosis from MA and IA perspectives. The general response by those interpreting the issues in Table 1 with an MA map will be to create a “kinder and gentler” environment for those idiosyncratic humans. The focus is on how to “fix” the employee. The general response by those interpreting the situation with an IA map is to encourage participation not only in work, but also in the conceptualization of work. The focus is on accomplishing the work and updating our “maps” so as to better conceptualize the work and create a common reference and common goals.

Table 1

Issue	MA Map	IA Map
Priorities keep changing.	Employees must be flexible.	Employees must be empowered to adapt to changing conditions including setting relevant priorities.
Projects are late. Some tasks seem to never get finished.	The employees must be lazy, incompetent or stupid.	The MA Map is introducing inefficiencies.
I (employee) am being micromanaged.	The employee has an authority problem.	The employee is not granted the autonomy to perform work in a dynamic environment.
Employees lack the sense of urgency I have as (owner, manager, etc.)	Employees are apathetic or unmotivated.	Priorities are constantly shifting. The employee has learned the harder he/she tries, the worse things get.
The manager is arrogant. He thinks he knows everything.	The employee needs more praise and recognition.	The MA techniques force the manager to take the “know all” stand.
The employee is arrogant. She thinks she knows more about my business than I do.	The manager needs to be more empathetic.	The employee is frustrated and may be challenging management rather than the MA Map
Deliverables are not matching the original managerial specifications.	The employee lacks skills.	The territory is changing or the original specifications did not map to the territory well.
Parts of projects delegated to different employees are not fitting together.	There must be poor communication or lack of teamwork.	The “know all and delegate” approach of the MA map is causing deficiencies in requirements and execution.
Employees seem to lack motivation.	Incentives are needed, or employees need to know the organization’s sense of urgency regarding the project.	Employees are demoralized. They feel robbed of their ideas and then made to feel stupid through the assignment of tasks that do not relate to a holistic solution.
The manager has to know everything I am doing and seems to be second guessing me.	The manager must know all aspects of the work. After all, he/she is ultimately responsible.	The manager is getting in the way of employees and should be leading rather than “managing.”

Applying an MA map to IA problems fails primarily because the map assumes an “all-knowing” manager. Since the manager must know everything, he or she must try to understand the insights of every employee so that these insights can be digested and reconstituted as revised objectives and tasks. This causes undue delays and robs IA employees of their insights and eventually their initiative. The manager’s reluctance to “give up” the MA map can be viewed by employees as arrogant or dictatorial, when this behavior is more likely an attempt to avoid cognitive dissonance. How could a manager possibly remain “in control” if he or she were to give up their current paradigm for one they are unfamiliar with and which makes their current role obsolete? How could they possibly “manage” without being “in control”? There must be another map available, and the manager must understand how to use this new map.

For those of us who have worked in effective IA teams, it sometimes seems that $1 + 1 = 3$. That is, accomplishments of the team seem to be greater than the sum of the contributions of the individuals. Attempts at duplicating aspects of these successful teams in MA organizations generally fail. “Pep-talks” wear off as individuals find themselves again at odds with an organization’s or manager’s framework. Free sharing of information and results is thwarted by the deficiencies of the single-map, hierarchical structure. The teams may seem “out of control” and their work not relevant from the perspective of the current organizational map. Lacking the ability to “remake themselves” the MA organization is destined to fall short of the achievements of the IA approaches.

Summary

While “old” or traditional MA approaches may continue to have beneficial results for traditional (non-information) work, they do not succeed with information-based work. Furthermore, “pure” non-information-age work is becoming far less common, as there is an information element in many, if not most types of businesses (circa 2005). The more an organization depends on IA work, the more likely they will profit by incorporating IA management approaches. This does not necessarily mean that all approaches to process oriented work need to be revamped, but may indicate that approaches to Information Age (IA) work may be applicable to at least a portion of the work of most businesses. At the same time, we should be particularly careful in misapplying IA Maps to Manufacturing Age (MA) territory, as surely as we need to stop applying MA Maps to IA terrain.

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SHORT-CIRCUITING ACHIEVEMENT AND PERFORMANCE WITH ELEMENTALISTIC PSEUDO-BIFURCATION

DAVID F. MAAS*

NOT LONG AGO, a student e-mailed my supervisor to complain that I had unfairly given a failing grade, although the student had attended every class and had repeated three of the tests. Effort alone, the student claimed, should earn a passing grade. “Which is more important, trying really hard and having a good attitude or passing the test?”

My colleagues and I have heard various complaints framed in a similar manner, in what I call questions of *elementalistic pseudo-bifurcation*. The complainer splits an issue into fictitious alternatives, and then asks which is better, or worse. The purpose is not constructive, and often involves excuses for failure to do something a student is supposed to do.

Over the past 37 years, I have witnessed an erosion of expectations and standards in the incoming freshmen classes. Much of this seems related to the calculated use of elementalistic pseudo-bifurcation — the creation of verbal divisions or dichotomies where dichotomies don’t really exist. Increasingly, students attending open-enrollment schools have arrived with expectations that

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the bars of achievement should be lowered for ‘special circumstances’ or that they should be rewarded for partial or incomplete work.

In the above example, the student attempted an all too typical strategy to divide and conquer by creating a fictitious dilemma:

- Which is more important, trying really hard — or demonstrating competence?
- Which is more important, doing a mediocre job or not doing it at all?

Students attempt to rationalize one dysfunctional behavior by comparing it with a worse form of behavior:

- Which is better, coming late or not at all?

With clever divide-and-conquer pseudo-bifurcation, students can seem to justify either alternative:

- If I come late, it would show rudeness. It would be far better not to show up at all.
- If I come late, the instructor should not grouse at me. At least it is better if I show up late rather than not at all.

To justify not staying focused or on task, the student may pose the following dilemma:

- Which is better — not attending class or not paying attention?
- If I am sitting in this classroom, why should I be expected to pay attention?
- Which is better — attending class with a hostile or disrespectful attitude or not attending at all?
- If I make the effort to attend this class, why should I be expected to have a good attitude toward the course material or the instructor?

To excuse poor test performance or poor daily class performance, a student may pose the following false dilemma:

- Which is worse — not turning in homework or not passing the test?
- If I faithfully do the daily homework, why should I be penalized if I fail the test?

- If I pass the test, why should I be penalized for not doing the daily homework?

To justify poorly written essays, the student might use the following either-or pseudo-bifurcation:

- Which is more important, passing the grammar tests or writing a coherent essay?
- If I write a coherent essay, why should I be expected to pass the grammar tests?

Conversely, the skillful test-taker may with equal intensity argue the other side of the fictitious dilemma:

- If I pass my grammar tests with high scores, why should I be expected to do the written assignments as well?

Many teachers of English customarily award two grades to written essays — one for content, including ideas, examples, development with detail, etc., and one for mechanics, including spelling errors, comma splices, verb form, faulty agreement, etc. To help the students calculate their grades, the instructor may direct students to add the *content* and *mechanics* scores together and divide by two. Sometimes, students feel insulted that the structure of their own private dialects should come under scrutiny, and they may articulate their complaints in the form of pseudo-bifurcation questions:

- Which is more important — having ideas or expressing them well?
- If I provide enough examples, why should I be expected to express them in grammatically correct form?

In formal speaking situations, similar elementalistic either-or pseudo-bifurcations emerge:

- Which is more important — having something to say or saying it well?
- If I express myself with sincerity, why do I have to worry about polishing my usage?
- Which is more important, glibness or honesty?

- If I can express myself clearly and precisely, why do I need to show concern about the truthfulness or accuracy of my facts?

In assessing SAT scores, we identify separate verbal and mathematical scores. Students who do well on one portion but not the other, may respond with pseudo-bifurcation thinking.

- If I do well in mathematical operations, why should I concern myself with learning to write well?
- If I express myself well in speaking and writing, why should I concern myself with learning mathematical formulas?

Similarly, the traditional demarcation between the sciences and arts has created endless pseudo-bifurcations about the desirability, usefulness, or practicality of one discipline over another.

Separating learning styles for the sake of certain tailor-made pedagogical procedures has also led to some non-productive bifurcations. Dividing learning ability into *visual/verbal*, *visual/nonverbal*, *tactile/kinesthetic*, and *auditory/verbal* styles can unwittingly create the impression that these are mutually exclusive categories; we overlook that they are actually tendencies along a continuum. Consequently, a student who discovers he/she is a tactile/kinesthetic learner may wrongly feel unable to profit from a pedagogy designed for a visual/verbal learner. The tyranny of this assumption leads to another elementalistic pseudo-bifurcation:

- If I am primarily a visual learner, the professor should not subject me to lectures.
- If I am primarily a hands-on tactile/ kinesthetic learner, I should not be subjected to ‘passively’ reading a lesson or listening to a lecture.

Thus, we unwittingly create many of our dilemmas by verbally dividing interconnected and indivisible parts of a process.

Joseph De Vito reminds us in his *General Semantics: Guide and Workbook* that, “in most situations we’re dealing with characteristics and elements which vary in degree, and we can’t easily group these items in two classes. People simply aren’t stupid or bright, but vary in degrees in intelligence.”

Susan and Bruce Kodish discuss the process of verbal bifurcation in their book *Drive Yourself Sane: Using the Uncommon Sense of General Semantics:*

In general semantics, we use the word *elementalism* to label this process of unconsciously dividing up with our words what we don't find so divided in the process world ... we can talk about stomachs, intestines, etc., apart from digestion; ... we can talk about 'thinking' apart from feeling.'

We can speak of 'minds' and 'bodies,' 'structure' and 'function,' 'physical' and 'mental,' 'space' and 'time,' 'organism' and 'environment.'

When we identify elementalistically, we then may look for 'minds' as if we can find 'them' as easily as we can find apples. We may look for 'the unconscious' rather than considering out-of-awareness processes.'

In sum, we can say that with our language structure we elementalistically create static isolated elements out of the dynamic related processes found on the non-verbal levels. We then project upon the world around as if they exist out there. (pp.135-136)

To remedy the false-to-fact segmentation of process, the Kodishes recommend a re-orientation to *non-elementalism*, which involves "developing a similarity of structure between our words and the processes we're talking about. We seek to get as much of a sense of process as possible into our language." (p.136)

Educator and writer Dr. Sanford Berman, in his audio tape series *How to Think, Communicate, and Behave Intelligently: An Introduction to General Semantics*, also stresses the importance of non-elementalism. He points out that artificially compartmentalized subjects such as chemistry and physics should not be approached as disjointed studies, but as interrelated parts of a larger process.

To encourage a non-elementalistic orientation, general semantics practitioners often use the extensional devices. The hyphen, as used in "mind-body" or "thinking-feeling" for example, repairs the breach between thinking and feeling; it removes the false dichotomies between such things as *content* and *mechanics*, *visual* and *tactile*, *means* and *end*, or *trying hard* and *achieving competence*.

We as educators must also emphasize the *journey metaphor* as we evaluate the progress of our students. Completing the homework should never be pseudo-bifurcated from the larger outcome. Gerald Prescott, former band director at the University of Minnesota, used to counsel his students, "Practice for results — not for hours."

Students often fail to see each assignment as a step in a larger process. The first assignment constitutes but a micro-step in a longer sequence. Let us suppose we were asked to do the following sequence of steps:

Add 2+5
Multiply sum by 4
Divide by two

If we completed the first step, we can assume we would arrive at 7. We could congratulate ourselves that we made it to the first leg of our journey, but we would not expect to receive accolades for completing the journey. Likewise, if we buy an airline ticket from Dallas to Los Angeles, we would feel cheated if the airline terminates our flight in Albuquerque or Las Vegas, even though, for other purposes, any of these locations would make delightful destinations.

The many way-stations on the educational journey include attending class, having a positive attitude, paying attention, doing homework, completing exercises, writing essays rich in ideas and correct in form, mastering skills by taking tests, exercising verbal and mathematical skills, developing and strengthening verbal, visual, auditory, and tactile capabilities, and demonstrating honesty and integrity. Even though for the sake of analysis we may segment these interrelated components, we must not allow ourselves or our students to short circuit the interrelated process through elementalistic pseudo-bifurcation.

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EVALUATING WITH CARTOONS

EVELYN STAGG*

TRYING TO EVALUATE what students know, and how well they can apply what they know of general semantics “rules,” seems to belong to a class of testing known as “unsatisfactory.” People can understand various aspects of their behavior, but how can we devise tests about language behavior when that may vary so frequently, depending on our “filters,” the environment, etc.? Actual performance, or “doing-as-I-say-I-should-do,” (presenting an accurate map of the territory involved) is not as easy as the comprehension. Even the comprehension seems difficult for some of my beginning students, however.

To perceive one’s inference in a conversation, to notice that words are being used on different levels, to recognize “allness” in one’s own statement, for example, does not seem to be quickly accomplished, and the entire orientation puzzles my students for awhile. Consequently, we use very familiar and simple tools to help check ourselves in the classroom — cartoons and comic strips. Because these can be obtained from many sources, students apparently have little difficulty finding suitable examples. In addition to their availability, cartoons can be very clear in their focus, on the particular general semantics con-

* Associate Professor of English and Communication at Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont, Evelyn Stagg conducted an experimental course in composition and speech based on general semantics. From *Classroom Exercises in General Semantics* (available from IGS).

cept they illustrate. Consequently, they usually provide a certain degree of “success” for students, and thus are more “satisfactory” as testing material.

At times, of course, we have some difficulty identifying a particular “problem.” One comic strip which recently developed a controversy was written by Ernie Bushmiller. It depicts Nancy reading a story to her friend Sluggo: “Once upon a time there was a beautiful princess She had eyes like stars ... raven-black hair, and a neck like a swan.” The small boy listening shows a question mark, accompanied by a mental image of a girl having two ravens for hair, atop a face with stars for eyes, and a long, long feathery neck. Discussion by students involved different opinions about the focus. Was it the use of similes? Intensional orientation? The literal interpretation of words? The differences in each person’s perception also led to further discussion regarding the process of symbolizing and of identification.

Each student searches through a variety of cartoons and selects one which she (or he) discusses with the other members of the group.

