From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 27, 2017 at 1:34:33 PM

https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?

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Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

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Date: September 27, 2017 at 1:53:44 PM

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Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 27, 2017 at 2:44:41 PM

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Is it thinking that rigorous, methodical study is for students in schools, not for competent, independent adults? Or just having negative associations with serious thinking or organized studying, due to school?

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To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 27, 2017 at 2:57:26 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:44 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

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learning 5 things halfway is less productive than learning one fully. (fully to current, achievable standards of knowledge, not to the standard of omniscience)

people's lack of persistence with topics is one reason they get stuck. though i think it has underlying causes such as avoiding "hard" things and so people just go around doing the parts of learning activities which feel easy and then moving on.

another issue is people want to pretend to be super-rational self-motivated interest-followers. but they have flawed interests they don't know how to control, and flawed motivations they don't know how to control. in that context, don't just give up and wait for rapid, effective learning to be easy and appealing – that will never happen by itself.

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Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 27, 2017 at 3:59:14 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:57 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

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Date: September 27, 2017 at 4:41:14 PM

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Bcc: curi@curi.us
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Usually I just write my answers and then everyone nods along and doesn't learn it and couldn't do it themselves. And people are OK with that instead of actually learning. And that's fucked up.

People also hate leading/educational questions and avoid them. So they just don't learn.

i don't know what to do about this. people need to think things through on their own, and take initiative in their learning. which they don't. or else they need to let someone superior guide them (since they are incompetent to guide their own learning), which they also don't – and say how rational they are not to defer to authority!

and then they say they are trying to learn without feeling bad, cuz TCS or something, but they don't know how so they just go through their life without learning and feel bad anyway. so that's stupid.

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>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
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>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/101557110406
>>>>>>> 69904/?
>>>>>>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A
>>>>>>> %22R%22%7D
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>>>>>>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM
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>>>>>>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in
>>>>>>>> the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the
>>>>>>>> type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone
>>>>>>>> than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking

and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

"Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of

explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism). And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

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Ray Scott Percival:

I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on. The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect. I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains. I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others. Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

How much do you think this followup comment lies? Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.

I think *close reading* is a really important skill which people don't work on enough – and usually haphazardly. I don't think people will get very far with learning if they don't try to methodically build up some skills. Being able to read passages and understand individual sentences is a skill people should get good at prior to thinking they understand a bunch of whole books they read. Before you can read a book *and understand it*, you need to be able to read a sentence *and understand it*.

Why don't people do this?

Is it ignorance of the option to try to do precise readings and post about them and get feedback? Unwillingness to ask me for help in a persistent thread over time?

Is it lack of humility? Thinking they already understand long texts like BoI, let alone individual passages in it, let alone basically all the sentences?

Is it thinking they'll fail at reading the passages above well (knowing something about their own inability), and not wanting to face that failure?

Is it being busy and not considering it a priority to make some serious effort at being able to understand written passages? They don't see the point? If someone wants to close read a non-philosophical passage and try to discuss the social lies and other features of it, that'd work too. But I think the passages above are particularly good samples to use.

Is it thinking that rigorous, methodical study is for students in schools, not for competent, independent adults? Or just having negative associations with serious thinking or organized studying, due to school?

learning 5 things halfway is less productive than learning one fully. (fully to current, achievable standards of knowledge, not to the standard of omniscience)

people's lack of persistence with topics is one reason they get stuck. though i think it has underlying causes such as avoiding "hard" things and so people just go around doing the parts of learning activities which feel easy and then moving on.

another issue is people want to pretend to be super-rational self-motivated interest-followers. but they have flawed interests they don't know how to control, and flawed motivations they don't know how to control. in that context, don't just give up and wait for rapid, effective learning to be easy and appealing – that will never happen by itself.

Broadly everyone wants to argue at first and super overestimates how much they know and how smart/wise/etc they are. And they lose every single argument with me. But they never learn the lesson that they should actually start studying and take on more of a student role, and this is complicated by various flaws with the student role (and with commitments and with the various methods people use to get themselves to do things) being emphasized at FI. RIP. idk what to do with this.

