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Teaching the Political Conflicts: A Rhetorical Schema

Donald Lazere

During the 1990-91 academic year, reports erupted into the national press about attempts at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst to address controversial political issues such as racism and sexism in freshman writing courses. One reason these attempts provoked disputes, within their own English departments as well as publicly, is that little basis has been established within the discipline of composition delineating either a theoretical framework or ethical guidelines for dealing with political controversies in writing courses. While I do not have the local knowledge necessary to judge the particular conception and implementation of the courses at Austin and Amherst, I want briefly to address the larger theoretical issues and then go on to outline my own model for incorporating critical thinking about politics in writing courses, an approach which has evolved over some twenty-five years of college teaching and a decade of presenting workshops based on this model.

Overviews

Under the opposition of Maxine Hairston and other critics to courses like those at Austin and Amherst lie not only quarrels with politicizing writing instruction but broader theoretical assumptions and emphases that have dominated the profession for most of the last three decades—assumptions that I believe have imposed crippling restrictions on our field. The major emphasis in theory, courses, and textbooks has been on basic writing and the generation and exposition of one's own ideas, to the neglect of more advanced levels of writing that involve critical thinking in evaluating others' ideas (particularly in the public discourse of politics and mass media)—i.e., semantics, logic and argumentative rhetoric, and their application to writing critical, argumentative, and research papers and other writing from sources. The consequence of

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these dominant attitudes has been a failure of responsibility in the English profession to emphasize those aspects of composition that bear quite legitimately on the development of critical civic literacy—a failure that has contributed by default to the present, universally deplored state of political illiteracy, apathy, and semantic pollution by public doublespeak in America.

Obviously, I endorse the theoretical conceptions of courses like those at Austin and Amherst. But I also share the concern of critics that such courses can all too easily be turned into an indoctrination to the instructor's particular ideology or, at best, into classes in political science. This concern has certainly been warranted by the tendency of some leftist teachers and theorists to assume that all students and colleagues agree—or *should* agree—with their views, rather than formulating their approach in a manner that takes respectful account of opposing views. My own political leanings are toward democratic socialism, and I believe that college English courses have a responsibility to expose students to socialist viewpoints because those views are virtually excluded from all other realms of the American cognitive, rhetorical, semantic, and literary universe of discourse.¹ I am firmly opposed, however, to instructors imposing socialist (or feminist, or Third-World, or gay) ideology on students as the one true faith—just as much as I am opposed to the present, generally unquestioned (and even unconscious) imposition of capitalist, white-male, heterosexual ideology that pervades American education and every other aspect of our culture.

I assert, then, that our primary aim should be to broaden the ideological scope of students' critical thinking, reading, and writing capacities so as to empower them to make their own autonomous judgments on opposing ideological positions in general and on specific issues. And it is just this aim that justifies introducing political issues in writing courses, within a *rhetorical* framework quite different from anything students are apt to encounter in political science or other social science courses. My concept of that framework consists of a version of what Gerald Graff advocates in literary theory as "teaching the conflicts"—introducing as explicit subject matter the issues of political partisanship and bias, as examples of the subjective, socially constructed elements in perceptions of reality and of the way ideology consciously or unconsciously pervades teaching, learning, and other influential realms of public discourse, including news reporting, mass culture, and of course political rhetoric itself. (By addressing these issues, *through a distinctively rhetorical approach*, writing courses can also become a vital part of the reorientation of English toward cultural studies.)

Part of my theoretical intention here is to indicate ways in which partisan political positions—like my own favoring socialist views on economic matters or those on sexism and racism emphasized in the courses at Austin and Amherst—can be introduced within a rhetorical schema that is acceptable to teachers and students of any reasoned political persuasion. In this way, I believe the left agenda of prompting students to question the subjectivity under-

lying socially constructed modes of thinking can be reconciled with the conservative agenda of objectivity and nonpartisanship. This approach obliges teachers to raise in class the question of their own partisan biases and how they can most honestly be dealt with in pedagogy and grading; I have found that students are immensely relieved at being able to discuss this taboo subject openly, to come to an open accord with the instructor about what guidelines are most fair, and to evaluate the instructor's fairness at the end of the course accordingly.

The most economical way of concretizing my theoretical position and tacitly answering likely objections to it is to provide an outline of the schema's central components in the form of four units of study that can be integrated into a writing course such as the one I teach as my department's second term of freshman English, a course devoted to argumentative and source-based writing and the research paper.² These units coincide with the preliminary stages of researching and writing a term paper on a topic of current public controversy, a paper which consists of a rhetorical analysis of sources expressing opposing ideological viewpoints on the topic. The units provide a pedagogical context for seven appendices, which form the substantive core of the schema. The appendices provide the kind of guides to locating and analyzing partisan sources that have only recently started to show up in writing textbooks (e.g. Mayfield 236-63), and I hope my version will prompt other writers to incorporate them in textbooks, as I am doing myself in a textbook in progress.