Depending on the individual class, and their “progress,” we sometimes work in small groups with copies of out-dated *New Yorker* magazines. Each student searches through a variety of cartoons and selects one which she (or he) discusses with the other members of the group. Groups may have three, four, or five members, so there are a corresponding number of cartoons, all considered by everyone in the group. Students then eliminate any which duplicate ideas, and depending on the assignment, may choose just one of the three, four, or five, or they may use all that have been selected. When they have been asked to choose just one, they must all agree on the focus of the illustration. Often they have difficulty. In this process of discussion they appear to learn not only terminology, but to analyze their own language habits. One cartoon by Froden about which groups recently seemed to agree, without dissension, shows a man at a bar holding up a glass, saying, “My country right or wrong, or in any of the gray areas that lie between.”

Another cartoon entitled “The Small Society,” taken from a daily newspaper, seemed to illustrate to everyone the idea of self-reflexiveness, making maps about maps.

Two people are watching television. One says, “They should show more true-to-life programs on television,” and the other responds, “If they did, all you would see is people watching television.”

The observation (fact)-inference-confusion focus has probably been the most useful in practical experience. A Dagwood/Blondie cartoon (and there are many

others) illustrates this particularly well. Dagwood smiles in his sleep, and Blondie watches him, soon inferring that he must have a girl, and is dreaming happily about her. Almost immediately she is ready to act on her inference as if it were fact, saying, "He'd better have a good explanation when he wakes up!" This kind of example led to recognition of the mischievous role of inference in real life miscommunications among students. In addition, it might be helpful to note a difficulty which arose. That is, that while we need to recognize and be aware of the probabilities of our own inferences, we do not expect to correct or inform other people of theirs. Two female students who became very excited and enthusiastic about their own awareness and what they felt was success in their own inference-making lives, apparently believed they had a messianic duty to their friends. They were quickly reeducated when they began informing students that, "That was an inference," and the quick rejoinder was, "So what!" That experience, too, was useful in learning better language behavior.

The focus in cartoons and comic strips may also be used for quiz or examination questions. Occasionally, after the small groups have all selected cartoons, I use these as "questions." Students respond to three of the four cartoons, for example, or perhaps six out of eight. They "answer" only those cartoons which have been selected by groups other than their own. Usually half the period is used to write their responses to these cartoons, and the second half allows them to organize and plan the "correction." The students in each group correct all the responses to the cartoons which they have selected at the start. Consequently, in a class of twenty students (four groups of five) each student (group) will be reading fifteen answers. Since the responses usually involve about half a page of explanation, they can be read in a period if it is a "long" one, but if the period is an hour, they finish outside, then meet for discussion in part of the next class. Students of a group must all agree on the value (grade) for each paper. Much more than focus is involved in the answers. The students also try to figure just how someone else observed something they didn't.

("Of course that's an example of intensional orientation, but why didn't he see that the judgment was the focus! It's not 'wrong,' but I think John missed the point.")

Sometimes I have encouraged students to keep notebooks of cartoons, especially if they seem to be having difficulty in identifying various formulations. This necessitates frequent office visits, but the results seem worthwhile.

Besides cartoons and comic strips, we use brief anecdotes or even one or two-line reprints. One, from the *New Yorker* reads:

A New York telephone company truck was spotted by an observant citizen we know, who reported that a printed sign on the truck's side read:

ASK ME ABOUT BETTER
TELEPHONE SERVICE

Just beneath the sign someone had written:

I don't talk to no truck.

We used this in a Communications class, and found that the inferences seemed to be endless. One of the difficulties, and an important point to discover, has been the tendency to project one's own perceptions and inferences into *any* cartoon or comic, and respond to those. Focusing on the language itself seems very troublesome for some students. Part of their "problem" has been the *is* of identity or predication, which seems to appear frequently in their descriptions of what has occurred. Helping them focus on what characters are *doing* seems to help.

At times I have experimented with different ways of using cartoons. One method was to find some which were related to a particular formulation such as the multi-usage of words. A few days ago a comic strip showed Nancy lowering her radio by a rope from her window in response to Aunt Fritzi's saying because of excessive volume, "Lower your radio." However, finding examples of multi-usage, all at one time, has not been practical. Students can seem to find instances of stereotyping, or maps and territories, or of inference, when they are looking for those of multi-usage, and of multi-usage if they want allness statements or stereotyping. Consequently, finding clear illustrations as they happen to appear in random searching seems preferable. The primary function of the exercises lies in fostering the ability to develop reliable maps of the territories in these cartoons at the time we first see them. This is not unlike the ability to perceive accurately what we are doing with our language usage — *as it happens*.

“Using the notion of rhythms to transform our ‘thinking’ can lead to a more accurate, useful, and satisfying approach to life.”

OUR LIVES AS A COMPLEX OF RHYTHMS

MILTON DAWES*

IN OUR EVERYDAY activities and relationships, we often think and act as if things don't change. We think of 'things' as staying basically the same, not as 'objects,' 'things,' 'situations,' and 'persons' *at a date*, as *stages in a process*, etc. General semantics postulates that we live in a world of continuous change. If we accept this, it seems to me that using the notion of *rhythms* to transform our 'thinking' can lead to a more accurate, useful, and satisfying approach to life.

Developing a sensitivity to rhythms, our own, those of others, the rhythms of our immediate surroundings, and rhythms of the universe can help us be more in touch with more of what's going on. Sensitivity to rhythms can help us recognize trends; anticipate and better manage change; improve the quality of our judgment, planning, and decisions; minimize anxiety and stress; and live more rewarding lives.

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We usually think of “rhythms” as mostly to do with music. But rhythms can be associated with many things, with almost everything we do. We live in a *universe of rhythms*. Rhythms measure structural transformation. Related terms include *frequency, oscillation, vibration, pitch, cycle, wave, recurrence, periodicity, pulsation, beat, drumming, variation, rate of change, fluctuation, pace, and speed* (change of position with respect to time). In describing rhythms, we use such expressions as “how often,” “ups and downs,” “going with the flow,” “to everything a season,” and “comings and goings.”

Our communication with others, our efforts to abandon a habit, our striving toward self-development and self-improvement, our progress and degree of satisfaction in many areas — these depend greatly on *the rhythms of our awareness*, that is, how often we can catch ourselves doing habitual and familiar things. To make corrections and improvements, we need these mindful rhythmic moments of awareness.

As far as we know, everything has a structure. Different structures express different rhythms. Tuning a guitar, piano, drum, or other musical instrument, involves structural changes. These structural changes will result in different tones. (Try this structural change: *While singing a very low tone, move your head up and slowly stretch your neck upwards. Next, sing the highest note you can while slowly moving your chin down to your chest. Notice the difference in sound and increasing discomfort.*) We can think of rhythms as “patterns of change,” as “a measure of structural transformation,” as “how systems change with respect to times.”

Our individual rhythms, and rhythms in general, clash with, merge with, and influence others, sometimes reinforcing, sometimes diminishing, sometimes augmenting, sometimes fragmenting, and sometimes destroying other rhythms.

As individuals, we influence or disturb each other’s rhythms. We cannot avoid this. As we interact with each other, we affect each other’s rhythms to varying degrees. We sometimes react strongly or violently to such disturbances. (Notice your own internal reactions and the behavior of others on a crowded downtown sidewalk.) On the roads and highways, accidents occur when drivers slow down or stop suddenly, or change lanes without timely warnings to others. When drivers react violently, we call it “road-rage.” In general, sudden changes in one’s rhythms that do not give others sufficient adjustment time often create problems. Ignoring this factor of differences in rhythms is often a source of conflict — personal, societal, and international.

Our personal and more easily observable rhythms involve our swing, sway, and other adjustments as we move, and even when we are “not moving.” When we travel abroad, we are recognized as different by the way we talk, walk, look

around, gesture, and so on. At 'home' we recognize friends, acquaintances, and others, from a distance and in poor lighting, by the rhythm of their movements. The pitch of our voice, our intonation, our speaking speed, when we are affectionate, angry, distressed, or impatient, show variations in rhythms. We move differently when we feel good, compared to when we feel bad. We talk, eat, sleep, listen, learn, understand, and do a variety of things at our own pace. (Many educational systems ignore differences in students' learning and comprehension in different areas.) As individuals, we recover from physiological and psycho-logical injuries at our own pace. In terms of perceived insults, some of us may be quick to forgive, others may hold a grudge for a lifetime. Some groups hold grudges for centuries.

Our personal, domestic, social, work-related, and other habits and activities, age differences, social standing, moods, and so on, are expressed in our rhythms. In our many relationships, whether, intimate, social, cultural, political, international, etc., a variety of problems, conflicts, disagreeableness, and violence can be attributed to our insensitivity to our own rhythms, and to the rhythms of others. How often do we write, telephone, or visit a relative or friend? How often do we expect them to write, telephone, or visit us? In conversations, how often do we stop to listen and allow others to speak?

*The rhythms of adults are usually different
from the rhythms of little children.*

In the workplace, some employers are beginning to recognize that some individuals do not easily adjust from night shift to day shift. While some individuals can easily move from one workstation or job assignment to another, others do not adjust easily. We recognize this kind of situation when we talk about "changing gears." Difficulties experienced in introducing operational changes can often be attributed to resistance to changes in rhythms. Many employee and departmental conflicts arise because departments in an organization operate at different rhythms. Sales agents for instance, anxious to please their clients with fast delivery, might be insensitive to rhythmic factors and become impatient, forgetting that the production department might be unable to meet demands due to late deliveries, unexpected changes in the weather, machinery breakdown, and so on. In hospitals, doctors are beginning to recognize that some medications, treatments, and operations, are more effective at certain times of the day.

The rhythms of adults are usually different from the rhythms of little children. Adults walking with little children may forget this and drag toddlers along

with their feet barely touching the ground. (I once silently cheered a toddler who refused to encourage this continuing abuse and simply sat down.) Notice the rhythms of grandparents with their grandchildren. Do they seem much more adaptable to the rhythms of little children, more so than the mothers and fathers?

In terms of rhythms, one could say a 'good' house guest does not disturb things, leave clothes lying around, or otherwise require a host to tidy up. In other words, such a guest is sensitive to the host's rhythms and does not unduly disturb them.

We notice that rhythms have rhythms.

Sometimes, we disturb our own rhythms when we push ourselves too fast or too much. We distress ourselves by taking on more than our psycho-physiological systems can adapt to in a given time period. When things don't go the way we expect or want them to, we can look for differences in rhythms as a possible source of our problems. When we are waiting impatiently for someone or for something to happen (an important phone call, or letter, for instance), we can be sure we are experiencing a difference in rhythms — a difference between our expectations, and the way others or things work. We often create problems for ourselves as individuals and as a species when we attempt to hurry the universe, or "push the river," or when we attempt to hold things back or "dam up the river." Through awareness of rhythms, we can create a harmony of rhythms, at least for a while. We notice that rhythms have rhythms. Rhythms, like other 'things,' also change.

Laws, rules, regulations, legal contracts, clocks, etc., can be thought of as ways we have invented to help us cope with the diversity of our individual rhythms. Imagine a city without traffic lights, or a business organization where workers come and go as they please, or libraries, stores, and gas stations that opened unpredictably, etc.

'Nations' have their own unique constellation of rhythms. This can be observed in the pace of economic, political, and other activities. We could define cultures in terms of patterns of behavior, rhythms of a 'people,' in terms of their speech patterns, beliefs, values, goals, social activities, movements, music, dance, and so on. In international affairs, many politicians, lacking knowledge of differences, or not caring about differences in rhythms, often create political-social-cultural-economic and other problems that may persist for years. This often occurs when certain practices or policies are imposed on another culture without recognizing or addressing that culture's rhythms. Colonial empires have

provided the grounds for many present-day bloody conflicts by ignoring the rhythmic differences of the tribes they forced to live together.

Here is another way to get a 'feel' of rhythms. Look at a tree with lots of branches and leaves. Observe their variety of movements and rhythms. If there is a light breeze, the leaves might be doing a fluttering dance like the leaves of an aspen. This will be different from the rhythms of the smaller branches, which will be different from the rhythms of the bigger branches. If it is a very big tree, the trunk may not show much movement, or any movement, but it also has its complex of rhythms. Think about these complexities. Is there any structure that does not change? Compare the rhythms of a tree to the rhythms of different human beings, or the rhythms of different societies.

I propose that we can think of anything in terms of rhythms. Thinking in terms of rhythms is not just a philosophical exercise, it also has many benefits. Thinking in terms of rhythms can be very helpful in improving our personal and other relationships. Including rhythms as one of our self-management or management tools can help us better avoid and manage stress, become more patient with ourselves, and develop more patience, sympathy, and understanding in our interacting with others. Including 'rhythms' as a variable can help us solve problems and improve decision making. We can ask, "Could a major difference in rhythms be a source of the problem? What patterns of change are involved? How do the rhythms disturb one another? Is this clash of rhythms likely to happen again?"

You may recall such folk sayings as "You can take a horse to water, but you can't make it drink," or "Don't cross the bridge 'til you come to it." These sayings are about living with rhythms. We can ask ourselves, how can we modify our usual ways of 'seeing' and doing things using the notion of rhythms?

According to general semantics, we live in a world of continual change. Thinking in terms of rhythms can help recognize and adapt to such change. Developing sensitivity to our own rhythms, those of others, and the rhythms of our surroundings can help us be more in touch with what's going on, improve our judgment, minimize anxiety and stress, and therefore live more satisfying lives.

ABSTRACTIONS

Awareness of abstraction would reduce the number of “why?” questions and “because” answers. Or it would at least make us realize that when we are dealing with whys and because we are dealing with interpretations, projections, and opinions and not with bare facts.

J. SAMUEL BOIS, *THE ART OF AWARENESS*

What does a scientist do with a theory? Memorize it? Defend it? Form a cult around it? By no means. He uses it for a very specific purpose. *He uses it as a source of questions*, new questions that have never before been asked by anyone. And he uses the questions to direct himself and others to new observations that have never before been made by anyone. In this way he gains new knowledge, new answers, new theories that have never before been imagined by anyone. And from the new theories come more questions, and thus new answers, in a never-ending process. Science is a perpetual frontier.