> Peikoff gave private courses (stuff like his grammar course wasn't at university, it was just for like interested Objectivist members of the public). He had *students* who *tried to learn from him* over a period of time. They did things like take notes and do grammar homework.
>
> They did this because of Peikoff's prestige and authority.
>
> People don't treat me the same way. They think prestige and authority are bad motivations. But they haven't replaced those motivations with any better ones, and they still use those motivations in other parts of their life.
>
> This is a reason people get so stuck for years.
>
> So for example when I've suggested people write shorter posts with simpler structures requiring less punctuation ... I get ignored. People won't do my suggestions. But nor will they come up with better ideas or discuss why they don't want to do my suggestions. They just refuse to try to learn, in basic ways, for years at a time, without being willing to discuss why.
>
> The task at the start of this thread – and actually pursuing it at length to some kind of completion – is exactly the kind of thing no one else has been willing to do, which is why no one makes a ton of progress.

> Usually I just write my answers and then everyone nods along and doesn't learn it and couldn't do it themselves. And people are OK with that instead of actually learning. And that's fucked up.
>
> People also hate leading/educational questions and avoid them. So they just don't learn.
>
> i don't know what to do about this. people need to think things through on their own, and take initiative in their learning. which they don't. or else they need to let someone superior guide them (since they are incompetent to guide their own learning), which they also don't – and say how rational they are not to defer to authority!
>
> and then they say they are trying to learn without feeling bad, cuz TCS or something, but they don't know how so they just go through their life without learning and feel bad anyway. so that's stupid.

it's hard cuz if i write non-interactive stuff then people read passively and think they understand and agree (or, worse, misunderstand, disagree, and leave without discussion).

but ppl aren't really willing to interact much.

i don't know how to teach ppl to read or write without interaction. they need to try to actually read things, and get their interpretations questioned/criticized, and try to get it right in detail instead of just approximating the overall gist. and they need to write simple things (and get criticism and keep working at it until they can actually address questions/criticism about what they're saying) and build up ... but they refuse to.

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 27, 2017 at 8:12:45 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

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>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?

I don't know what you had in mind by lies, but I had criticisms, so I figured I'd start there.

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Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
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> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

I would guess that the way Lulie means her statement is wrong.

Explanations have some kind of audience in mind (though the audience in mind can be very general, like "lay people who understand X language."

If people in your audience have ideas which are hostile to your point or content, it can be very difficult to explain stuff in a way that isn't off-putting to those people.

It is not impossible to explain your point in a non-offputting way, but it can be hard to

figure out how to do so.

People often stop trying to explain the point that their audience dislikes. Instead, for the sake of not angering their audience, they explain a milder version. So they actually change the substance.

I would bet that when Lulie figures out a way of explaining stuff that's not off-putting, she's actually changing the substance some. I do not claim this because I think Lulie is particularly bad or dishonest, but because that is a very common way of trying to solve the problem of people getting mad at your ideas. There is enormous cultural pressure to not offend people, and unless you're fully immersed in a culture that rejects that approach, it's very easy to fall into soft-selling behavior and not even realize when you're doing it.

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

Many people *do* dislike criticism. To deny this is to deny facts. (Though Lulie is throwing me off a bit with "fundamentally." I don't know what she means there exactly. Does she mean its not a part of human nature to think criticism is an attack? If so, fair enough. But in our culture, basically, the overwhelming attitude towards criticism is negative. And non-Western cultures are worse.)

People see criticism as an attack, as negative, as bad.

Merriam-Webster's (note the examples as well!)

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/criticism

> Definition of criticism
>
> 1a :the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
> • seeking encouragement rather than criticism
>
> b :a critical observation or remark
> • an unfair criticism

Also note the term "constructive criticism." Some synonyms for constructive: "useful, helpful, productive, positive, encouraging." So people think that you need to *specify* when you're talking about the useful, helpful, productive kind of criticism. I think that shows what people think about criticism in general pretty clearly...

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad;

Being bad/immoral is a valid criticism of some stuff. But Lulie says "it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism."

> | | having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.

If this is what people disliked, they'd seek out criticism instead of getting angry at it.