If, as is almost inevitable, I sometimes let my own partisanship bias my presentation, I think that, far from discrediting my general intention, this will only illustrate and validate it. An implicit message of my approach to teaching political conflict is that any effort to construct such a schema is itself bound to be captive, in some measure, to the partisan biases it sets out to analyze. The only possible way to transcend these biases is refinement through dialectical exchanges with those of differing ideologies. So much the better, then, if readers who find fault with my definitions, interrelations among ideological positions, or predictable lines of partisan rhetoric can suggest modifications that will bring the schema closer to the difficult ideal of acceptability to those of any reasoned ideology; I regularly modify and update it myself in response to student suggestions in class. I hope that my beginnings here will prompt ongoing professional debate on these points and thereby help bring such debate into the forefront of composition theory.

The content of this schema and the four course units it is keyed to do not dictate any particular pedagogical model. Nor do their emphases on specific subject matter related to politics contradict the current emphasis in the profession on the writing process; on the contrary, the sequence of topics and assignments shows how process instruction can be extended to critical thinking, reading, and writing about political subject matter, while the appendices constitute a heuristic for the process of working the analysis of partisan rhetoric into an outline for the term paper.

As a final introductory note, I need to respond to the concerns of Hairston and other critics that writing instructors are venturing out of their own field of expertise when they address political issues. The level at which these issues are analyzed in a course like the one I describe here is that at which they are addressed, not in scholarly studies, but in political speeches, news and entertainment media, op-ed columns, general-circulation journals of opinion, and other realms of public discourse to which everyone is exposed every day. The political vocabulary and information covered here are no more specialized than what every citizen in a democracy should be expected to know, even before taking a college argumentative and research writing course. Indeed, two of the main points that must be stressed throughout such a course are the difference in levels of rhetoric between public and scholarly treatments of political issues and the need for students to take more specialized courses to gain deeper knowledge of these issues. Students *can* learn in writing classes, though, to develop a more complex and comprehensive rhetorical understanding of political events and ideologies than that provided by campaign propaganda and mass media—or, for that matter, by most social science courses, whose emphasis is empirical rather than rhetorical. Higher education in composition as well as literature has the unique, Emersonian mission of bringing to bear on current events the longer view, the synthesizing vision needed to counteract the hurriedness, atomization, and ideological hodgepodge that debase our public discourse as well as our overdepartmentalized curricula and over-specialized scholarship.

Four Units for Teaching Political Conflicts

Political Semantics

This first topic in the schema can be integrated into a standard argumentative and research writing course with a review, within a General Semantics perspective, of definition, denotation, and connotation. This review provides a context for discussion of racism and sexism through study of selections from the large body of writings analyzing the role of definition and connotative language in the social construction of racial and gender identity, and of other issues in which control of definitions functions as a form of social power. Analysis of readings with opposing viewpoints on race and gender can focus on the semantic intricacies involved in current disputes over “political correctness,” limits on free speech, tolerance of intolerance, and “reverse discrimination.”

The unit continues with study of the problems of subjectivity involved in defining political terms, including the way partisan biases color our perception of these terms’ meaning, through ambiguous or selective definitions, unconcretized abstractions, connotative associations and slanting, etc. Students are assigned to look up in one or more dictionaries the following terms: “conservatism,” “liberalism,” “libertarianism,” “radicalism,” “right wing,” “left

wing," "fascism," "plutocracy," "capitalism," "socialism," "communism," "Marxism," "patriotism," "democracy," "totalitarianism," "freedom," and "free enterprise." Then they bring their different dictionaries to class and read aloud the multiple and varying definitions for each word. In this way, students learn that understanding these terms and using them accurately in spoken or written discourse are complicated, not only by each dictionary's giving several meanings for each word but by differences among various dictionaries (and from one edition to another of the same dictionary—a nice lesson in historical subjectivity). Furthermore, even the largest unabridged dictionary fails to cover the almost infinite number of senses in which "liberal," "conservative," "socialist," "communist," and "Marxist" are used throughout the world, or the equally immense diversity of political factions which identify themselves with each of these ideologies. In America alone, a conservative may be a Mencksonian aristocrat, a Donald Trump-type corporate capitalist, a Moral Majority populist, a Ku Klux Klanner, a member of the Libertarian Party, etc. And yet our mass media chronically use *conservative* either without any definition at all or as a simplistic label, as though it had one and only one meaning. Many Democratic and Republican Party politicians consciously evade any consistent definition of their ideology in an unscrupulous attempt to woo the widest possible constituency; hence they almost inevitably must resort to doublespeak.