WENDELL JOHNSON, *PEOPLE IN QUANDARIES*

No matter which factors we choose as causes, the important point to remember is that *we* do the choosing. We are forced to abstract because we cannot deal with the tremendous numbers of factors involved in even the simplest phenomenon. The vital question in any instant is: Does this particular selection of causes enable me to function effectively in this situation? And effectiveness will be measured by such matters as predictability, simplicity, ease of decision-making, verifiability, relief of tension, and the like, depending on the problem-solving situation.

HARRY WEINBERG, *LEVELS OF KNOWING AND EXISTENCE*

Two types of reaction may now be distinguished: *signal reactions*, which are undelayed, over-quick, automatic, less observing, impulsive, seeing similarities only, undifferentiating — in short, those which go on the assumption that what is seen is “all” there is to be seen and known; *symbol reactions*, which are delayed (if only for an instant), taking into account more factors in the situation, going to the present facts rather than to prior-held judgments of them — in short, those which accompany a consciousness of the partial character of acquaintance and attend to differences as well as similarities.

IRVING J. LEE, *LANGUAGE HABITS IN HUMAN AFFAIRS*

A set of assumptions can be viewed as a ‘house’ within which we live. Like a house that can be structurally unsound and unable to support the lives within it, our basic assumptions can lead to an inadequate world view, inadequate attitudes and behavior. How do we ‘rebuild the house,’ find new more useful behaviors, solutions to problems, etc?

BRUCE KODISH AND SUSAN PRESBY-KODISH, *DRIVE YOURSELF SANE*

Man has such a predilection for systems and abstract deductions that he is ready to distort the truth intentionally; he is ready to deny the evidence of his senses only to justify his logic.

FYODOR DOSTOEVSKY, *NOTES FROM UNDERGROUND*

Compiled by Jeremy Klein

CALLING OUT THE SYMBOL RULERS

STEVE STOCKDALE*

NOTHING ILLUSTRATES the power of symbols and language quite like a presidential election. Of course, those of us who know a little bit of general semantics recognize that this “power” lies not in the words and symbols themselves, but in the motivations, intentions, reactions, and evaluations of the individual human beings who speak, write, see, hear, and read the words and symbols.

Alfred Korzybski emphasized that we must vigilantly maintain an ongoing awareness that *symbols* (or “maps”) are *not* the things symbolized (or “territories”). He underscored the potential consequences of confusing symbols with their referents when he cautioned that, “Those who rule the symbols, rule us.” (1)

Who rules *your* symbols?

With this issue we introduce a new regular feature, “Calling Out the Symbol Rulers.” Each quarter we will highlight examples of how rulers rule by symbols, and how we let ourselves be ruled by symbols. This feature will succeed to the degree that you and other readers participate in the process by corresponding with us — we seek your responses, reactions, analyses, opinions, and examples *you* find pertinent to this topic.

Whom might we classify as potential *symbol rulers*? By our definition, just about anybody who participates in a communicative transaction could be considered a *symbol ruler*. We might start by carefully observing people of influence such as politicians, bureaucrats, teachers, bosses, parents, supervisors,

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coaches, advertisers, priests, preachers, rabbis, mullahs, commentators, columnists, reporters, etc. How do they generate, manipulate, frame, and convey their messages? What techniques do they employ to influence our judgments and decisions?

You might apply some of the principles of general semantics in your analyses:

- Do they confuse *facts* with inferences, judgments, or beliefs? (And by what standard are *facts* differentiated from *non-facts*?)
- Do they over-simplify complex issues into easy-to-understand but misleading *either-or*, *black-or-white*, *right-or-wrong* polar choices?
- Do they attempt to attribute only one cause to an event or one consequence of an action, rather than recognizing multiple causes and multiple consequences — some of which we may never know?
- Do they generalize from one experience or one person's anecdotal evidence as if that were the only possible or the 'right' universal experience?
- Do they take responsibility for their own statements and judgments, recognizing what Wendell Johnson referred to as "to-me-ness," or do they attempt to speak for a group or with the authority of a group?
- To what degree are they saying something beyond the simple application of a label? ("All you need to know about him is that he's a *liberal!*")
- Do they objectify high order abstractions such as *truth*, *justice*, *moral values*, *security* and speak about 'them' as if 'they' were 'things,' rather than inherently inexact and personalized notions?
- Do they concentrate on similarities at the expense of ignoring differences, and vice-versa? Do they exhibit attitudes of "allness" (or "noneness")?
- Do they fail to apply Korzybski's *extensional devices* — specifically, *indexing* (Muslim Leader₁ is not Muslim Leader₂), *dating* (Senator Phlops views on de-regulation₁₉₈₀ may not represent the Senator's views₂₀₀₅), and *et cetera*, (the *et cetera*, or *etc.*, means that more can always be said; we can never know *all* there is to know about *anything*).

Remember ... these same principles that you apply critically to others, you can apply to yourself. And we want to emphasize that in general semantics we

are not so concerned with the *words* as we are with the underlying human thinking-feeling and evaluating processes, judgments, perspectives, etc., that are conveyed by the words.

Please send your contributions to the IGS office by e-mail, which we prefer, (symbols@time-binding.org) or mail (IGS, P.O. Box 1565, Fort Worth, TX 76101). Please note our Writers Guidelines on page 114, also posted online at www.time-binding.org/library/guidelines.htm.

The following articles address aspects of the 2004 presidential election from several points of view.

Gregg Hoffmann wrote his analysis after the Democratic and Republican conventions, but before the post-Labor Day heat of the campaign. His reactions to the symbols and language coming out of the conventions offered a portent of the verbal clashes that marked the campaigns in September and October.

Allan Brooks contends that the traditional labels and language of politics don't adequately reflect the direction and dynamics of the two parties. Using the scientific method and general semantics formulations to develop new terms could help us all see through the fog.

Terence Ripmaster does not conceal his semantic reactions in his post-election remarks, "Semantics and the 2004 Election," in which he makes connections with George Orwell's essay, "Politics and the English Language."

Nora Miller offers a survey of commentary and fact-checking resources from the Internet. During the campaigns, these sites experienced heavy traffic as people tried to find the facts behind the words. Even the Vice President mentioned one of them during the debate. We hope to watch some of these sites to see if they continue their service to the public's efforts at language evaluation and understanding.

We conclude this first section of "Calling Out the Symbol Rulers" with a special reprint from the Institute's archives. Presented as a paper at the Second American Congress on General Semantics at Denver University in 1941 and later printed in *The Quarterly Journal of Speech*, Irving J. Lee's article compares the rhetoric of Aristotle, Hitler, and Korzybski. We should remember that Lee prepared this article in 1940, before the ultimate consequences of the Nazi symbol rulers' propaganda were discovered in places like Dachau, Treblinka, Auschwitz, etc.

NOTE

1. Alfred Korzybski, *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (Available from IGS), p.76.

POLITICAL CONVENTIONS, IMAGES, AND SPIN

GREGG HOFFMANN*

September 2, 2004

THE POLITICAL CONVENTIONS have not served any real substantive purpose in the democratic process for years.

By the time they roll around, we already know who the candidates of the two parties will be. The platforms of the parties often are made public before the events.

The conventions primarily serve two purposes: 1) to provide delegates with a big party, often on the dime of those companies and organizations that would like to buy influence and 2) to provide an opportunity on television to spin certain images and establish dominant themes.

Many general semanticists would consider most of these images and themes higher order abstractions, playing off the viewers' fears, assumptions, and projections.

* Gregg Hoffmann is a veteran journalist who covers Midwest politics and business for Wispolitics.com and WisBusiness.com. Hoffmann recently retired from UW-Milwaukee, where he taught journalism and developed a general semantics-based media literacy program called The Milwaukee Media Connection. Hoffmann also wrote a version of this column for *Telemedium*, the journal of media literacy. He periodically writes columns on media, politics and news events for the IGS web site and *ETC*.

This summer, the main imagery of both parties' conventions centered on which party best could provide strong leadership in the War on Terrorism. Both parties created spin intended to convince those in the middle of the political spectrum — wherever that might be — that their candidate could better fight that war. TV coverage not only bought into the imagery; it helped establish the images.

The Democrats put on a convention that looked like it could have been a VFW gathering. Military veterans were everywhere. They accompanied John Kerry to the convention and escorted him to the podium. Kerry started his speech with an emphatic salute, and said he was “reporting for duty.”

It was an obvious attempt to gain some ground in what has traditionally been Republican territory — national defense.

The imagery became very clear. Kerry would be just as tough as, and much smarter, in the war on terrorism than George W. Bush. The images of supportive veterans, and Kerry's Vietnam War heroism, were meant to ease the fears of anybody concerned about national security under a Democratic administration.

Kerry, primarily known as a liberal during his long tenure in the Senate, was using his military background, and all the imagery the DNC experts could spin, to appeal to more conservative groups that supported the military.

The imagery didn't really match up with Kerry's voting record in the Senate. He often has opposed increased spending for the military, and in fact has a mixed voting pattern on funding for the War on Terror. He has questioned the wisdom of “going it alone” in Iraq.

A presumed unintended offshoot of this spin and imagery was that Kerry also opened himself up for the Swift Boat commercials, in which some vets who claimed to have served with him in Vietnam disputed his accounts and those of his supporters.

For at least a couple weeks, more media attention was paid to what happened 30 years ago than what Kerry would try to do as President. He slipped in the polls during that time.

Moderate, “Compassionate” Republicans

The Republicans knew their candidate already had the advantage of actually being a war-time President, but the concerns centered on two areas: 1) mixed poll results about Bush's handling of the Iraq war aftermath and 2) some polls that showed many of those potential voters in the middle considered the President too far to the right on other issues, such as health care, the environment, economic policy, gay rights, etc.

So, early in the convention, Senator John McCain, former New York mayor Rudy Giuliani and the Terminator-turned-California-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger took to the podium. First Lady Laura Bush, who has favorable ratings in most opinion polls, spoke on the second night to relate the more compassionate side of her husband.

All had images of being more moderate than Bush on social issues, with appeal that crossed party lines. As one pundit put it, McCain, Giuliani and Schwarzenegger likely would not have been nominated by the more conservative delegates at the convention, but by having them endorse Bush's leadership against terrorism, they spun the image of a broader, farther reaching GOP.

The abstraction was a Republican Party that had "compassionate conservatism," a party that would reach out to Americans in need while still maintaining a tough, proactive stance on the battle against terrorism.

A theme was established that played off people's fears of another terrorist attack. Do you really want to change leaders midstream during a war?

Television ate up these images. Panelists from Chris Mathews "Hardball" to CNN briefly questioned the spin at first, but spent much more time talking about how effective the approaches were.

In part, television was manipulated by GOP spin master Karl Rove and his DNC equivalents, but in part the medium also created the need for the tactics. TV pays attention primarily to visual images, controversy, and rhetoric that is flamboyant and lively, and issues that can be easily defined.

The War on Terror fits these criteria much better than detailed explanations of health care plans or economic policies. The visual images of the airplanes hitting the World Trade center towers will be etched in many Americans' minds forever.

How the war should be fought, especially in Iraq, can create controversy and flamboyant rhetoric, which can be very either-or in its structure. Any war, even one against a "different enemy" that so often is mentioned by politicians, can be more easily defined than many policies and programs.

Media Literacy Needed

So, to understand the spin and imagery of the political conventions, one really needs to become more media literate and understand that the media, especially TV, plays a big part in setting the agenda and determining tactics for the parties.

If one really wants to be politically astute, one has to pursue other outlets on the internet, in print, perhaps on public TV or the Sunday political talk shows, to find out more about the issues that are not included in the primary spin.

Citizens should consume more media than just television and become critical thinkers about the content. Do the images match up with the underlying facts? When the media concentrate on one story or theme, what else is left out?

For example, protests outside the RNC reached proportions not seen at a political convention since the infamous DNC in Chicago in 1968. Yet, TV gave them little coverage in comparison to the choreographed performance that was going on inside Madison Square Garden. In fact, it took a couple of protestors to actually invade the Garden, during VP Dick Cheney's and Bush's speeches, to almost force TV to break away from the staged show, even then for only a moment.

Visual literacy also is needed so students better understand the influence of sophisticated images, colors, staging, especially for celebrity speakers, on potential voters. Giuliani looked 10 feet tall with a backdrop of the Big Apple behind him. Arnold seemed like an action figure on steroids with the stars and stripes on the jumbo-tron in the background.

General semantics offers several tools to help citizens become more media literate. These tools develop awareness of: 1) the abstracting process and the possible effects of higher order abstractions, 2) how either-or arguments exclude other possible viewpoints, 3) the is-of-identity trap, 4) the danger of jumping to conclusions and allowing your assumptions become substitutes for verifiable information, 5) the influence of affective language, especially what Hayakawa called "snarl" and "purr" words, which also can be applied to visual images, etc.

Of course, whether this imagery and spin during the summer will have any real influence on voters' decisions in November is debatable. For example, the night on which McCain and Giuliani spoke at the RNC drew only cable coverage and not that of the over-the-air networks. Ratings for both conventions were poor.

The debates were scheduled between the conventions and the election. The economy can take several turns in two months time. Events in Iraq and elsewhere in the world cannot really be completely controlled by either party.

So, once again the importance of the conventions is questionable. But, the opportunity to spin images on a national TV show remains as one of the few functions left for the political extravaganzas.

CORRESPONDENCE

What's in a Name?

To people with an understanding of general semantics, polarized thinking qualifies as simplistic, even counter-productive. The use of labeling falls into the same category. Political terms that suffer from both shortcomings warrant some changes, therefore, or some clarification at least.