BTW you often don't even need to *say* the criticism you have of their life for people to get angry — you can just *act* like it's true and that's enough:

From _The Fountainhead_:

> Keating had come here prepared to exercise caution and tact to the limit of his ability; he had achieved a purpose he had not expected to achieve; he knew he should take no chances, say nothing else and leave. But something inexplicable, beyond all practical considerations, was pushing him on. He said unheedingly:
> "Can't you be human for once in your life?"
> "What?"
> "Human! Simple. Natural."
> "But I am."
> "Can't you ever relax?"
> Roark smiled, because he was sitting on the window sill, leaning sloppily against the wall, his long legs hanging loosely, the cigarette held without pressure between limp fingers.
> "That's not what I mean!" said Keating. "Why can't you go out for a drink with me?"
> "What for?"
> "Do you always have to have a purpose? Do you always have to be so damn serious? Can't you ever do things without reason, just like everybody else? You're so serious, so old. Everything's important with you, everything's great, significant in some way, every minute, even when you keep still. Can't you ever be comfortable—and unimportant?"
> "No."
> "Don't you get tired of the heroic?"
> "What's heroic about me?"
> "Nothing. Everything. I don't know. It's not what you do. It's what you make people feel around you."
> "What?"
> "The un-normal. The strain. When I'm with you—it's always like a choice. Between you—and the rest of the world. I don't want that kind of a choice. I don't want to be an outsider. I want to belong. There's so much in the world that's simple and pleasant. It's not all fighting and renunciation. It is—with you."

> "What have I ever renounced?"
>
> "Oh, you'll never renounce anything! You'd walk over corpses for what you want. But it's what you've renounced by never wanting it."
>
> "That's because you can't want both."
>
> "Both what?"
>
> "Look, Peter. I've never told you any of those things about me. What makes you see them? I've never asked you to make a choice between me and anything else. What makes you feel that there is a choice involved? What makes you uncomfortable when you feel that—since you're so sure I'm wrong?"

Roark's whole approach to life is an implied criticism of Keating's approach. Roark doesn't even actually say anything directly criticizing Keating. Roark's *example* is enough to make Keating mad.

Furthermore, lots of what people do is say their problems are inevitable and not under their control. They don't want criticism; they want their excuses validated.

From _Life at the Bottom_ by Dalrymple:

> Other locutions plainly serve an exculpatory function and represent a denial of agency and therefore of personal responsibility. The murderer claims the knife went in or the gun went off. The man who attacks his sexual consort claims that he 'went into one' or 'lost it', as if he were the victim of a kind of epilepsy of which it is the doctor's duty to cure him. Until the cure, of course, he can continue to abuse his consort – for such abuse has certain advantages for him – safe in the knowledge that he, not his consort, is its true victim.
>
> I have come to see the uncovering of this dishonesty and self-deception as an essential part of my work. When a man tells me, in explanation of his anti-social behaviour, that he is easily led, I ask him whether he was ever easily led to study mathematics or the subjunctives of French verbs. Invariably the man begins to laugh: the absurdity of what he has said is immediately apparent to him. Indeed, he will acknowledge that he knew how absurd it was all along, but that certain advantages, both psychological and social, accrued by keeping up the pretence.
>
> The idea that one is not an agent but the helpless victim of circumstances, or of large occult sociological or economic forces, does not come naturally, as an inevitable concomitant of experience. On the contrary, only in extreme circumstances is helplessness directly experienced in the way the blueness of the sky is experienced. Agency, by contrast, is the common experience of us all. We know our will's free, and there's an end on't.

More from Dalrymple:

> Another burglar demanded to know from me why he repeatedly broke into houses and

> stole VCRs. He asked the question aggressively, as if 'the system' had "so far let him down in not supplying him with the answer; as if it were my duty as a doctor to provide him with the buried psychological secret that, once revealed, would in and of itself lead him unfailingly on the path of virtue. Until then he would continue to break into houses and steal VCRs (when at liberty to do so), and the blame would be mine.
> When I refused to examine his past, he exclaimed, 'But something must make me do it!'
> 'How about greed, laziness, and a thirst for excitement?' I suggested.
> 'What about my childhood?' he asked.
> 'Nothing to do with it,' I replied firmly.
> He looked at me as if I had assaulted him."

"as if I had assaulted him." That's a dislike of criticism right there!

Back to Lulie:

> > > It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

BTW Elliot provides lots of great examples of how he approaches discussions. Where are Lulie's?

> > > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

I think Paths Forward is basically about criticizing the whole approach of authoritarian gatekeepers. And that is the dominant model right now.

> > > Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

Academia is evil and destructive, not merely flawed.

> > > But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

This is true (I think). It's still very hard, but it has gotten easier.

> > > You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

Not sure what she has in mind here.

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".
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> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

If there's strong clash in core premises of your tradition and another tradition, that would be a reason not to be interested in making stuff appealing to people in that tradition.