This dictionary exercise can point up another widespread semantic confusion in our public discourse, the false equation of political terms like "democracy," "freedom," "justice," "patriotism," and "dictatorship" with words referring to economic systems—"capitalism" or "free enterprise" and "socialism." One must again go beyond dictionary definitions to address the problematic relation between these political and economic terms, for partisans of varying ideologies posit differing connections between, say, freedom and democracy on one hand and capitalism and socialism on the other. In Appendix Six, I have attempted to present my own definitions of these relations as objectively as possible, but, as I make clear to students, scholars whose ideological convictions differ from mine might take issue and present a quite different set of definitions. Indeed, the larger rhetorical question (a vital one for both class exercises and theoretical inquiry by English scholars) is whether it is possible to arrive at definitions of these terms and relationships that can be agreed on by partisans of all differing ideologies.

Next, the writer seeking accuracy of definition needs to key these political terms to a spectrum of positions from far right to far left in the United States and the rest of the world (see Appendix Two). Rather than speaking of "the liberal *New York Times*," one should explain and document the sense and degree of liberalism referred to. "Liberal" in relation to what other media? One might clarify the label by placing the *Times* to the left of *Time* but to the right of *The Nation*. The whole range of American news media—along with politicians and parties, individual journalists and scholars, and even figures in popular entertainment (like Clint Eastwood and Jane Fonda, Donald Duck and

Doonesbury,³ Madonna and Bruce Springsteen, "Dallas" and "Roseanne")—can be placed on this spectrum in such a precise way that their political identity can be agreed on to a large extent by those of every ideological persuasion. In distributing Appendix Two to students I make it clear that this is a very general overview that necessarily involves over-simplifications and some debatable placements, and that this schema needs regular updating due to shifts in the positions of countries, individual politicians, writers, and periodicals. Recent upheavals in the Communist world have compounded semantic complexities: left-wing has been equated historically with Communism as a political ideology, but if "left-wing" is defined as opposition to the status quo, does that make those trying to overturn the status quo in Communist countries leftists or rightists? (During the 1991 attempted coup in the Soviet Union, my students, in tracking American news media, found that they most often designated the Communist hardliners "right wing" and "conservative.")

Extending the right-to-left spectrum worldwide serves to call students' attention to the parochially limited span of ideology represented by the poles of the Republican and Democratic parties and of "conservatism" and "liberalism" that define the boundaries of most American political, journalistic, scholarly, and cultural discourse. Factions and positions that are considered liberal in the United States, for example, usually stay well within the limits of capitalist ideology, thus are considerably to the right of the labor, social-democratic, and communist parties with large constituencies in most other democratic countries today. (A politician or position labeled "moderate" in the United States is considered right-wing from today's European perspective, while many American "radicals" would be "moderates" in Europe. Similarly, many "ultra-conservatives" in American terminology appear "moderate" in comparison to fascistic countries.) Therefore, in order to expose themselves to a full range of ideological viewpoints, students need to seek out sources excluded from the mainstream of American discourse, though such sources may be hard to find in many communities. The most prominent of these ideologies in a worldwide perspective are democratic socialism and libertarian conservatism (both of which favor political freedom), communism and fascism (both of which are opposed to democracy and freedom but are nonetheless strong presences in today's world and therefore need to be studied and understood through their own spokespeople and not just through the distorting filters of second-hand accounts).

Throughout this unit, and the rest of the course, the instructor needs to indicate the parameters of this kind of rhetorical analysis and the need for students to expose themselves, in history, political science, or economics courses, to more systematic analysis of ideologies and the way they have actually been implemented throughout the world.

Psychological Blocks to Perceiving Bias

The psychological factors that lead student writers and readers into partisan or biased arguments are an essential aspect of critical thinking and argumentative

rhetoric that is inadequately emphasized in most conventional approaches to composition. (The growing body of recent scholarship applying the psychology of critical thinking "dispositions" and of cognitive and moral development to composition is useful theoretical and pedagogical background here; see my "Critical Thinking in College English Studies.") This unit—keyed, along with the following one, to Appendices Five through Seven—focuses on the most common psychological blocks to critical thinking that students should watch for in their sources for their term paper, as well as in themselves while reading and writing on these sources, and in their teachers in this and other courses. These blocks include culturally conditioned assumptions (which frequently emerge as hidden premises in arguments), closed-mindedness, prejudice and stereotyping; authoritarianism, absolutism, and the inability to recognize ambiguity, irony, and relativity of point of view; ethnocentrism and parochialism; rationalization, wishful thinking, and sentimentality. (Despite its brevity and simplicity, Ray Kytle's *Clear Thinking for Composition* is the most useful textbook I know on these blocks.)