The labels “conservative” and “liberal” are generally considered to lie along the political spectrum, where “reactionary” and “radical” represent the respective far ends. These terms are not definitive, however; what are their limits, and how can they be measured? Answers to these questions can only be subjective. Most people want to conserve some things, and we all react strongly to some ideas or events. We may lean towards the liberal, even radical, about other matters. “Liberal” connotes to many an unrestricted appetite for the unattainable, a freewheeling tolerance, even a wishy-washy stance. “Radical” can refer to the political right or the left. Even those terms, left and right, are relative to where one stands — or sits, since they come from the seating orientation of the French National Assembly. “Libertarian,” whether used as a formal political party name or as an adjective, is also open-ended. Things get worse when we

add “neo” or “ultra” to conservative, for example. “Independent” though, seems safely neutral.

In the United States, “Democrat” and “Republican” typically imply opposing political tendencies in very general ways for most people; but again, the terms involve overlaps. Where does a moderate Republican end and a moderate Democrat start? (For that matter, we believe we live in a democratic republic!)

Operational terms for spots along the political spectrum would be more meaningful. They would eliminate the possibility of absolute, discrete end-points. I propose “progressive” and “retrogressive.” To me, these are simply descriptions of the two opposing trends. The mid-point in this spectrum would be “mainstream,” a word that connotes the flow of events. Quantitative modifiers would suggest how far left or right one is under any political moniker because each term implies movement in time. Since they represent a continuum, these labels are only relative and still subjective, of course; but because they describe actions rather than attributes, they could be used more descriptively than the formal names of political parties. (Though there was a viable Progressive Party in the last century, “Retrogressive” would not do as a name for a political party!)

“Progressive” has a positive connotation, implying working towards a solution; “regressive” connotes a reversal to some earlier stage of development. Some say that if one is not part of the solution, one can only be part of the problem; in light of these proposed terms, those who are not moving ahead essentially force society to go backward at that point in time.

Apart from descriptive clarity, my proposal fulfills another goal. Contemporary modes of evaluation, when done intelligently, follow a scientific approach. That is, they involve analysis of verifiable evidence proceeding to a synthesis based on realistic probability. The scientific mind set, which underpins general semantics, applies labels only operationally. They must answer, “What does the item DO?” Good thinkers and good writers adopt this practice. The terms I propose are functional and dynamic, and that is consistent with the game of politics.

Because scientific thinking is primarily inductive, it lends itself to flexibility from constantly produced new evidence. This is consistent with progressive thinking. Those we call conservative or reactionary tend to be more deductive: they start from rules, principles, or dogmas established in the past, and choose their behaviors accordingly. Though science, too, must depend on established principles and theories, these are based in physical reality. Ideas held by doctrinaire political groups, even on the political left, are very apt to be unproven assumptions, stereotypes, myths or abstractions. The scientist accepts that even theories may be overthrown by new evidence.

Is all of this just bandying words? Why should it be worth considering? I contend that in the realm of politics we need to give more consideration to movement than to stasis, and this should be reflected in the designations we give to political sectors. Neither “retrogressive” nor “progressive” should be seen as pejorative. Inevitably, though, people in either camp will use the term for the opposite one in a negative way. This is because values are involved. Conservatives may value stability, regardless of problems in the status quo. Liberals put more value on solving human problems, regardless of upsetting apple carts. Social, economic or moral issues, however, can trump a thrust for change. You take your choice!

Unless conditions in a country are unbearable, political dynamics seem to favor those on the right; people prefer to leave things as they are. Supported by a base of established institutions, the right wing becomes more rigid. They can then exert more power than those on the left. Doctrinaire people on the left are venturing into uncertain, and therefore unsettling territory; so it can be much harder for them to bring about change. Since the potential need for change is my political touchstone, I opt for forward movement.

If people framed evaluation of political issues and candidates along these operational lines, political discourse and evaluation of political candidates might operate more effectively.

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Semantics and the 2004 Election

I’m now sorry I did not send Bush and Kerry copies of George Orwell’s “Politics and the English Language.” It would not have changed the election results, but, if they and their handlers had read it, it might have provided a more enlightened public discourse.

Orwell admits that struggling against the abuse of language is considered a “sentimental archaism, like preferring candles to electric light. ...” His essay warns against staleness of imagery, lack of precision, vagueness, and sheer incompetence. I would add mendacity and distortion to the list.

It is no secret that President George W. Bush holds the lead on mangled rhetoric, malapropisms and what Orwell dubbed “dying metaphors.” Rumor has it that some of his advisors even worry when he diverts from the script

written for him. After 9/11, Bush had to back off from using the word “crusade” in describing America’s response to that event. While apologizing for the use of that unfortunate term, Bush has not let up on the use of stale imagery and a lack of precision. As the war in Iraq began, it was “shock and awe” that would bring the enemy to the realization of U.S. military power. When he launched the hunt for bin Laden, he embraced his cowboy slang, assuring us he would get him “dead or alive.” On the matter of warfare, he announced, “bring ’em on.” Some of Orwell’s dying metaphors are a regular staple in Bush-speak: *shoulder to shoulder*, *play into the hands of*, *hotbed*, and *toe the line*.

Orwell also reminds us, “In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible.” Of course, he wrote this in the 1940s at the end of WW II and the beginning of the Cold War, followed by *1984* in 1949. He disliked the extreme politics of the left and right, and excoriated all those who twist language to fit their political agenda. One can only wonder how he would have responded to the 2004 election.

Because of the participation of social and cultural conservatives in the 2004 election, we were exposed to the vague terms “values” and “faith-based.” Senator John Kerry got caught in this language trap, adding to the horrendous distortions associated with such terms. Lexicographers and semanticists recommend clarity and definition in order to reduce distortions.

Somehow Bush and his religious backers were able to convince people that *their* “values” are the sum total of values worth considering, and that those who support gun control, gay marriage, pro-choice and separation of church and state have either no values or the wrong values. Politically speaking, a vote for Bush was a vote for his values. In the political rhetoric surrounding values, science, intelligent discourse, and constitutional considerations disappear into the abyss of charges and countercharges. Toss in the word *God* and you have a total lack of clarity.

The misuse and distortion of language reached a peak in the campaign rhetoric surrounding economics. Issues such as taxation, wages, jobs, fiscal and monetary decisions were wrapped in generalizations. “The economy is recovering!” Bush shouted from countless platforms. Kerry retorted with, “Under this president, millions of people have lost their jobs.”

Bush insisted that his tax cuts for the rich “create jobs for everyone”; Kerry promised that if elected, he would provide “tax cuts for the middle class.” Neither provided specifics to help us evaluate their promises. And little was said about the most important economic institution in the nation: corporations and their control of government policies. Such linguistic definitions would require more than slogans and political gobbledygook, and quick stops along the campaign trail do not lend themselves to exact and clarifying remarks.

When Stuart Chase decried the *tyranny of words* he might have had foreseen this year's claims and counterclaims surrounding bureaucratic-governmental programs. Bush called his education program "Leave No Child Behind," for example, and his environment program the "Clear Skies Initiative," (this for a bill that *reduces penalties for increased* mercury emissions), and based his foreign policies on confronting the "axis of evil," and making "preemptive responses." Nations that did not support the war became "old Europe." These stale or emotional images convey little about the facts behind the policies.

Both candidates assured us they are "for democracy." Orwell writes, "The words democracy, freedom, patriotic, realistic, justice have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another — words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way." Since the invasion of Iraq by the United States, Bush has endlessly and constantly used the word democracy. "We will bring democracy to the Middle East." The people of Iraq might wonder what the word means as their homes and lands are destroyed by U.S. bombers.

So who is to blame for this linguistic chicanery? There are analysts who point to what is called the dumbing down of the American public. In 1984, Neil Postman, then editor of *ETC*, published *Amusing Ourselves to Death: Public Discourse in the Age of Show Business*. Some answers can be located in this book. But blaming the victim is not the only answer. As Orwell clearly understood, it is in the interest of those in power to use distortions, outright lies, and their power base to inflict their policies on the public. Bush has done this with great skill and by corrupting the English language even more than Orwell imagined.

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***ANTI-SPIN: USING INTERNET
RESOURCES TO UNWIND
POLITICAL CLAIMS***

NORA MILLER

THE RECENT ELECTION broke records in many areas — most first-time voters, most people voting for a winning candidate, most people voting for a losing candidate, probably most money every spent per candidate, etc. This election also enjoyed the participation of millions of citizen contributors drawn into the campaigns by a variety of ambitious Internet sites that continually motivated, activated and informed their members with all the tools available and some invented just for the purpose. As a result of this phenomenal mobilization, practically every word uttered in print or on the air about either candidate immediately triggered web searches and blog updates as people tried to guess the “truth” about the claims they heard. Several of the sites below grew up specifically to meet the needs of election “truth-seekers” while others have longer histories. All do something to provide background or evidence to fill in the holes in our daily information puzzle.

If you consult any of these sites, consult more than one. After all, *quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* (Who will protect us from the protectors?) The authors of these sites face the same verbal and mental challenges we all do.

Fact Check : <http://www.factcheck.org/>

The most famous of the many organizations that attempt to align claims made by or on behalf of political candidates with underlying facts, Fact Check draws on as many sources as possible to provide perspective on claims that sound like facts but don't measure up.

“We are a nonpartisan, nonprofit, ‘consumer advocate’ for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics. We monitor the factual accuracy of what is said by major U.S. political players in the form of TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews, and news releases. Our goal is to apply the best practices of both journalism and scholarship, and to increase public knowledge and understanding.

“The Annenberg Political Fact Check is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania. The APCC was established by publisher and philanthropist Walter Annenberg in 1994 to create a community of scholars within the University of Pennsylvania that would address public policy issues at the local, state, and federal levels.”

Black Box Voting : <http://blackboxvoting.org>

This site started in response to the 2000 election, the passage of the “Help America Vote Act” and growing concern about the issue of electronic voting.

The site defines black box voting as “Any voting system in which the mechanism for recording and/or tabulating the vote is hidden from the voter, and/or the mechanism lacks a tangible record of the vote cast.”

History News Network : <http://hnn.us/>

If you think history only applies to the past, you need to visit this site.

“Even those who profess utter indifference to history are beholden to it. History is inescapable. Who we are and how we react to events depends, to a great extent, on our past. As Eugene O’Neill has a character in *Long Day’s Journey into Night* exclaim, at a critical juncture, ‘The past is the present, isn’t it? It’s the future, too. We all try to lie out of that but life won’t let us.’”

Snopes : <http://snopes.com/politics/politics.asp>

The Politics page on Snopes.com contains fairly well-researched assessments of claims that made the rounds during the campaign, and some that date from before the most recent election period. From their site: “Named by *Time* magazine in March 2002 and again in June 2003 as one of the 50 Best Web

Sites, snopes.com contains thousands of articles about urban legends, Internet lore, odd news stories, strange facts, common misconceptions, superstitions, unusual word origins, and little-known yet fascinating tidbits of history.”

Theocracy Watch : <http://www.theocracywatch.org/>

“TheocracyWatch is a project of the Center for Religion, Ethics and Social Policy (CRESP) at Cornell University. CRESP is a nonsectarian, action-based educational organization with its roots in religious dialogue, human rights advocacy, and ethical thought.

“TheocracyWatch raises awareness about the pervasive role of the Religious Right in the U.S. government. It disseminates information through its speakers bureau, powerpoint presentations, CDs — both audio and powerpoint — and a DVD. It also conducts interviews with the media.”

Disinformation : <http://www.disinfo.com/site/>

“Launched on September 13, 1996, Disinformation was designed to be the search service of choice for individuals looking for information on current affairs, politics, new science and the ‘hidden information’ that seldom [sic] seems to slip through the cracks of the corporate-owned media conglomerates. Ironically, it was funded by one of the largest media companies in the world (TeleCommunications, Inc. (TCI), now part of Comcast), who paid for placement on Netscape’s then ubiquitous search page.”

Alliance for Better Campaigns : <http://www.bettercampaigns.org/>

“The Alliance for Better Campaigns is a public interest group that seeks to improve elections by promoting campaigns in which the most useful information reaches the greatest number of citizens in the most engaging ways.

“We advocate for reforms that reduce the cost and increase the flow of political communication; that open up the political process to more competition; and that facilitate and encourage voter participation. We believe that broadcasters can and must use the publicly-owned airwaves to revitalize our democracy and are working to put meaning back into broadcasters’ statutory obligation to serve the public interest.”

Center for Public Integrity : <http://www.publicintegrity.org/default.aspx>

“The Center for Public Integrity is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, tax-exempt

organization that conducts investigative research and reporting on public policy issues in the United States and around the world.”

On the Issues : <http://www.issues2000.org/default.htm>

This site provides voting records and direct quotes from candidates in national, state, and local elections.

“Our mission is to provide non-partisan information for voters in the Presidential election, so that votes can be based on issues rather than on personalities and popularity.

“We get our information daily from newspapers, speeches, press releases, and the Internet — it is a labor-intensive process that requires countless volunteer hours.”

Project Vote Smart : <http://www.vote-smart.org/index.htm>

“A knowledgeable electorate is the strongest component of a functioning democracy. Information about elected officials and candidates is crucial to maintaining the defense of one’s rights and privileges guaranteed in the Constitution. In that spirit, Project Vote Smart (PVS) provides a comprehensive database about thousands of candidates and elected officials for President, Congress, Governors and State Legislators. Less detailed information is available at the county and local level for each state.”

Open Secrets : <http://www.opensecrets.org/>

OpenSecrets offers a single-source location for publically available information about campaign financing. All candidates for office at most levels of government have to report this information several times during their campaigns. OpenSecrets compiles the information and provides several useful options for searching their database for specific candidates, donors or regions. They also provide background information for major legislation, with data on the financial interests of participating Congressional members and lobbying organizations.

“The Center for Responsive Politics is a non-partisan, non-profit research group based in Washington, D.C. that tracks money in politics, and its effect on elections and public policy. The Center conducts computer-based research on campaign finance issues for the news media, academics, activists, and the public at large. The Center’s work is aimed at creating a more educated voter, an involved citizenry, and a more responsive government.”