That doesn't mean you can't try arguing with and persuading people from that tradition. But you're going to be focused on arguing the things that people call "first principles" instead of trying appeal to them given their current ideas.

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

I don't think many people are getting very interested in a meaningful, serious way. If I'm wrong, where are they? Tell Elliot!

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

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Ray Scott Percival:

> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on. The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect. I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite

> extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw!

Fighting metaphor. I thought we were talking about argument and persuasion?

> It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂

It sounds kinda like he thinks he was winning arguments when (I'd guess) he was leaving people confused with jargon.

If he had great, memorable details of how he refuted their arguments, he'd presumably share those instead of fighting metaphors.

> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains. I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

Mentions Tipler in this context, but not DD?

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA.

More fighting metaphors. He likes the self-image of a brave, courageous intellectual. If he his one, why doesn't he come here??

> The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

FB is a safe space.

> How much do you think this followup comment lies?

Some. I almost certainly missed tons of stuff.

> Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

I dunno. I'm bad at judging that.

> If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.

Okay well I hope that's enough to get started.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 27, 2017 at 9:13:56 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 5:12 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view? Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

What is LT more optimistic about?

How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is? How did LT compare these amounts?

There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

I find it strange that you included 3 long book quotes and wrote a lot, but skipped any attempt to analyze the first 3 paragraphs. What do you think they're about? Why were they written, what's the point?

Then after figuring out what they say, you could consider if what they're saying is true or not. (And for false things, did the author have some way to know it's false?) This helps find lies.

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

> I would guess that the way Lulie means her statement is wrong.

After I read this, I expected some things to follow it:

- What way you thought LT meant the statement
- At least one other interpretation
- An explanation of how you judged the interpretations
- Then, a criticism of the interpretation you accepted

> Explanations have some kind of audience in mind (though the audience in mind can be very general, like "lay people who understand X language."
>
> If people in your audience have ideas which are hostile to your point or content, it can be very difficult to explain stuff in a way that isn't off-putting to those people.
>
> It is not impossible to explain your point in a non-offputting way, but it can be hard to figure out how to do so.

LT said "there's always a way" and you say "It is not impossible" (not impossible = possible), so you agree with her?

> People often stop trying to explain the point that their audience dislikes. Instead, for the sake of not angering their audience, they explain a milder version. So they actually change the substance.

> I would bet that when Lulie figures out a way of explaining stuff that's not off-putting, she's actually changing the substance some. I do not claim this because I think Lulie is particularly bad or dishonest, but because that is a very common way of trying to solve the problem of people getting mad at your ideas. There is enormous cultural pressure to not offend people, and unless you're fully immersed in a culture that rejects that approach, it's very easy to fall into soft-selling behavior and not even realize when you're doing it.

You're trying to have a philosophy discussion-debate like you usually do, rather than try to understand/analyze the text in detail.

> > > it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

> Many people *do* dislike criticism.

Here you're replying to what you think LT was saying, rather than trying to state what she was saying and analyze it.

If you were in close reading mode, I think you would have said something about the "not ... dislike" phrasing and tried to translate it to a clear statement.

> To deny this is to deny facts. (Though Lulie is throwing me off a bit with "fundamentally." I don't know what she means there exactly. Does she mean its not a part of human nature to think criticism is an attack? If so, fair enough. But in our culture, basically, the overwhelming attitude towards criticism is negative. And non-Western cultures are worse.)

Do you think LT thought through using the word "fundamentally"?

> People see criticism as an attack, as negative, as bad.

> Merriam-Webster's (note the examples as well!)

> https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/criticism

> > Definition of criticism
> >
> > 1a :the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
> >   • seeking encouragement rather than criticism

> b :a critical observation or remark
> > • an unfair criticism

> Also note the term "constructive criticism." Some synonyms for constructive: "useful, helpful, productive, positive, encouraging." So people think that you need to *specify* when you're talking about the useful, helpful, productive kind of criticism. I think that shows what people think about criticism in general pretty clearly...

> > > (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad;

> Being bad/immoral is a valid criticism of some stuff. But Lulie says "it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism."

So do you understand what LT's point is supposed to be?

> > > having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.

> If this is what people disliked, they'd seek out criticism instead of getting angry at it.