The topic of prejudice provides a further occasion for consideration of opposing viewpoints on racial, sexual, and class bias. To avert a one-sided approach to these charged issues, it may be best to introduce them through psychological studies like Allport's *The Nature of Prejudice*, Rokeach's *The Open and Closed Mind*, or the developmental principles of Perry and Kohlberg and their feminist critique in Gilligan. In regard to subjectivity in political ideology in general, the beginning point here can be the hypothesis that many students have lived all their lives in a parochial circle of people who all have pretty much the same set of beliefs, so that they are inclined to accept a culturally conditioned consensus of values as objective, uncontested truth. (Most of the students at my school are middle-class whites, so middle-class ethnocentrism is the focus of study; this and other units of the course might need to be adjusted to differing pools of students.) Students need to become aware that what they or their sources of information assume to be self-evident truths are often—though not always—only the opinion or interpretation of the truth that is held by their particular social class, political ideology, religion, racial or ethnic group, gender, nationality and geographical location, historical period, occupation, age group, etc. Furthermore, we are all inclined to tailor our "objective" beliefs to the shape of our self-interest; consequently, in controversies where our interests are involved, we are susceptible to wishful thinking, rationalization, selective vision, and other logical fallacies. (A basic example of semantic cleans and dirties is that "biased" is a word that always applies only to arguments favoring the other side; we instinctively label arguments that confirm our own biases as "impartial," "well-balanced," "judiciously supported with solid research.")

Modes of Biased and Deceptive Rhetoric

While authorities used as sources, such as scholars, professional researchers or journalists, public officials, and business or labor executives can—or should—

be expected to have a more informed viewpoint than students on specialized subjects, students should be made aware that authorities are not immune from numerous causes of subjective bias. This unit, then, addresses modes of biased or self-interested arguments in sources, as well as of outright deception—another aspect of rhetoric inadequately addressed in many conventional composition and argumentation courses and textbooks that regard fallacious reasoning mainly in terms of impersonal, formal reasoning and unintentional fallacies. A more realistic approach to contemporary public discourse necessitates a systematic study of possible causes for bias (and the predictable rhetorical patterns they produce—see Appendix Seven) in conventional sources of information—including political partisanship, conflicts of interest, sponsored research and journalism, special pleading, and other forms of propaganda and pure lying that have come to be known as public doublespeak. The growing influence during the past twenty years of books and articles produced by scholars in research institutes like those in Appendix Three, whose sponsors—frequently foundations representing corporations or political lobbies with special interests in the subjects studied—calls for particular attention to the possible biases of such scholars.

Useful textbooks and teachers' guides for this unit include the works cited by Schrank, Harty, Lazere, Rank, Dieterich, and Lutz. The latter two were published by the NCTE Committee on Public Doublespeak, whose *Quarterly Review of Doublespeak* and annual Doublespeak and Orwell Awards are equally valuable classroom resources. These can be supplemented by comparative analysis of current issues of periodicals devoted to criticism of bias in media, such as *Extra!*, *Propaganda Review*, or *Lies of Our Times* on the left, versus *AIM Report*, *Repap Media Guide*, or *MediaWatch* on the right.

The next point to be made is that every ideology—political, religious, etc.—is predisposed toward its own distinct pattern of rhetoric that its conscious or unconscious partisans tend to follow on virtually any subject they are reading, writing, or speaking about. Critical readers need to learn to identify and understand the various ideologies apt to be found in current sources of information. Having done so, they can then to a large extent anticipate what underlying assumptions, lines of argument, rhetorical strategies, logical fallacies, and modes of semantic slanting to watch for in any partisan source. (See Appendices Five through Seven.)

This is not to say that partisan sources should be shunned. Indeed, a clear-cut, well-supported expression of a partisan position can be more valuable than a blandly non-partisan one. Nor does partisanship in a source necessarily go along with biased or deceptive reasoning. One must judge a partisan argument on the basis of how fully and fairly it represents the opposing position and demonstrates why its own is more reasonable. Some partisan authors or journals are highly admirable on this score (and students should be encouraged in their papers to cite such examples, not just fallacious or deceptive ones). Others, unfortunately, predictably repeat the same one-sided, doctrinaire line

year after year, whatever the subject, and they are to be read, if at all, with one's bias calculator close at hand.

Locating and Evaluating Partisan Sources

The foregoing discussion units culminate in an assignment, for the preliminary stages of the term paper, of an annotated bibliography and working outline, designed to locate and analyze articles and books with opposing partisan viewpoints on the chosen topic (Appendix One). These exercises can help prevent students from simply picking *American Spectator* or *In These Times*, a book published by Arlington House or Monthly Review Press, or a report from American Enterprise Institute or the Institute for Policy Studies off the library shelf to use as a source and quoting it as gospel, without a critical understanding of the sponsor's habitual viewpoint. Following this procedure enables students to replace categorical assertions in their papers with statements like these:

Barbara Ehrenreich, writing in *Democratic Left*, a journal of the Democratic Socialists of America, presents a socialist analysis of the effects of Reaganomics on the gap between the rich and poor in the United States.

Ed Rubenstein, in the conservative *National Review*, refutes statistics presented by leftists like Ehrenreich claiming that Reaganomic policies have widened the gap between the rich and poor.