***GENERAL SEMANTICS AND
PUBLIC SPEAKING:
Perspectives on Rhetoric Comparing
Aristotle, Hitler, and Korzybski***

IRVING J. LEE*

THERE ARE MANY WAYS of looking at human behavior. As a result we may have “many psychologies,” rather than “one psychology.” The same is true of geometry. Euclid’s way of looking at the patterns and forms of measurement is but one along with the geometries of Lobatchevsky and Riemann. Similarly, there are many “philosophies.” One has merely to mention the names of Plato, Leibniz, Dewey, and Croce. In this paper I shall be urging that rhetoric or the art of public speaking is not to be evaluated from one point of view only, but from many. In doing that I shall try to show simultaneously where and how general semantics contributes one other way of looking at the purposes and functions of speechmaking.

In the attempt to describe what it is that students of public speaking and general semantics are trying to do, using the method of contrast, I shall focus on three orientations or perspectives of rhetoric as they appear in three books:

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Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf*, Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, and Alfred Korzybski's *Science and Sanity*. I take the third book as the most complete statement of general semantics and its relation to rhetoric.

Let me begin with Adolf Hitler. There is no special chapter on public speaking in *Mein Kampf* but in the sections on Propaganda in the Reynal and Hitchcock edition there is a host of specific, rule-of-thumb injunctions for the speaker which grow out of Hitler's assumption that in a world of weak men the role of the leader is the basis of politics and all human affairs. The major tenets of Hitler's art of public speaking might be summarized this way:

That you must always exaggerate your claims, even if fantastically; that you must never concede the slightest justice to your opponent's cause, else men will begin to doubt yours; that your platform, once formulated, must remain fixed; that you must hammer away always at a single idea; that the continued iteration of it will finally induce belief; that there is nothing so likely to be believed in the end as the daring and the unimaginable. (1)

But if these are Hitler's strategies, what is his over-all view of their use? What is this art to be used for? He has been quite explicit and I quote him [Hitler] directly.

Propaganda's task is ... not to evaluate the various rights, but far more to stress exclusively the one that is to be represented by it. It has not to search into truth as far as this is favorable to others, in order to present it then to the masses with doctrinary honesty, but it has rather to see its own truth uninterruptedly. (2) The more modest, then, its scientific ballast is, and the more it exclusively considers the feelings of the masses, the more striking will be its success. This, however, is the best proof whether a particular piece of propaganda is right or wrong, and not the successful satisfaction of a few scholars or 'aesthetic' languishing monkeys. (3)

His Minister of Enlightenment, Herr Goebbels, has perhaps best summed up the position in these words: "*Propaganda should not be in the least respectable; nor should it be mild or humble; it should be successful.*" (4) There is no point here in telling you what this attitude towards rhetoric has accomplished; there is relevance only in an attempt to characterize it.

This is the Rhetoric of Power. We have here the bald statement of one who thinks of public speaking in terms of those tactics, strategies, maneuvers which will get the user what he wants. It is the utterly practical attempt to organize whatever means exist to mobilize the 'minds' of the audience. *Mein Kampf* can thus be conceived as a "ready reference" for those "conscious ways of making

the speaker's position more efficient," (5) of those modes of approach which will command acceptance for one's own doctrine. This is the Rhetoric of Power in which only the end-result is of importance.

When one leaves "the crude but effective magic" of Adolf Hitler for the *Rhetoric of Aristotle*, one is struck by certain similarities. Thus, Aristotle in three places suggests the value of repetition; there is no mention of slogans, but there are five pages on maxims; in two places Aristotle argues the necessity of recognizing the limited capacities of the "masses;" and there are forty-one pages on the means of stirring the "emotions."

Now, if one considers the *Rhetoric* as a whole, it is clear that it is designed as a handbook of the ways and means of obtaining the speaker's purposes. As Rowell put it:

The main concept from which Aristotle proceeds is the idea of persuasion. This term 'persuasion' defines for him the general aim of oratory. He uses it in the inclusive sense which makes it embrace all the elements involved in the speaker's effort to influence his audience. (6)

And in these respects the *Rhetoric of Aristotle* is similar in orientation and purpose to that of Adolf Hitler.

But there are differences that should be underlined. Speaking of Aristotle's fundamental position Lane Cooper says, "*the emphasis is always upon the nature of the person to be persuaded, and the means by which it is possible, and just, to persuade him.*" (7) There is here reference to the *moral purpose* of the speaker. That is, Aristotle recognizes that Rhetoric is a neutral instrument, a "faculty" which can be used for good or evil, for the "greatest blessing" or the "utmost harm," for "sophistical speaking is made so, not by the faculty, but by the moral purpose." (8) In short, rhetoric is a useful art which should be "rightly and honestly" practiced. In addition, Aristotle would urge the study of this art not only as an instrument of persuasion, but also as an instrument to be used against an exploiter, and to "prevent the triumph of fraud and injustice." (9)

The difference here can be underscored by asking whether Hitler would be willing to permit his methods to be used against him.

There are other differences. First, is Aristotle's analysis of nine sham enthymemes, those forms of argument "that look genuine, but are not." (10) And immediately following is his analysis of the methods of refutation, by means of which one may answer statements which though illegitimate may from force of statement pass as legitimate. (11) It is important, then, to notice that Aristotle indicates (as Hitler does not) that a speech may be successful even though it is unjust in its purpose, and spurious in its argument.

To summarize this statement thus far, I should say that the rhetorics of Aristotle and Hitler are concerned with the means of making discourse effective, with the art of organizing statements for the settled purposes of the speaker. Each is concerned with telling the speaker how to “get across” his notions. But Aristotle’s position is without the crassness of Hitler’s. It is rather softened and leavened by the sense of moral purpose. It is thus that Aristotle’s rhetoric can be characterized not as a Rhetoric of Power, but as a Rhetoric tempered with notions of Ethics.

Now there remains a question which neither of these rhetorics undertakes to raise. It has to do with determining whether or not what a speaker says properly evaluates the situation with which he deals; whether or not what he says is an adequate representation of the actual facts or happenings of which he speaks. This may be clarified by an analogy.

Let us take some actual territory in which cities appear in the following order: San Francisco — Chicago — New York, when taken from the West to the East.

If we were to build a map of this territory and place San Francisco between Chicago and New York thus:

Chicago — San Francisco — New York

we should say that the map was wrong, or that it was incorrect, or that the map has a different structure from the territory. If, speaking roughly, we should try in our travels to orient ourselves by such a map, we should find it misleading. (12)

Similarly, we should be disturbed if the movie *The Return of Mr. Moto* were to throw on the screen the events of *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*. And again, we do not expect that a letter addressed to Henry Adams of Chicago will find its way to the Grand Llama of Tibet.

In short, we expect our maps to represent their territories, our film titles to indicate the appropriate films, and our letters to reach the designated persons. In like manner, we expect our weather vanes to point to the way the wind blows, our thermometers, pressure gauges, and scales to register the degrees of heat, force, and weight that exist at any moment. If these instruments, indicators, or signs fail to perform their function of representing adequately the phase of ‘reality’ to which they are assigned — we should hurry to replace them. In the same way, should we not expect that our language, our words be used, so that they adequately represent the facts, feelings, happenings, etc., to which they are intended to refer?

It is in the effort to achieve this map-territory, this language-fact correspondence that general semantics and Alfred Korzybski make their contribution to a

linguistic analysis of rhetoric. General semantics must not be thought of as a branch of philology or as an instrument for popular debunking, but as a natural science concerned with the *problems of values* and so of *interpretation, i.e.*, with the whole process whereby men [and women] in speaking evaluate properly the happenings, objects, feelings, labels, descriptions, and inferences with which they are dealing. Put another way, the book, *Science and Sanity*, is an attempt to anatomize our linguistic usages to find wherein they falsify 'reality' and mislead us, and the means whereby this falsification may be corrected.

It is not possible in this paper to tell of the fertility and scope of this analysis of 'significance,' as it might be applied either to the teaching or practice of public speaking. I can merely hint at a few of its relevant topics. Thus, for example, in 1776, in his *Principles of Rhetoric*, George Campbell included a very 'modern' chapter entitled, "What is the Cause that Nonsense so often escapes being detected both by the writer and by the reader?" The question might be answered this way: just as one can draw a map that refers to no existing territory, so too, one can *talk*, without having that talk represent actual facts and events; for example, I can say that the "sun *rises* in the East;" I can say that coffee and brandy are being served where you are, even though you look in vain for them. In his little book, *The Standardization of Error* (13), Vilhjalmur Stefansson reveals that though we can *talk* about an ostrich who sticks his head in the sand when danger approaches, no human being has ever seen or photographed the actual event, and thus, when we talk about reference to observable facts our talk may prove to be nonsense.

Then, too, Korzybski has discovered a way of protecting us against those "debaters" who would confuse an approximate description of the world with a complete description of it. Fundamental in language-fact relations is the realization that one can never make a statement that will give the total details of any event — that there never can be a speech or newspaper story that "tells all," because "*we see what we see because we miss all of the finer details.*" (14) And that, above all, a consciousness of such omitting (i.e., *abstracting*), an awareness of the 'partial' character of our statements is the beginning of sanity in expression. (15)

Again, Korzybski has called attention to the fact that the search for the absolute 'meanings' of words is fraught with disillusion because words carry a multiplicity of 'meanings,' no one of which can be nominated the only interpretation, and 'meanings' depend upon contexts, verbal, psycho-logical, situational, etc.; additionally some of the most important words are multiordinal, i.e. their 'meaning' in any context, depends on the level (order) of abstraction, etc. (16) This point can perhaps be somewhat clarified by pointing out that we use symbols (words) much as we do vessels, which can be filled variously. Just as a cup

will hold water, sand, or any other liquid or solid — so too, any word can be filled with many contents, in many contexts. Even the word “is” has in common use at least four well-differentiated senses. Confusion arises in discussion when one implies that a word ‘means’ this or that only, when a speaker assumes, for example, that words like *education*, *propaganda*, *persuasion*, *discussion*, *truth*, *reality*, etc., mean only what he says they mean — when the speaker forgets that there are no absolute ‘meanings.’ It is helpful in this connection to remember that the dictionary is merely a record of word usage, and not a legislative device.

Further, Korzybski has shown that too often we “split verbally what empirically cannot be divided,” that though we ‘know’ that any organism must be treated as a ‘whole,’ that there is integration of function we, nevertheless, talk of body *and* mind, reason *and* emotion, thinking *and* feeling, heredity *and* environment — as if each were a separate entity. (17)

But I intended only to hint at some of the array of findings that come from the notion that the very structure of our ordinary language may distort what we wish to convey, mislead ourselves, and others, and actually restrict our horizons of investigation. (18) There is nothing esoteric or mystical in *Science and Sanity*, for as Korzybski himself says:

Curiously enough, the principles involved are often childishly simple, often ‘generally known,’ to the point that on several occasions some older scientists felt ‘offended’ that such ‘obvious’ principles should be so emphasized. Yet my experience, without exception, was that no matter how much these simple principles were approved of verbally, *in no case* were they *fully applied in practice*. (19)

And he is clear in what it is he believes that general semantics must do. In his words:

All our doctrines, institutions, etc., depend on verbal arguments. If these arguments are conducted in a language of wrong and unnatural structure, our doctrines and institutions must reflect that linguistic structure and so become unnatural, and inevitably lead to disasters. (20)

I shall conclude with a comparison of the three perspectives.

Pavlov said that “men are apt to be much more influenced by words than by the actual facts of the surrounding reality.” (21) It seems perfectly ‘obvious’ to say that “the map is not the territory, that words are not the facts to which they refer, that, symbols are not the events which they are supposed to represent.” Yet it is just as ‘obvious’ that men do react to the maps, words, or symbols *as if*

these were the territory, fact, or happening. In a recent class forty-seven out of forty-nine students thought that the word *prostitute* symbolized something unpleasant, someone who was socially 'bad,' yet a week later when the instructor introduced a young woman who spoke on "Social Maladjustment" the class of forty-nine agreed that both her person and her analysis were quite "good," in spite of the fact unknown to the class that the young woman was making a living in a nearby house of prostitution. That class responded to the *word* and not to the *fact*. (22) It is not difficult to respond similarly to the words *Communist, Catholic, Alien, Truth, Liberty*, etc., as if they were the non-verbal facts and living situations rather than mere words. It is as if one were to try to keep warm with the trunk-tag instead of the fur coat inside the trunk. (23) Yet it is the response to words and symbols without regard for the maladjustment that may result, that seems to be the objective of the Aristotle-Hitler rhetoric. Theirs is the attempt to achieve response to the utterance of the speaker — and not to the facts which that utterance may or may not represent. And the aim of the rhetorical system which you will discover in Korzybski seems to be the prevention of such "un-critical response" and the substitution of responses which more adequately evaluate the situations.

I have had no intention of suggesting in this paper that there is an antithesis or opposition between these three linguistic attitudes. What concerned Hitler and Aristotle was not something that concerned Korzybski. Each represents a difference in total orientation. If, for you, it is more important to organize the thinking of your hearers to your "modes of thought," then you will go to the former; if for you it is more important that statements are "adequate," that they fit what it is they are about, then you will go to Korzybski. Hitler-Aristotle would teach you how to use words skillfully "for effect" — Korzybski would teach you how to use words carefully for their fitness with facts, for proper evaluation.

Hitler and Aristotle start with this question: "*How can we persuade others to 'think' as we do and to act as we would have them act?*" Korzybski starts with this question: "*How can I talk about the events of this world so that my talk evaluates them properly?*"

In brief, I conceive the emphasis of the Hitler-Aristotle rhetoric to be on those speaker-audience relationships by means of which the audience becomes controlled by the speaker. The emphasis of the Korzybskian system as applied to rhetoric is on those relationships which exist between an utterance and the facts it is to represent. The one breeds a philosophy of power, the other a doctrine of adequate statement, and proper evaluation for both speaker and hearer.