You're skipping steps. You haven't discussed which criticisms destabilize/overwhelm, which don't, why, how people could seek out the desired criticisms, etc. Nor have you discussed what LT is saying. Your reply begins by first having in your head an interpretation of what LT said, then directly replying to that without sharing it with us readers.

> Back to Lulie:

> > > It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> BTW Elliot provides lots of great examples of how he approaches discussions. Where are Lulie's?

That's a fair question. Why do you think LT is saying things are possible without offering some real-world examples? Do you think she knows of examples, or she's just speaking theoretically, or what?

> > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

> I think Paths Forward is basically about criticizing the whole approach of authoritarian gatekeepers. And that is the dominant model right now.

Why do you think LT wrote the material in this paragraph? From your reply (and several previous ones) it's unclear to me that you understand what LT's trying to communicate.

> > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

> I don't think many people are getting very interested in a meaningful, serious way. If I'm wrong, where are they? Tell Elliot!

Why is LT claiming they are getting interested? Why did she write that? Does she believes it's true? Why, from her perspective, might she consider it true or false? What sort of thought process might she be using to reach her answer?

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

> Ray Scott Percival:

> > I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on. The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect. I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😄
> > When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw!

> Fighting metaphor. I thought we were talking about argument and persuasion?

Yeah that stood out to me too. But slow down and try going through these sentences one by one. What's the first sentence about, and once you write down what it's saying, can you see anything wrong with it?

> It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂

It sounds kinda like he thinks he was winning arguments when (I'd guess) he was leaving people confused with jargon.

If he had great, memorable details of how he refuted their arguments, he'd presumably share those instead of fighting metaphors.

Yes, I think his presentation of events is dishonest.

Did the other people agree that he punched them in the jaw and easily won the debate? If not, what did he do to adjudicate the disagreement? What thought processes and attempts to learn about his debates actually took place, and how do those differ from the story he's presenting?

> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains. I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

Mentions Tipler in this context, but not DD?

FYI he knows who DD is.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA.

More fighting metaphors. He likes the self-image of a brave, courageous intellectual. If he his one, why doesn't he come here??

Do you think he's *lying* about being a brave, courageous intellectual?

> > The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.
>
> FB is a safe space.

What do you think his conception of a "safe space" is?

What do you think his analysis, if any, of the CR FB group's safe space status is?

> How much do you think this followup comment lies?
>
> Some. I almost certainly missed tons of stuff.
>
> > Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?
>
> I dunno. I'm bad at judging that.

You didn't comment sentence by sentence. Try that!

> > If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.
>
> Okay well I hope that's enough to get started.

Sure. As a first step, I think you should focus more on stating what you think each sentence is saying.

You may want to do the just first few paragraphs and then get feedback before doing more.

From: 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 28, 2017 at 2:16:45 AM

On 27 Sep 2017, at 18:53, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>
>>
>> Danny Frederick:
>>
>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>>
>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>>>
>>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment,

> the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
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> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

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Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

The first half of the sentence and the second half of the sentence contradict one another. This is a polite way of saying she thinks the post is crap.

> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

The material she's replying to isn't a formal argument. It doesn't have premises.

This sentence is an endorsement of social networking and politicking disguised as part of an argument.

> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

This sentence is a brag about having lots of interests.

> > Why would social networking and politicking be special?

This would be more honest if she just wrote "I don't think social networking and politicking is special."

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,

This could be a sentence in its own right with a little rephrasing.

But it would be an unclear sentence.

Who is assuming that critical discussion is incompatible with social stuff? Is it the author of the quote? Are the people discussed in the quote making that assumption?

She's trying to answer arguments nobody made to look clever, and to denigrate people who disagree with her.

> but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

This is unclear. Lulie's trying to look clever without actually explaining stuff.

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

The laws of physics don't forbid people from disliking criticism. At present, getting many people to like criticism requires knowledge that doesn't exist. So this assertion is misleading.

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.

These are excuses for people avoiding criticism. Treating them as legitimate reasons to avoid criticism is bad.

There are situations where a person won't like criticism. A person doesn't like feeling bad. Some criticism undermines that person's current standards. He doesn't want to give up those standards and so he feels bad if he gets that criticism. This is a problem with critical discussion that needs to be solved. Denying its existence is a bad idea.

Also, Lulie knows that there are people with such ideas. She knows about anti-rational memes since she has read BoI. People who hold anti-rational memes often feel bad about criticism. So this sentence is a lie.