Student writers can then go on to explain how the source's general ideological viewpoint applies to the particular issue in question, to analyze the rhetorical/semantic patterns accordingly, and to evaluate the source's arguments against opposing ones. In this way they can get beyond the parochial mentality of those who read and listen only to sources that confirm their preconceptions while deluding themselves that these sources impartially present a full range of information.

Lest this approach be misconstrued as an invitation to total relativity or scepticism, students are asked in the conclusion to their term papers not to make a final and absolute judgment on which side is right and wrong about the issue at hand, but to make a balanced summary of the strong and weak points made by each of the limited number of sources they have studied, and then to make—and support—their judgment about which sources have presented the best-reasoned case and the most thorough refutation of the other side's arguments. Grading for the paper and the course, then, becomes a matter of evaluating the quality of students' support for their judgments—regardless of what those judgments may be.

Conclusion

English faculties correctly resist attempts to make composition a "service course" providing only the technical skills needed for writing in other disci-

plines; however, composition can and should be a service course in the sense of fostering modes of critical thinking that are a prerequisite to studies in other disciplines—preeminently the social sciences—and to students' lifelong roles as citizens. To reiterate, this does not mean that composition should be turned into a social science. Nor does this conception of composition duplicate recent efforts to incorporate writing instruction within social science courses and other disciplines. Writing across the curriculum is a laudable enterprise, but it is not the same thing as what I am advancing, a program for studying political issues squarely within the discipline of English and through its distinctive humanistic concerns. By thus breaking through the arbitrary disciplinary constrictions that have diminished the scope of composition scholarship in recent decades, we can begin to restore the study of composition to its classical role as the center of education for citizenship.

Notes

1. I have developed this argument in "Literacy and Mass Media" and *American Media and Mass Culture*.
2. I have incorporated this approach in *Composition for Critical Thinking*, a monograph-length description of a model for a two-term freshman English course; the same pedagogical approach tacitly informs "Mass Culture, Political Consciousness, and English Studies" and its development in *American Media and Mass Culture*, explicitly in the introduction and readings on critical pedagogy in the concluding section, "Alternatives and Cultural Activism."
3. For analyses of implicit ideological viewpoints in comic books, see the two chapters from *How to Read Donald Duck*, by Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart, and "From Menace to Messiah: The History and Historicity of Superman," by Tom Andrae, reprinted in *American Media and Mass Culture*.

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Appendix One

Assignment for an Annotated Bibliography and Working Outline

Turn in ten bibliographical entries, on five leftist and five rightist sources, including at least one magazine article and one book or monograph report from the left-wing publishers and one article and book or report from the right-wing publishers in Appendices Three and Four. Annotate the sources according to the following guidelines, and develop them into a detailed working outline keyed to citations of these entries.

1. Identify author's political position, using clues from affiliation with a particular research institute, book publisher, journal of opinion, party, or organization, and—more importantly—from arguments s/he presents that exemplify the glossary terms and the particular patterns of political rhetoric in Appendices Six and Seven; give enough quotes (or high-lighted photocopies) to support your identification. In cases where the author is not arguing from an identifiable position but only reporting facts, indicate which position the reported facts support, and explain how. (Note: some newspapers, magazines, etc., have an identifiable political viewpoint in general, in their news and op-ed orientation, but also attempt to present other views at least some of the time; e.g., the *LA Times* is predominantly liberal, but often carries conservative op-ed columns, letters, etc. So you shouldn't assume that any article appearing in such a periodical will automatically have its predominant viewpoint; look for other identity clues.)
2. Apply to each source the "Semantic Calculator for Bias in Rhetoric" (Appendix Five), along with the more general principles of rhetorical analysis studied in this course.

Appendix Two (A)

Political Spectrum*
(Ca. 1985)

*This version reflected the world spectrum in the mid-1980s. Regular updatings are, of course, necessary, and recent upheavals in the Communist world in particular necessitate major revision on the extreme left.

The politics of Middle Eastern countries are too complex a mix of left-wing and right-wing forces to schematize here. For example, Iran under the Shah was a plutocratic dictatorship allied with the U.S.; under the Ayatollahs it is another variety of right-wing dictatorship, a theocratic one, but is allied with some Communist and left-wing Arab forces.