NOTES

1. Max Lerner, "Hitler as Thinker," *The New Republic*, CI (Nov. 22, 1939), p.132.
2. Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1939), p.236.
3. *Ibid.*, p.233.
4. Richard S. Lambert, *Propaganda* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1938), p.153.
5. Kenneth Burke, "The Rhetoric of Hitler's 'Battle'," *The Southern Review*, V (Summer, 1939), p.15.
6. Edward Z. Rowell, "Prolegomena to Argumentation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, XVIII (April, 1932), p.226.
7. *The Rhetoric of Aristotle*, ed. by Lane Cooper (New York: D. Appleton and Co. 1932), p.xxi.
8. *Ibid.*, I, 1, p.1355b.
9. *Ibid.*, I, 1, p.1355a.
10. *Ibid.*, II, 24, pp.1401a-1401b-1402a.
11. *Ibid.*, II, 25, pp.1402a-1402b-1403a.
12. Alfred Korzybski, *Science and Sanity: An Introduction to Non-Aristotelian Systems and General Semantics* (Lancaster, Penn.: The Science Press Printing Co., 1933), p.58.
13. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1927.
14. *Science and Sanity, op. cit.*, p.376
15. *Ibid.*, Ch. XXVI.
16. The test for the multiordinality of a term is simple. Let us make any statement and see if a given term applies to it, (true, false, yes, no, fact, reality, to think, to love, etc.). If it does, let us deliberately make another statement about the former statement and test if the given term may be used again. If so, it is a safe assertion that this term should be considered as multiordinal ... The main point about all such terms is that, in general, they are ambiguous ... (they) have only definite meanings on a given level and in a given context. (*Ibid.*, pp.433-434.)
17. Cf. the numerous references to *Elementalism, Ibid.*, pp.64, 87, 107, etc.
18. D.G. Campbell, "General Semantics in Education, Counseling, and Therapy," *National Education Association Proceedings*, 1939.
19. *Science and Sanity*, p.539.

20. *Ibid.*, p.59.
21. *Ibid.*, p.452.
22. Of course, the responses of the students might have been different had they known of the fact, or had they seen the young woman in a different setting. But the important point for our purposes is the realization that the setting or context affects the interpretation, and that in responding fixedly to the word *prostitute*, the students were responding to a fiction, to an 'absolute meaning,' to a symbol considered apart from the varied possible contexts in which it might be located.
23. Walter N. Polakov, *Man and His Affairs* (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins Co., 1925), p. 60.

METAPHORS IN ACTION

EDITOR: RAYMOND GOZZI, JR.

FROM LINEAR MYTHS TO MUSICAL MODELS OF COMMUNICATION

RAYMOND GOZZI, JR.*

A MODEL IS a simplification. But a model is meant to make clear some underlying dynamics of a complex situation. It fosters metaphors which fit into the model's structures. It is also helpful if the model can be diagrammed visually.

Our textbooks abound with linear models of communication — starting with a sender on the left, ending with a receiver on the right. There are many different ways of labeling these models, and many different lines that are drawn between sender and receiver. Metaphors abound. But the linearity of the underlying conceptualization remains.

In interpersonal communication, this linearity does not exist. Instead there is a mutual and simultaneous sending and receiving. Perhaps the metaphors of sending and receiving are not appropriate in real life. Furthermore, there is not a message which goes from sender to receiver, there are multiple messages

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simultaneously constructed in the minds of each participant. Much of communication involves a delicate process of adjusting these messages in each person's head until they are congruent enough to allow for coordinated action. This cannot be depicted with the linear models.

The linear models of communication are a kind of myth. They impose a certain way of seeing, and a certain set of values on a complex process. The linear models grow out of a print-based culture (with its orderly left-to-right lines of text). The values are those of technology: orderly, step-by-step, clearly hierarchical processes. In order to impose these values, the models create certain mythic figures: the sender and the receiver, which are really just metaphors for certain functions. To remain orderly and step-by-step, the models create discrete messages, which also do not exist.

If we were to set these linear models in motion, as real communication is enacted, they would produce a very jerky and uneven process over time. Discrete messages would be flying back and forth like baseballs in a game of catch. Senders would become exhausted transforming themselves into receivers, and then back into senders. Real interpersonal communication is not like this.

The perceptual field is all-involving: all the senses are in play.

In real interpersonal communication, people share a common field of perceptions and cognitive knowledge. The perceptual field is all-involving: all the senses are in play, and a total impression of a person and a situation is constantly being constructed by both participants. The cognitive field is shared to the extent that each participant understands a common language and set of social conventions. Much communication is about other aspects of the cognitive field, which may not be shared at the beginning of the interaction, but which can be shared during it.

Instead of a linear mythology being imposed on interpersonal communication, a more musical and harmonic model, with an accompanying set of metaphors is appropriate. Each person is partly within and partly outside of the shared perceptual and cognitive field. Different communication actions are like different musical notes or themes. The notes of each participant may harmonize, or may be dissonant. The process of communication is like collectively singing an improvised song, or playing in a band with musical instruments. Performances will differ in length, subtlety, originality, and outcome.

In this musical model, some people are clearly lead singers, while others are backup vocalists. Sometimes people compete to be the leader. Sometimes there is no leader, just a collective chorus.

The musical model of communication is still a model. It is a simplification based on a metaphor. It does not catch all complexities of communication, which envelops us all of our lives. I think in many ways it is preferable to the linear models, based on the metaphors of print and technological processes. But it is still a model, still a simplification.

One shortcoming of the musical model of communication is that it does not lend itself easily to diagrams. However, this may be the price of greater accuracy. In fact, much of what happens in communication cannot easily be portrayed in a visual model. We love our pictures. But we need to remember that in communication there is an interior dimension which cannot be shown on a page or in a photograph. Not everything can be televised.



THE TWO LEVELS OF WRITING TO THE POINT

PHILIP VASSALLO, ED.D.*

WHEN BUSINESS WRITERS speak about writing to the point, they usually have in mind either the *concept* level or the *fluency* level of the document. The concept level centers on the single, most critical point of the document; the fluency level focuses the economy of language. These are entirely different matters. The concept level may evoke the image of an architect drawing a blueprint of an office space, while the fluency level reminds one of an interior designer planning how to fill the space. The concept level may suggest a carpenter erecting beams to create the structure of a building, while the fluency level seems something more like a mason laying bricks over the frame-

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work to establish the façade. The concept level, then, is the plan and the framework; the fluency level is the decor and the surface. Let's get to the point here: this article describes both of these levels to clarify what writers mean in either case.

The Concept Level

A good way to write to the point on the concept level is to think about the acronym P-D-F: *purpose*, *details*, and *follow-through*. (My apologies to Adobe Systems, Inc., the firm that pioneered another kind of PDF: portable document format.)

Purpose

Starting at the highest level of the document — the *purpose* — the writer needs to create a single statement that speaks for the entire message. This is the sentence that would cover all the *details* described in the middle of the document. It serves as a unifying force for both the *writer* and the *reader*:

- It guides the writer in deciding whether to expand or limit details for the reader.
- It informs the reader by framing the message within an understandable and relevant context.

In Figure 1, on the next page, the purpose appears in the second sentence:

Below I highlight the key points to consider concerning the attachments, and I note the pending statement you can expect from us after the year's end.

It is such an important sentence because documents do not achieve things — people do. Therefore, the purpose — and only *one* purpose — needs to be literal, and not implied, for the sake of the least informed reader.

FIGURE 1: THE PDF ELEMENTS IN A LETTER

Dear Ms. Vella:

Purpose This letter and its three attachments provide you with some of the financial information you requested to help you prepare for your annual internal fiscal audit kickoff meeting scheduled for February 11. Below I highlight the key points to consider concerning the attachments, and I note the pending statement you can expect from us after the year's end.

Details **Consolidated Statement of Earnings**
We computed the net earnings per share by dividing net earnings by the weighted average number of common shares outstanding.

Consolidated Balance Sheet

The total common shareholder's equity includes four factors:

- all common stock at \$1 par value, which totaled 406 million shares in 2001
- paid-in capital
- retained earnings
- accumulated other comprehensive income

Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows

New operating activities that have an impact on cash flow include environmental remediation charges and merger integration costs.

Consolidated Statement of Common Shareholders' Equity

We will complete the fourth statement due from our office, your Consolidated Statement of Common Shareholders' Equity, as soon as we receive year-end common stock values and your common stock cash dividend distribution statement. Assuming we will have received these figures by December 31, we will complete the statement for your review by January 4.

Follow-through I trust that you will find this information useful as you deploy your auditors for their important engagement. If you need additional information or clarification on any of the new categories, please call or e-mail me. We look forward to assisting you during the audit process in any way we can.

Sincerely,

Carmen Rodriguez
Vice-president

Details

A complete yet concise document answers only those questions the reader may have about the purpose. To support the purpose and address the reader's concerns, the writer provides the *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, and *how* — but only as needed. She may imagine himself in a dialogue with the reader, answering only those questions that she assumes the writer would have. (How much easier said than done this is!) Subject-matter expertise and audience sensitivity, more than linguistic control, come extremely handy here.

Bulleted or numbered points also prove useful when requesting or responding to multiple items. They become a means of eliminating verbiage. Notice the first and second drafts in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2: CREATING POINTED MESSAGES WITH BULLETS

<p style="text-align: center;">First Draft</p> <p>We need 20 CD-ROM disks as soon as you can get them to us, and we also could use 2 packages of 10 legal pads and a dozen Rollo-Bollo pens with blue ink. In addition, please provide us with a 12-pack of Freedom Writer color markers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Second Draft</p> <p>Please send to us by tomorrow the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 CD-ROM disks• 2 packages of 10 legal pads• 12 Rollo-Bollo pens with blue ink• 1 pack of 12 Freedom Writer color markers

By rewriting the paragraph as a bullet list, the writer achieves at least three objectives of writing to the point:

- reduces the word count by 20 percent, from 45 to 36 words
- makes the four items needed plainly visible, as opposed to burying them in two sentences
- groups the items under a lead-in sentence that clearly states the urgency of the need, instead of sending the mixed message contained in the phrases “we need,” “we also could use,” and “please provide us”

Follow-through

Next, the writer wants to close with a *follow-through*, which should reinforce the purpose by transitioning the reader from the details with useful next steps. To reinforce the purpose, a writer checks that the follow-through:

- appears at the end of the message
- stands in a separate paragraph
- connects clearly to the purpose statement
- provides logical next steps for your reader

The follow-through of the message in Figure 1 appears, as it should, in the last paragraph. Notice how it connects to the purpose statement in the first paragraph without repeating it:

I trust that you will find this information useful as you deploy your auditors for their important engagement. If you need additional information or clarification on any of the new categories, please call or e-mail me.

After moving through P-D-F, the writer is ready to shift from the ideas to their expression, from the document and paragraph levels to the sentence and word levels; in other words, she will move from the concept level to the fluency level.

The Fluency Level

To-the-point sentences share four distinct qualities: *smoothness*, *conciseness*, *clarity*, and *consistency*. These elements contribute to making powerful sentences that crystallize the purpose by speaking directly to the reader.

Smoothness

Numerous studies indicate that on average articulate people speak 15 to 25 words per sentence. Smoothness in writing should reflect that same range. Smoothness also requires that the sentences vary in length and begin with different grammatical forms. Notice how the second draft in Figure 3 achieves smoothness by combining the sentences and varying the openings.

FIGURE 3: EDITING FOR SMOOTHNESS**First Draft (11 sentences, 104 words)**

Evergreen Industries has great promise. It has traded in the \$20-25 range the past two years. We believe it will sell in the \$35-40 range. This should happen before the year's end. Evergreen wants to increase sales in the first quarter of 2003. Evergreen opened distribution channels in the Pacific Rim to accomplish this. Evergreen CEO Al Alter looks to the last half of 2003. He projects sales to increase 75 percent. This increase is in comparison to the same period in 2002. Evergreen has new production facilities in Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. The company should keep pace with increased demand for its Bogotogo toys.

Second Draft (5 sentences, 92 words)

Evergreen Industries has great promise. Although it has traded in the \$20-25 range the past two years, we believe the stock will sell in the \$35-40 range before the year's end. To increase sales in the first quarter of 2003, Evergreen opened distribution channels in the Pacific Rim. Looking to the last half of 2003, Evergreen CEO Al Alter projects sales to increase 75 percent compared to the same period in 2002. With new production facilities in Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok, the company should keep pace with increased demand for its Bogotogo toys.

Note in the above example the three benefits of editing for smoothness:

- The first draft begins every sentence in a redundant subject-verb order, typical of immature writing. The second draft begins each sentence differently: subject-verb, subordinate clause, infinitive phrase, participial phrase, and prepositional phrase.
- The first draft averages 9.5 words per sentence, and the sentences have monotonous word counts (5, 11, 9, 7, 11, 11, 11, 7, 11, 9, and 12). The second draft averages a more readable 18.4 words per sentence, and the sentences vary more in length (5, 26, 17, 24, and 20).
- By combining sentences, the writer reduces the total word count by 11.5 percent.

Conciseness

In business writing, less is more, and conciseness is a buzzword that seems to never lose its appeal. Conciseness means making every word count. Figure 4 lists five tips for conveying ideas concisely.

FIGURE 4: TIPS FOR WRITING CONCISELY

<i>Tip</i>	<i>Example</i>
1. Crunch phrases into words.	<i>Wordy:</i> I sent the letter from the manager to the associate, who is new to our company.
	<i>Concise:</i> I sent the manager's letter to the new associate.
2. Remove redundancies.	<i>Wordy:</i> Past experience portends to tell us that each and every employee should wear an ID badge at this point in time.
	<i>Concise:</i> Experience tells us that each employee should wear an ID badge now.
3. Cut through circumlocutions.	<i>Wordy:</i> In light of the fact that the possibility exists for sharing the network, we should proceed to do so.
	<i>Concise:</i> If we can share the network, then we should.
4. Reveal hidden verbs.	<i>Wordy:</i> Jane will come to completion on the report when you make your recommendation of the product.
	<i>Concise:</i> Jane will complete the report when you recommend the product.
5. Purge useless pronouns.	<i>Wordy:</i> It is essential that there be twelve directors at the meeting.
	<i>Concise:</i> Twelve directors must be at the meeting.

Draft 1 below shows how to violate all the guidelines listed in Figure 4, and Draft 2 shows how to edit with the conciseness tips in mind.

