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To: "Dr. Baruch Fischhoff - Chair, National Academy Committee on Improving Intelligence" <baruch@cmu.edu>, "Dr. Richard Atkinson - Chair - NRC/DBASSE" <rcatkinson@ucsd.edu>
From: Lloyd Etheredge <lloyd.etheredge@policyscience.net>

Subject: 173. DNI Databases and Two Theories of Truth: The Correctness/Analytic Theory v. the Unconcealment/ Enlightenment Theory. Implications for National Intelligence?

Dear Dr. Fischhoff and Colleagues:

Two Theories of Truth in Philosophy: Implications for the DNI and National Intelligence?

There are two theories of truth, the correctness/analytic theory and the unconcealment/enlightenment theory, discussed in Western philosophy. The first - easier - theory is embodied in the advanced study of statistics (as currently known, or as reinvented) and the formidable combination of "everything included" meg-databases and maximum application of analytic methods.

Unconcealment theory/methods are under-developed and not yet embodied in graduate degrees. They are, in some respects, a leading edge and they may be the kind of processes that Robert McNamara came to honor toward the end of a lifetime of applying maximum rational analysis to questions of national strategy and security. (McNamara also pioneered the development of large, N-variable databases for the Vietnam War.) As you may recall, McNamara - in The Fog of War and cautioning against a war in Iraq (but with a sensibility that could not be rationally persuasive to Vice President Cheney or most members of Congress) quoted Auden: "We shall not cease from exploration/And the end of all our exploring/Will be to arrive where we started/And know the place for the first time." There are formal and more expert explorations in philosophy (e.g., Heidegger's "What is Called Thinking?") but here are three examples of what I think Auden, and perhaps McNamara (re national intelligence), had in mind:

Three Examples of Unconcealment/Enlightenment Theory

- 1.) A simple example is the process of writing a substantial paper, the process of moving from the first notes and early drafts, through cycles of revision to a final, polished draft in which everything is said clearly and all of the pieces come together. The writer knows that a draft is still a rough draft by physical sensations, an almost physical pain, and the sensations of discomfort, or awkwardness, etc. are activators of new and clearer language, etc. What the author is trying to say and what the paper is trying to say, "unconceals" itself.

- 2.) A second example is the movie Groundhog Day. By the end of the journey the leading character, a weatherman, is still as capable of analytic science and still living in the same (often repeated) objective reality. However, something is shifted and - in the slightly elusive [i.e., to analytic reasoning] language of unconcealment/enlightenment theorists: "Everything is different and nothing has changed." . . . And his life in the world around him works better. Robert Thurman (Columbia), a leading specialist in Buddhism, was an adviser to the film, and it accurately portrays the phenomena being modeled by Buddhists when they discuss the slow accumulation of *karma* and a path to enlightenment across endless cycles of death and rebirth. <1>

- 3.) A third example - the touchstone in the Western philosophical tradition - is Plato's allegory of the cave in Book VII of The Republic. How far would the prisoners get if they also were equipped with computer terminals, analytic software, and had Ph. D.'s in statistics?

Domains of Relevance and Value

The analytic/correctness theory of truth surely works well for many challenges in the physical sciences. And, for example, standard - known - analysis methods will work well if you are trying to track the flow of money from abroad into specific accounts, then to users and their networks of credit card uses, and then adding their telephone and computer records and networks of telephone and email contacts, and physical proximity/travel, and the credit card purchases (etc.) in the second-step contact net, etc. And you can make probability assessments of which links and pathways might be most useful

for the computer software programs to be pursuing, in the background, as they work 24x7 with huge databases re terrorism suspects. These are the kinds of analysis systems that, I assume, the National Academy of Sciences will be auditing.

Yet there is another theory of productive thinking, beyond Dr. Petraeus's upgrade from 90 to 500 categories of information collected in Afghanistan, i.e., even if N-Var=500 truths are pursued by maximum application of linear regression models. And this is a state-of-the-art challenge that I hope your Report can articulate, even if (as at the end of Groundhog Day) the phenomenon (sometimes called "post linguistic." although "non-linguistic" may be the more accurate term) appears to be elusive to describe linguistically. It is an achievement of intelligence/truth that could shift world politics to a more productive plane albeit (as Plato would predict) perhaps slowly.

Lloyd Etheredge

<1> These processes are worth understanding and modeling, as there may be formal methods that (i.e., possibly discovered with assistance from analytic methods of inquiry) can be distilled and that go faster. [There is a longer discussion, with professional references, toward the end of my "Wisdom and Public Policy" chapter in Sternberg & Jordan's Handbook of Wisdom volume (2005) from Cambridge UP].

These issues also are involved in the recommendations for recapitalization and leading-edge neuroscience ["Neuropsychology and Rapid Learning about Social Problems" (January 2010), at II. A. archived on

[1. www.policyscience.net](http://www.policyscience.net).]Hierarchical psychodramas, via the imagination & visual cortex, appear to be involved in the phenomena that Plato is discussing.

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