Appendix Two (B)

American Media and Commentators from Left to Right

<i>People's World</i>	<i>The Nation</i>	<i>Village Voice</i>	<i>NY Times</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>New American</i>
<i>The Guardian</i>	<i>In These Times</i>	<i>LA Times</i>	<i>Wash. Post</i>	<i>US News & World Report</i>	<i>Plain Truth</i>
	<i>Mother Jones</i>	<i>NY Review</i>	<i>Newsweek</i>	<i>Readers Digest</i>	<i>Wash. Times</i>
					(<i>Insight</i>)
	<i>The Progressive</i>	<i>Atlantic</i>	<i>New Republic</i>	<i>Wall St. Journal</i>	
	<i>Z Magazine</i>	<i>New Yorker</i>	<i>Harper's</i>	<i>Commentary</i>	
	<i>Tikkun</i>	PBS documentaries	<i>Reason</i>	<i>American Spectator</i>	
	Pacifica Radio	NPR	CBS news	Most newspapers, local TV & radio	
			NBC, ABC news	<i>National Review</i>	
				McLaughlin Group	
		60 Minutes			
		McNeil-Lehrer			
Alexander Cockburn	Gore Vidal	Michael Kinsley		George Will	Pat Buchanan
Edward Said	Barbara Ehrenreich	Anthony Lewis		Chas. Krauthammer	Phyllis Schlafly
Noam Chomsky	Jesse Jackson	Tom Wicker		William Safire	Pat Robertson
Edward Herman	Todd Gitlin	Richard Reeves		Evans & Novak	Paul Harvey
	Robert Scheer	Bill Moyers		Henry Kissinger	Jerry Falwell
	Betty Friedan	Gloria Steinem		Irving Kristol	
	Stanley Aronowitz	Seymour Hersh		Norman Podhoretz	
	Molly Ivins	David Halberstam		Midge Decter	
	Irwin Knoll	Woodward & Bernstein		Jean Kirkpatrick	
	James Weinstein	Ted Koppel		William Buckley	
	Ralph Nader	John K. Galbraith		Michael Novak	
	Victor Navasky			Milton Friedman	
	Roger Wilkins			Thomas Sowell	
	Cornel West				
			Murray Rothbard (libertarian)		
			Douglas Bandow (libertarian)		

Appendix Three

Political Orientations of Publishers & Foundations

Book Publishers

Liberal or Socialist

Pantheon
 Monthly Review Press
 South End Press
 Praeger
 Beacon Press
 Seabury/Continuum Books
 International Publishers
 Pathfinder Press
 Routledge
 Methuen
 Schocken
 Bergin & Garvey

Conservative or Libertarian

Arlington House
 Freedom House
 Brandon Books
 Reader's Digest Books
 Greenhill Publishers
 Laissez-Faire Books (Libertarian)
 Paragon House

Research Institutes and Foundations

Liberal or Socialist

Institute for Policy Studies

 Center for Responsive Law (Journal: *Public Citizen*)
 Public Interest Research Groups
 Common Cause (Journal: *Common Cause*)
 Brookings Institute
 Institute for Democratic Socialism (Journals: *Democratic Left*, *Socialist Forum*)
 Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions (Journal: *New Perspectives Quarterly*)

Conservative or Libertarian

American Enterprise Institute
 (Journal: *Public Opinion*—not *Public Opinion Quarterly*)
 Center for Strategic and International Studies
 Hoover Institution (Stanford)
 The Media Institute

 Hudson Institute
 Heritage Foundation (Journal: *Policy Review*)

 Olin Foundation
 Scaife Foundation
 Cato Foundation (Libertarian: *Cato Journal*)

Appendix Four

Current General Periodicals

This is a partial list intended to supplement, not replace, the more accessible, mass circulation newspapers and magazines, most of which have a center-conservative to center-liberal orientation.

<i>American Scholar</i>	Quarterly	Left-conservative
<i>American Spectator</i>	Monthly	Center-to-left conservative
<i>Atlantic Monthly</i>	Monthly	Center-liberal
<i>The Black Scholar</i>	Quarterly	Socialist
<i>Chronicles of Culture</i>	Monthly	Left-conservative
<i>Commentary</i>	Monthly	Center-conservative
<i>Commonweal</i>	Bi-weekly	Left-liberal Catholic
<i>Conservative Digest</i>	Monthly	Center-to-right conservative
<i>Dissent</i>	Bi-monthly	Socialist to Center-liberal
<i>Foreign Affairs</i>	Quarterly	Center-conservative to right-liberal
<i>The Guardian</i>	Weekly	Socialist
<i>Harper's</i>	Monthly	Center-liberal to left-conservative
<i>Human Events</i>	Weekly	Center-to-right conservative
<i>Insight (Washington Times)</i>	Weekly	Center-to-right conservative
<i>In These Times</i>	Weekly	Socialist
<i>Modern Age</i>	Quarterly	Center-conservative
<i>Mother Jones</i>	Monthly	Socialist to left-liberal
<i>Ms.</i>	Monthly	Center to left-liberal
<i>The Nation</i>	Weekly	Socialist to left-liberal
<i>National Review</i>	Bi-weekly	Center-conservative
<i>New American</i>	Bi-weekly	Right-conservative (formerly <i>American Opinion</i>)
<i>New Guard</i>	Quarterly	Center-conservative
<i>New Politics</i>	Quarterly	Socialist
<i>New Republic</i>	Weekly	Right-liberal to left-conservative
<i>New York Review of Books</i>	Bi-weekly	Center-liberal
<i>New York Sunday Times</i>	Weekly	Center-liberal to left-conservative
<i>New Yorker</i>	Weekly	Left-to-center-liberal
<i>People's World</i>	Daily	Community Party USA
<i>Progressive</i>	Monthly	Socialist to left-liberal
<i>Public Interest</i>	Quarterly	Left-to-center-conservative
<i>Public Opinion</i>	Monthly	Center-conservative
<i>Reason</i>	Monthly	Conservative libertarian
<i>Rolling Stone</i>	Bi-weekly	Center-liberal
<i>Social Policy</i>	Bi-monthly	Left-liberal