First Draft (48 words)

This is to inform you that at some point in the near future there will be a number of recommendations that will be made to you because we are convinced that each and every one of them will increase the effectiveness of your operations in a satisfactory manner.

Second Draft (10 words)

Soon we will recommend actions to increase your operational effectiveness.

Clarity

A sixth tip for conciseness is to write in the active voice, but active voice also achieves a far greater benefit: clarity. Let's look at voice from the perspectives of both conciseness and clarity.

As the example below shows, passive voice usually lacks conciseness. The passive version has 13 words, and the active version 8 words.

Passive: The report was written by me so that the staff would be informed.

Active: I wrote the report to inform the staff.

The more serious problem with passive voice, however, is that it often lacks clarity. In the passive example below, the writer does not inform the reader who requires, who reviewed, and who should print the payment procedure, while the active version makes the doers clear.

Passive: The payment procedure that is required of new accounts has been reviewed, and it should be printed.

Active: Publications may print the new account payment procedure that management requires because Accounting has reviewed it.

Notice the contrasting styles of passive and active voice and their effect on the reader in Figure 5. The passive version seems ambiguous, verbose, impersonal, and evasive, while the active version is clear, concise, personal, and direct.

FIGURE 5: PASSIVE AND ACTIVE VOICE*Passive Voice (124 words)*

Miles,

As was requested by you, this information is being provided about the \$15,937 that was requisitioned by Ms. Miller for office equipment to be purchased.

When Ms. Miller's purchase order was reviewed, it was asked whether three bids were requested, and a negative response was given. An explanation was offered about the procedures that are required for purchases that are exceeded by \$10,000. It was pointed out that the full specifications for the equipment had to be put in writing, and it was promised that this would be done. The purchase order was returned to Ms. Miller at that time. The revised requisition in compliance with agency policy is still being awaited.

If more information is needed, an e-mail may be sent to me.

Sonny

Active Voice (98 words)

Miles,

I am providing the information you requested about Ms. Miller's \$15,937 requisition for office equipment.

When reviewing Ms. Miller's purchase order, I asked whether she received three quotes, and she said that she had not. I then explained the procedures for purchase orders exceeding \$10,000 and pointed out that the vendor should also provide full product specifications in writing. Ms. Miller said she would take care of these matters, so I returned to her the purchase order. I am still waiting for her revised purchase order in compliance with agency policy.

If you want more information, please e-mail me.

Sonny

Writers should remember that passive voice does not always harm a message. Sometimes a writer will find writing in passive easier because it creates an air of objectivity. For this reason, technical and scientific writers frequently employ passive voice. At other times, a writer might want to conceal the doer of an action to avoid embarrassing him, so a sentence may read "A mistake was made" rather than "Philip made a mistake." As a rule, though, use passive voice sparingly.

Consistency

One way to maintain consistency in writing is with parallel structure, the expression of parallel ideas in grammatically parallel terms. As with active voice, parallel structure achieves conciseness and clarifies meaning. Whenever we use the words *and* or *or*, we are linking parallel ideas. We immediately recognize the flawed thinking in the following sentence:

I like apples, oranges, and you.

Even though I do like you, I should not liken you to a fruit. It's the word *and* that makes us treat the three nouns equal. Here is a more confusing sentence:

Send the estimate to Marilyn or Ramin Shah.

The reader has no choice but to think that Marilyn's last name is Shah, but, of course, it's Monroe.

A final example appears in Figure 6. Since the writer is asking the reader to *complete steps* 1 to 4, he should begin each numbered point with a verb, as he did with Point 2 in the first draft. On the other hand, if he had written, "please ask the following questions," then Point 1 would have been correct and the other points would have to follow suit.

FIGURE 6: WRITING WITH PARALLEL CONSTRUCTION

Nonparallel: Before leaving the office, please complete the following steps:

1. Have I set the alarm?
2. Lower the heat.
3. The lights must be turned off.
4. Be sure to lock both doors.

Parallel: Before leaving the office, please complete the following steps:

1. Set the alarm.
2. Lower the heat.
3. Turn off the lights.
4. Lock both doors.

Writing to the Point by Pointing in the Right Direction

For a writer, nothing beats having something important to write. But I meet many writers who have a lot to write and don't know where to begin, or who don't know what to write at all. If this description fits your situation, I suggest that you look at this article as a logical method for processing your ideas. Separate the concept level from the fluency level. In doing so, you will begin your creative journey with half the load on your back — and you will write to the point.

BOOKS

EDITOR: MARTIN H. LEVINSON, PH.D.

Deirdre Bair. *Jung: A Biography*. Boston: Little Brown, 2003.

Deirdre Bair, author of biographies on Anaïs Nin and Simone de Beauvoir, offers in this book compelling and solidly researched insights into Carl Jung, a seminal figure in psychology who is responsible for many terms that are now considered common: the archetype, the collective unconscious, introvert and extravert, anima and animus, synchronicity, individuation, and even New Age spirituality. Jung was Sigmund Freud's "crown prince," selected by the father of psychoanalysis to become the first president of the International Psychoanalytic Association in 1910. In 1914, Jung jettisoned Freud's theory to found his own system of analytical psychology.

In her research Bair received unprecedented access to private archives, restricted interviews, analytic diaries, and early drafts of Jung's own writings. With this knowledge she presents well-documented disclosures on a number of topics. For example:

- Many have claimed Jung was a Nazi sympathizer. Bair reveals that he actually analyzed the German mind-set for Allied forces during World War II and prepared reports on the best propaganda appeal to the German people.
- Bair details Jung's relationship with his mentor, and his eventual parting from Freud over Freud's emphasis on infantile sexuality and the Oedipus Complex.

- Bair discusses accusations, put forth in a featured story in the *New York Times*, that Jung stole his theory of the unconscious from Johann Jakob Honegger, Jr., a medical student under his supervision. (Bair was the first scholar to have access to the Honegger papers.)
- Was Jung a polygamist and misogynist? Bair furnishes evidence and arguments surrounding charges that Jung treated his mistress as a second wife and insisted on a triangular relationship that lasted much of his lifetime.

Jung's life and work touched on many areas including medicine, religion, philosophy, mythology, literature, and art. To find out about the influence this great thinker had on these domains, and to learn more about his private life, I highly recommend you read this book.

John M. Barry. *The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History*. New York: Viking, 2004.

In 1918 an influenza virus emerged — probably in the United States — that would spread around the world. Before that worldwide pandemic faded away in 1920, it would kill more people than any other outbreak of disease in human history. Plague in the 1300s killed a far larger portion of the population — more than one quarter of Europe — but in raw numbers influenza killed more than plague did then, more than AIDS today (the lowest estimate of the pandemic's worldwide death toll is twenty-one million, in a world with a population less than one-third of present times). But 1918 was not the Middle Ages and the story of this epidemic was not simply one of death, suffering, and terror.

In 1918 science was used, for the first time in history, to battle epidemic disease and great scientists — pioneers who defined American medicine — fought against the pestilence. The politicians and generals of World War I, concentrating on a different sort of enemy, ignored warnings from these scientists and so enhanced conditions for the virus to kill. However, in the end, scientists made progress against the pandemic and a particularly tenacious investigator came up with one of the most important scientific discoveries of the twentieth century (this discovery has given birth to many Nobel prizes and is influential even now).

Can we learn anything from the response to the influenza pandemic of 1918 that would be helpful as we confront AIDS and other infectious diseases today? Is there a possibility that the world could face another devastating flu pandemic in the future? *The Great Influenza* answers these questions and provides a wealth of knowledge regarding the people and events surrounding a horrible epidemic that changed America and the world.

Robert L. Carneiro. *The Muse of History and the Science of Culture*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2000.

“Is history more than ‘a mere chronological series of remarkable events’? Does it have a pattern? Is it fraught with ‘meaning’? Can we discern its trends? What determines its course? In short, we will be asking, ‘Is there a substantial and coherent philosophy of history that offers an answer to these questions?’”

In chapter one of this book, Robert L. Carneiro, curator of South American Ethnology at the American Museum of Natural History, adjunct professor of Anthropology at Columbia University, and the invited speaker for the 2005 Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture, announces his intention to explore the questions above.

Carneiro, a professional anthropologist, brings the insights of anthropology to his work. For example, in a chapter titled “The Great Men and Ideas as Prime Movers,” Carneiro writes, “Simply put, we can say that in explaining social changes, great or small, anthropology places much more emphasis on the generative power of culture than on the strivings of great individuals.”

In a chapter titled “How to Turn History Into Science,” Carneiro asserts “In contrast to the ways of conventional history, anthropology widens the arena of study — widens it immeasurably. It encompasses the cultures of the entire planet, of the Fuegians as well as the French, of the Paiute as well as the Persians. And it deals not just with a few millennia of culture history, but with the full two million years of it.”

In the book’s concluding chapter, titled “Proposed Laws of Culture,” Carneiro proposes original anthropological perspectives, which include quantitative formulations toward developing a science of culture.

The Muse of History and the Science of Culture is an ambitious, compelling, and well-researched compendium that merges various ideas on how to interpret history with intriguing anthropological analysis. I highly recommend it.

Daniel Mark Epstein. *Lincoln and Whitman: Parallel Lives in Civil War Washington*. New York: Ballantine, 2004.

The Greek historian Plutarch said the biography of the individual gains in significance when it is paired with another. This book uses that idea to detail the parallel lives of America's greatest statesman and America's greatest poet — beginning with the day Lincoln first read *Leaves of Grass* to the elegy Whitman composed after Lincoln's assassination in 1865.

The narrative begins in 1857 in Lincoln's Springfield, Illinois, law office. There we find the future president reading aloud from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*.

I celebrate myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
I loafe and invite my soul,
I lean and loafe at my ease, observing a spear of summer grass.

Epstein argues that verses such as these inspired Lincoln to write more dramatic oratory, such as his incendiary "House Divided" speech — quoting St. Mark, Lincoln proclaimed: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure, permanently half slave and half free." This was the first of Lincoln's speeches to be widely regarded as a work of literature.

Lincoln also influenced Whitman. Though initially dubious about the Illinois Republican, Whitman became a supporter when Lincoln stopped in New York on the way to his first inauguration. During the war years, after Whitman moved to Washington to care for wounded soldiers, the poet's attachment increased. "Lincoln is particularly my man, and by the same token, I am Lincoln's man." *Lincoln and Whitman* is a compelling, well-researched, original work about two great men and the era they fashioned through common beliefs about the unfairness of slavery and the dignity of man.

ALL REVIEWS BY MARTIN H. LEVINSON, PH.D.

RETROSPECT

EDITOR: NORA MILLER

One of the foremost authorities of our time in the field of psychological warfare has written a volume of extraordinary interest to students of semantics. And Mr. Barrett's qualifications are exceptional: he has served as one of the editors of *Newsweek*, was entrusted with setting up the world-wide news distributing system of the United States Government during World War II, and he succeeded Robert E. Sherwood as director of international operations of the Office of War Information. In the Eisenhower headquarters he did top-level work in the Psychological Warfare Branch, and for two years — beginning in 1950 — he was Assistant Secretary of State, responsible for developing the “campaign of truth” by the Voice of America and the United States Information Service.

His book is divided into three parts — embracing 25 chapters and an appendix. The first part illuminates some of the costly errors through which we learned our propaganda lessons; ten of these chapters tell of the days of World War II. The second part seeks to take the measure of our foes without and within, and the author describes the Soviet techniques. In the third part, the author makes constructive suggestions as regards the many methods by which America can put its best foot forward in a propaganda-laden world. Here, he opens new doors on the controversial Voice of America operations and relates many facts which congressional committees have yet to place in the public record.

One chapter in particular, “The Problem of Words,” is semantically exciting. Writes Barrett: “So complex have the problems of semantics become to those operating in forty-six languages that one weary propaganda executive once broke up a meeting by rising, mopping his brow, and announcing, ‘I’m afraid I’m becoming anti-semantic.’ Nonetheless, because official announcements must necessarily deal in words, top information officers of the government have no choice but to search continually for those word-concepts with the greatest appeal to the greatest number of people.”

To assist in this search he once prepared a list of 42 positive word-concepts, that is, words like *peace*, *liberty*, *honor*, and *human dignity*. To this list be added 14 negative word-concepts, that is, such terms as *slavery*, *thought control*, and *foreign domination*. The State Department then sent the lists to its public affairs staffs in 157 different cities around the world. The public affairs officers, who were systematic students of public opinion in their areas, were asked to rate the terms (on a scale of 0 to 100) on the basis of “propaganda effectiveness in the immediate area.” Barrett writes:

The answers proved fascinating. No single key word was scored highly by all posts. *Peace* ranked highest in most of the Far East but lowest in Indonesia (where the accepted translation implies “peace at any price”). It ranked well down the line in Europe, Latin America, and the Near East—perhaps because of Soviet distortion of the term. *Liberty* stood high in many countries of Latin America and Europe but low in Japan, Hong Kong, and Indochina. *Independence* ranked second (just below *peace*) in the Far East but well down the list in Latin America. Though there was not even near-unanimity on any word, the highest rated positive words for all areas, on the average, were *independence*, *freedom*, *education*, *prosperity*, *security*, *national culture*, *peace*, *liberty*, *justice*, *progress*, and *honor*. The lowest rated positive words on the average represented the concept of cooperation and mutuality: *mutual assistance*, *world friendship*, *neighborliness*, *brotherhood*, *democratic unity*, and *harmony*. The most effective negative word, on the average, turned out to be *slave labor*, followed by *Soviet imperialism*, *slavery*, *foreign domination*, *Communism*, and *iron curtain*. There were wide variations, however. *Iron curtain* understandably rated high in Europe, low in the Far East. *Foreign domination* ranked first in the Far East, low in Latin America.

From his detailed studies of the emotive polarities of word-concepts in many areas of the world, Barrett suggests a number of specific strategies in the conduct of psychological warfare. For example:

Wartime events proved how “honorable capitulation” could persuade an enemy who would never be influenced by “prompt surrender;” how the “Peace Movement” in Germany made respectable what was unthinkable as “a plot against Hitler.” Later, “campaign of truth” proved far superior to “propaganda offensive.” “Captive peoples” meant far more than “Soviet allies” or even “satellites.” “Mutual security,” while not ideal, was infinitely better than “U.S. foreign aid.”