<i>Socialist Review</i>	Quarterly	Socialist
<i>Tikkun</i>	Bi-monthly	Left-liberal
<i>Utne Reader</i>	Bi-Monthly	Digest of liberal journals
<i>Village Voice</i>	Weekly	Left-liberal
<i>Washington Monthly</i>	Monthly	Center-liberal to left-conservative)
<i>World Press Review</i>	Monthly	Digest of diverse foreign viewpoints
<i>Z Magazine</i>	Monthly	Socialist

Appendix Five

A Semantic Calculator for Bias in Rhetoric*

1. What is the author's vantagepoint, in terms of social class, wealth, occupation, ethnic group, political ideology, educational level, age, gender, etc.? Is that vantagepoint apt to color her/his attitudes on the issue under discussion? Does she/he have anything personally to gain from the position she/he is arguing for, any conflicts of interest or other reasons for special pleading?
2. What organized financial, political, ethnic, or other interests are backing the advocated position? Who stands to profit financially, politically, or otherwise from it?
3. Once you have determined the author's vantagepoint and/or the special interests being favored, look for signs of ethnocentrism, rationalization or wishful thinking, sentimentality, and other blocks to clear thinking, as well as the rhetorical fallacies of onesidedness, selective vision, or a double standard.
4. Look for the following semantic patterns reflecting the biases in No. 3:
 - a. Playing up: (1) arguments favorable to his/her side,
(2) arguments unfavorable to the other side.
 - b. Playing down (or suppressing altogether):
(1) arguments unfavorable to her/his side,
(2) arguments favorable to the other side.
 - c. Applying "clean" words (ones with positive connotations) to her/his side.
Applying "dirty" words (ones with negative connotations) to the other.
 - d. Assuming that the representatives of his/her side are trustworthy, truthful, and have no selfish motives, while assuming the opposite of the other side.

5. If you don't find strong signs of the above biases, that's a pretty good indication that the argument is a credible one.
6. If there *is* a large amount of one-sided rhetoric and semantic bias, that's a pretty good sign that the writer is not a very credible source. However, finding signs of the above biases does not in itself prove that the writer's arguments are fallacious. Don't fall into the *ad hominem* ("to the man") fallacy—evading the issue by attacking the character of the writer or speaker without refuting the substance of the argument itself. What the writer says may or may not be factual, regardless of the semantic biases. The point is not to let yourself be swayed by words alone, especially when you are inclined to wishful thinking on one side of the subject yourself. When you find these biases in other writers, *or in yourself*, that is a sign that you need to be extra careful to check the facts out with a variety of other sources and to find out what the arguments are on the other side of the issue.

*This guide derives from Hugh Rank's "Intensify-Downplay" schema, various forms of which appear in Rank (*Persuasion, Pitch*) and in Dieterich.

Appendix Six

A Glossary of Political Terms and Positions

Left wing and right wing (also see Appendix Two):

"The left wing" (adjective: "left-wing" or "leftist") is a broad term that includes a diversity of parties and ideologies (which often disagree among themselves but usually agree in their opposition to the right wing) including liberals, nearest the center of the spectrum, and—progressively toward the left—socialists and communists (the latter two are also sometimes called "radical").

"The right wing" (adjective: "right-wing" or "rightist") is a broad term that includes a diversity of parties and ideologies (which often disagree among themselves but usually agree in their opposition to the left wing) including libertarians, nearest the center of the spectrum, and—progressively toward the right—conservatives, ultra-conservatives, plutocrats, and fascists.