CEDRIC LARSON, “REVIEW OF *TRUTH IS OUR WEAPON*, BY EDWARD W. BARRETT.”

Don't know if the editor of *ETC* will print this. There are some who will call it advertising. Actually, it *is* advertising — for an entirely satisfactory weekly news magazine, such as I have never yet been able to find, nor, I suspect, has anyone else.

On every page of every news magazine I pick up, I run into some prejudice, political, national, philosophical, that annoys me. Some items strike me as trivial. Nonentities are given prominence for some sensational idiocy. A momentous discovery by a brilliant intellect is noted only in passing, and with flippant contempt. I do not think I am alone in being annoyed, and I am sure such annoyance is dangerous. It can produce rashes. It has been known to upset family relations. There is no telling what chains of causation these annoyances set off, leading to who knows what remote consequences — all because we do not get the news we want to read.

It is high time that modern scientific methods were applied to magazine production. This is exactly what the publishers of *YOUR SLANT: A PERSONAL NEWS MAGAZINE* intend doing. They intend to bring out a magazine which every member of the reading public without exception will buy. The motives of the publishers in preparing such a magazine are, of course, mercenary. They see and see dearly that existing magazines — with their present leanings and slantings — attract always only a part of the reading public, while repelling another part. *YOUR SLANT* will be designed for all the reading public. It will snugly fit every crook of every reader's crotchets.

How is this universally satisfactory magazine to be produced?

As follows: first, every subscriber will be asked to fill out a questionnaire which gives a full schema of his religious, political, philosophical, national, racial, and ideological loyalties and predilections. This information is coded on punch cards, with a separate card for each subscriber. These cards ultimately insure that *each* subscriber will get the tailor-made, individually-fitted magazine that follows *exactly* the contours of his attitudes and prejudices.

This does not mean that there will be as many different editions of the magazine as there are subscribers. The mass-producing tailors find that after being in business for a while they do not have to make any more patterns; every new set of measurements that comes in can be found already cut in their files. Just so, the editors of *YOUR SLANT* have found in experiments that combinations of viewpoints recur often enough so that the number of separate editions required to capture the total audience can be kept within practical bounds. The number will be large but not staggeringly so, and at any rate it will be but a small fraction of the total number of subscribers.

The cost? Trivial, with modern production methods. News events are written up, separately interpreted from a wide variety of viewpoints. These view-

points will also be expressed in numerous editorials, each giving a different evaluation of the world scene. The articles are then set and electrotyped on mats. The punched cards, serving as the memory of an electronic calculator, will control the selection and rejection of these mats at the rate of about 100,000 mats a minute. Every series of mats so selected by similarly coded cards falls into a neat stack, and each stack is automatically correlated with headings. An employee pages them. We have a magazine. Other stacks of mats form other editions of the magazine. From then on, everything is gloriously automatic — until the Post Office finally sorts the wrapped magazines.

Since the circulation will be world-wide, each of the separate editions will reap a profit. There will be an AFL-Republican-female-New England edition, a CIO-Democrat-Negro-male-Michigan edition, a New Zealand-industrial-cooperative-engineer edition, a Socialist-Scots-Oxonian-male-soldier-vegetarian edition, and a Texas edition. Plus a large but still manageable number of others.

What would be the outcome of this enlightened procedure? I will give just one example. A Russian communist might be glad to hear that Mr. Churchill was dead. The electronic censor would be quick to let this news item through to the Russian communist edition of the magazine, but any eulogistic comment on his career would be, just as promptly, tossed out. Now it may be argued that this sort of thing is already done. But it is done, after all, in a prescientific and slipshod manner. Even within the Soviet Union, there must be a dissident minority of Russian communists who break out in a rash as they read present Russian communist magazines. (I myself once heard an American capitalist executive of the kind celebrated in *Fortune* magazine excoriating *Fortune* as “run by a bunch of socialists”!) YOUR SLANT, with its *scientific* method of selecting the news and the interpretations thereof, will dovetail neatly with *everybody's* prejudices.

Some readers of *ETC* may deplore the introduction of such a magazine. There are always captious persons to cavil at every forward step. They will say that such journalism will do nothing more than persuade people that the world is the sort of place they think it is, and that each reader will only become more convinced than ever that he is right and everyone else is wrong. Such a charge is, of course, absurd. The *old* journalism does that. The *new* journalism is *really* new, in that it builds on what has already been accomplished.

It has long been recognized that people's personalities take a set shortly after they have succeeded in discarding everything their fathers believed in and doing all the things their mothers considered disgraceful. From this point on their minds are closed. And since the age at which this closure occurs is gradually moving toward infancy, it is safe to suppose that the closed mind now characterizes practically the entire reading population. People with closed minds

are, under present conditions, constantly being made uncomfortable by the barrage of other points of view. When they are uncomfortable they are disturbing to their friends and family. The *new* journalism avoids all this. Therefore the new journalism can bring nothing but happiness to humanity.

There may remain a few odd folk who *like* the jolt of a differing viewpoint now and then. Such people are so few that no system of mass production could properly be asked to cater to them. Fortunately, however, the new journalism is methodologically so sound that even for these deviates YOUR SLANT can be of service. For example, a Hindu-cooperative-pacifist-handweaver could put his name down for the Pakistani-militarist-industrialist edition. For a couple of weeks, until he came to his senses and canceled the edition, he would be able to peer with horrified disbelief into a strange and topsy-turvy world. Then, having returned to his own edition with a sigh of vast relief, he will forever after know better than to try *that* again.

ADRIAN YOUNG “*YOUR SLANT: A PERSONAL NEWS MAGAZINE*”

LOGIC. “In Los Angeles it was found that one of the most damning pieces of information about [Dr. J. Robert] Oppenheimer — according to the California investigators responsible for many of the current charges against him — was that he was classified in secret Communist party communications as unsympathetic to communism The committee’s explanation of this paradox was that, in secret Communist party communications, the scientist’s status was deliberately misrepresented in order to deceive anyone who intercepted the communications.” *Kansas City Times*, April 14, 1954.

How widely and how well is general semantics understood nowadays? Evidence on this question in books and magazines is conflicting. In most of the places where we would expect general semantics to be misunderstood, it is misunderstood. But sometimes it is misunderstood in quarters where understanding might be expected. Such, at least, were the feelings of the Editor when he dispatched the following letter to *The Socialist Call*. The editors of *The Call* were so courteous as to publish this letter, almost in full, in their March, 1955 issue, along with their own vigorous rejoinder. The letter is printed here in full, not any longer to scold *The Call*, but to call the attention of readers to miscon-

ceptions about general semantics which are held, whether or not by the editors of *The Call*, by a surprising number of other equally well-read people:

Sirs: I have just read with amazement your editorial references in the February issue of *The Socialist Call* to Irving Lee's article, "Procedures for 'Coercing' Agreement," and to Irving Flamm's article, "How to Sell a Vision," both of which appeared in the Spring, 1954 issue of *ETC*.

My God, can't you guys read? You say that Dr. Lee "did not appreciate all the implications of the title he chose to give his article," and you cite this supposition as an instance of current "pressures toward conformity" (which Dr. Lee no doubt deplores no less than you). Why do you suppose the author put quotation marks around the word "coercing" if not to indicate that he does *not* mean by the word what is ordinarily meant?

If you had read the article beyond the title, you would have discovered that he meant by "coercing" no more than the establishment of semantic rules of discourse, no more "coercive" in their effect or intent than Robert's Rules of Order.

Concerning Irving Flamm's article you write that he "is bothered by the fact that Norman Thomas and Peter Viereck ... should find it possible to disagree on political and economic policies. Mr. Flamm insists that they have no differences and should not be arguing with each other." This is far from what Mr. Flamm said. What he said is that until the high-level abstractions of the Thomas-Viereck debate (i.e., the *particular* debate in the April, 1953 issue of *The Progressive* to which Mr. Flamm was referring) are translated into concrete proposals, it is not possible to tell to what extent they agree or disagree. As Mr. Flamm wrote, "Had Viereck and Thomas formulated remodeling plans to display their respective concepts of the good society, we could examine each, compare their respective mechanisms to insure democracy, freedom, and economic stability Wide debate on both plans would then be fruitful."

Your editorial also states, "The theory of these intellectuals is that the only thing that's wrong is our 'communications.' If only we could understand each other, they say, we would find that we all mean the same thing!"

The mistaken cliché to the effect that semanticists are people who believe that there are no problems except problems of communication comes from two sources that I know of. The first is the Communist Party, which in such places as *The New Masses*, *The Bolshevik: A Theoretical Political Journal* (Moscow), and the Soviet *Short Philosophical Dictionary*, has declared that semanticists are "lackey philosophers" of "decadent bourgeois imperialism" who try to allay the "seething discontent of oppressed masses in capitalist societies" by telling them that "all problems are merely verbal." The fact that communists should

have such a distorted view of semantics is not all surprising in view of their own doctrinal propositions. Knowing your attitude towards communism, I am sure that the foregoing are not your sources of information about semantics.

Another source of misinformation about semantics is the cocktail party. Many people derive their knowledge of semantics at cocktail parties from people who got *their* knowledge of semantics at other cocktail parties. From such conversational exchanges, they usually emerge with the impression that “semanticists believe that everything is just a matter of words.”

Now I would be loath to deny that the cocktail party is an important medium of communication, but in some areas of concern (such as semantics or socialism) I have never found it a substitute for reading the literature. Hence if you are planning to venture any more remarks about semantics in *The Call*, you might take the trouble to read what semanticists have written.

What have semanticists written? They have written that language, unconscious assumptions about the relation of language to fact, and confusions created by language are *often* a factor in human problems. They have written that human beings, instead of confronting reality, often dissipate their energies combating verbally-created bogeymen. (Isn't “creeping socialism” one of these?) They have written that in the absence of communication, imaginings are often mistaken for fact. They have warned against and provided tools with which to avoid cliché-thinking, slogan-thinking, formula-thinking, which are the verbal manifestations of the “pressures toward conformity,” which you deplore. Finally, by insisting on caution about reacting to unverified inferences, they have tried to reduce the tendency (which we all have to greater or less degree) to go off half-cocked.

May we therefore enter your name to receive regularly from now, on an exchange subscription to *ETC*? Perhaps you will do the same for us with *The Call* to prevent us in our turn from holding mistaken notions about what it is that Socialists believe and advocate.

SINCERELY YOURS,
S. I. HAYAKAWA

In the comic strip “Pogo,” in the newspapers of the same date as the foregoing: Pogo says, “Albert, you suspects one man, catches the WRONG one an' you claims the one you is got is GUILTY! Jus' CATCHIN' a man don't prove he's a CULPRIT!” Albert the Alligator replies, “It's a good start, ain't it?”

DATES AND INDEXES

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 - e. Do not use superscripts or subscripts for footnotes or references; instead, use normal sized numeral inside parentheses.
 - f. In lists, use serial commas and place a comma before the “and” such as, *apples, oranges, and bananas*.
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 - h. For dashes, please use the long dash — (*em dash*) symbol with one space on either side.
 - i. Use only one paragraph return after each paragraph.
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6. Do not use headers or footers.
7. Do not use automated footnote or note referencing programs. Below are some examples of end notes as they appeared in a recent *ETC*:

REFERENCES

Coyne, Kevin. *A Day in the Night of America*. New York: Random House, 1992.

Landes, David. *Revolution in Time: Clocks and the Making of the Modern World*.

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1. Kanchier, Carole. (2000, July 16). "Identifying Your Crucial Work Skills." *The San Francisco Examiner*, page J-3. Kanchier is the author of *Dare to Change Your Job—and Your Life* (2000). She is principal of Questers, a career consulting group.
 2. Whitaker, Urban. (1998, June 14). "Transferable Skills Crucial for Those Who Want to Get Ahead." *The San Francisco Examiner*, page J-3.
 3. Johnson, Wendell. *People in Quandaries: The Semantics of Personal Adjustment*. Harper & Row: New York (1946), p.24.
 4. See Kuhn, Thomas S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago (1962), pp.24-27.
8. We especially encourage submissions by students. We would like to publish articles by high school and college students in every issue.
 9. If you submit an article that has been previously published, please obtain reprint permissions prior to submission to *ETC* and provide such permission with the submission.
 10. Please remember that *ETC* serves as a journal specifically for the field of **general semantics**. While we do occasionally publish articles that do not relate directly to the subject, we prefer articles in which the writer makes a clear connection with general semantics or explains how the topic relates to general semantics.

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April 22-23 — New York City: **the Alfred Korzybski Memorial Lecture** and Program featuring **Robert L. Carneiro**, Adjunct Professor, American Museum of Natural History, author of *Evolutionism in Cultural Anthropology* and *The Muse of History and the Science of Culture*. American Museum of Natural History. Sponsored by the Institute of General Semantics and the New York Society for General Semantics. Discount for IGS members. Details online: www.time-binding.org/news.htm.

June 22-26 — New York City: the Sixth Annual Meeting of the **Media Ecology Association**. Fordham University Lincoln Center Campus. Details online: www.media-ecology.org.

June 25-28 — San Francisco: **National Media Education Conference 2005**, “Giving Voice to a Diverse Nation,” sponsored by the Alliance for a Media Literate America. Details online: www.amlainfo.org.

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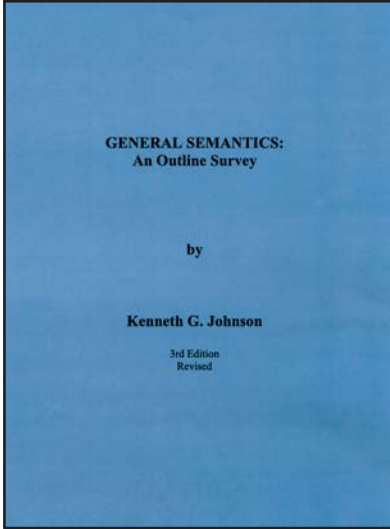
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