Leftists tend to support:

The poor and working class
Labor, consumers, environmental and
other controls over business

Rightists tend to support:

Middle and upper class
Business, management, unregulated
enterprise

Equality (economic, racial, sexual)	Inequality (economic, racial, sexual)
Civil and personal liberties	Economic liberty; controls on personal liberties (e.g., sexual conduct, abortion, obscenity, drugs)
Cooperation	Competition
Internationalism	Nationalism (primary loyalty to one's own country)
Pacifism (exception: Communists)	Strong military and willingness to go to war
Questioning of authority—skepticism (exception: Communism is authoritarian)	Acceptance of authority, especially in military, police, and strong “law and order” policies
Government spending for public services like education, welfare, health care, unemployment insurance	Government spending for military, subsidies to business as incentive for profit and growth
Progressive taxes, i.e. greatest burden on wealthy individuals and corporations	Low taxes for wealthy individuals and corporations as incentive for investment (“supply-side economics” or “trickle-down theory”)
Religious pluralism, skepticism, or atheism	Religious orthodoxy

Capitalism:

An economic system based on private investment for profit. Jobs and public services are provided, and public needs met, to the extent that investment in them will predictably result in a return of capital outlay. In its principles capitalism does not provide any restrictions on extremes of wealth and poverty or of social power, but its advocates (especially pure, libertarian capitalists) believe that the workings of a free market economy, unrestricted by government controls or regulation, will minimize social inequity.

Capitalism is not a political system; in principle, a capitalist economy can operate under either a democratic government or a dictatorship, as in plutocracy or fascism—see Appendix Two (A).

Socialism:

An economic system based on public investment to meet public needs, provide full employment, and reduce socioeconomic inequality. In various models of socialism, investment and industrial management are controlled either by the federal government, local governments, workers' and consumers' cooperatives, a variety of community groups, etc.

Socialism is not a political system; in principle, a socialist economy can operate under either a democratic government or a dictatorship, as in Communism—see Appendix 2 (A).

Communism:

With lower-case “c”: Marx’s ideal of the ultimate, future form of pure democratic socialism, with virtually no need for centralized government.

With upper-case “C” as in present-day Communist Parties: A socialist economy under undemocratic government. Historically, Communists have manipulated appeals to left-wing values like socioeconomic equality and worldwide cooperation in order to impose police-state dictatorship and military aggression.

Plutocracy:

Rule by the rich. A capitalist economy under undemocratic government.

Fascism:

A combination of capitalist and socialist economies under an undemocratic government. Historically, fascists have manipulated appeals to conservative values like patriotism, religion, competitiveness, anti-communism, respect for authority and law and order, traditional morality and the family, in order to impose police-state dictatorship.

Fascism typically is aggressively militaristic and imperialistic, and promotes racial hatred based on theories of white (or “Pure Aryan”) supremacy and religious persecution of non-Christians. It glorifies strong authority figures with absolute power.

Conservatives, Liberals, and Socialists in America:

In the American context, conservatives are pro-capitalist. They believe the interests of business also serve the interests of labor, consumers, the environment, and the public in general—“What’s good for General Motors is good for America.” They believe that abuses by businesses can and should be best policed or regulated by business itself, and when conservatives control government, they usually appoint businesspeople to cabinet positions and regulatory agencies without perceiving any conflict of interest therein.

American liberals believe that the interests of business are frequently contrary to those of labor, consumers, the environment, and the public in general. So although they basically support capitalism, liberals think business abuses need to be policed by government regulatory agencies that are free from conflicts of interest, and that wealth should be limited.

American socialists, or radicals, believe even more strongly than liberals that the interests of business are contrary to the public interest; they believe

that capitalism is basically an irrational and corrupt system where wealthy business interests inevitably gain control over government, foreign and military policy, the media, education, etc., and use the power of employment to keep the workforce and electorate under their control. They think liberal government reforms and attempts to regulate business are usually thwarted by the power of business lobbies, and that even sincere liberal reformers in government offices usually come from and represent the ethnocentric viewpoint of the upper classes. The socialist solution is to socialize at least the biggest national and international corporations, as well as the defense industry, and operate them on a nonprofit basis, and to place much higher taxes on the rich, so as to reduce the power of wealthy corporations and individuals.

Appendix Seven

Predictable Patterns of Political Rhetoric

Leftists will play up:

Conservative ethnocentrism, wishful thinking, and sentimentality rationalizing the selfish interests of the middle and upper class and America abroad

Right-wing bias in media and education

Conservative rationalization of right-wing extremism and foreign dictatorships allied with US (e.g., El Salvador, South Vietnam); rightists' use of "Communism" as scapegoat for rebellion against right-wing extremism

US military strengths, selfish interests of the military and defense industry; right-wing scare tactics about the Russians or other adversaries being ahead

Rip-offs of taxpayers' money by the rich; luxury and waste in private industry and the military

Rightists will play up:

Leftist "negative thinking," "sour grapes," anti-Americanism, and sentimentalizing of the lower classes and Third World rebellion

Left-wing bias in media and education

Leftist rationalization of Communist dictatorships or guerillas (e.g., Nicaragua, North Vietnam) and wishful thinking in leftists' denial of Communist influence in anti-American rebellions

Russians' or other adversaries' military strengths; manipulation of leftist "doves" by Communists et al.; left-wing scare tactics about nuclear war

Rip-offs of taxpayers' money by the poor; luxury and waste by government bureaucrats; selfish interests and inefficiency of labor, teachers, students, etc.