> It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

The laws of physics allow critical discussions that don't hurt people if the participants

have the right knowledge. But that is not the current situation.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

This sentence is about looking clever and denigrating disagreement. No attempt to refute the idea.

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Note that this appeal to the social status of Percival follows a denial that such appeals are necessary.

The sentence insinuates that Percival has an argument against the need to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. But Lulie doesn't give the argument or refer to any place where we could find it. Lulie's trying to get away with denying a position without giving any substantive arguments, which is dishonest.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

Lulie doesn't discuss any flaws. She is pulling her punches to avoid annoying people.

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

She doesn't refer to any particular communities or organisations. But she is aware of the existence of a group where people discuss critical rationalism: FI.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

Lots of academics don't engage in critical discussion, see

http://curi.us/2038-breaking-people

> Problems are soluble.

This is true, but no explanation is given. Nor does Lulie give the source she got it from so people can learn more.

> There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without

> > > doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

She knows of a group where this is happening, but doesn't mention it.

> > > The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

Lulie keeps makes up a position without knowing or asking if anyone holds them.

> > > (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

The sentence sez that critical rationalists might not adopt ideas from other traditions. That is not the same as not taking ideas seriously. People who take ideas seriously don't adopt bad ideas just to appease their advocates.

> > > But truth is connected.

This is too brief and is not explained. It is fake intellectual filler.

> > > Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

Lulie doesn't mention DD's idea that if you refute and idea you're no longer tempted to act on it. So you don't necessarily need to appeal to bad ideas to spread critical rationalism.

Lulie also doesn't mention Elliot's attempts to spread good ideas including critical rationalism.

> > > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

Most of DD's fans don't understand critical rationalism. It's not clear how much success he is having at spreading CR.

> > > And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,

Most of those communities reject critical rationalism, e.g. - Less Wrong. Lulie either

knows this or hasn't spent much time looking. Either way this is a lie.

> a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy,

Dissatisfaction with academic philosophy doesn't imply support for critical rationalism.

> people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on.

Lulie doesn't explain how this is relevant. Lots of people seem satisfied with their current ideas and aren't shopping around.

> It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

It might be possible to explain critical rationalism to lots of people so they adopt it. But the knowledge required to do this hasn't been discovered. So this sentence is dishonest.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

Ray Scott Percival:

> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.

Translation: I like the fact that Lulie mentioned me.

> The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

Percival sez the Birner quote is verbose.

> I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted.

He doesn't know much about most of the people in the group, so he doesn't know how much they go out.

> Just look at me!

This sentence is bragging.

> Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just

> so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁

This is another brag.

> When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position.

He is not clear about what happened.

Did he convince these Marxists of better ideas? If so, he should be using that ability. He's currently wasting it on academia while the West commits suicide through socialism.

And why explain two difficult issues at the same time to the same people who have very different ideas?

> Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂

He thinks of criticism as hurting people. He likes hurting people and he's boasting about doing it easily.

Note that this disagrees with Lulie's position despite his claim to agree with her.

> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

How did he come to this conclusion? Lots of entrenched ideas are 'applied', e.g. - Keynesian ideas are applied to govt economic policy.

I don't think he has an argument. He just wanted to say this as a pat on the back for himself and others.

> I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles,

He describes Medawar and Eccles as Popperian knights, but he doesn't explain any of their achievements.

Just repeating stuff that Popper said is not doing much for critical rationalism.

He's doing this as a social thing to hint that failing to do new stuff is okay.

> but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

Tipler is a Bayesian, not a critical rationalist:

https://arxiv.org/abs/quant-ph/0611245

Mentioning Popper's name isn't a sign of being a critical rationalist. He's lying about Tipler.

Also, this is an appeal to authority.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book.

Arguments only work when people choose to listen to them. Also, if Percival was convinced of the importance of argument he wouldn't be making appeals to authority or likening arguments to violence.

> Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age.

This is an unclear simile about violence and argument. What is the similarity supposed to be? He's more concerned with fancy writing than clarity. This is not honest.

> You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.

If he can't wait to use argument why is there no argument in this paragraph?

> That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR.

He is more concerned with feeling good than with arguments.

Also, if he feels so good about the ECA and CR why is he limiting his activities to academia?

> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

This is a bad sentence. It contains a metaphor and a simile and both are unclear. If he valued argument so much then he would celebrate getting better ideas, not mourn losing bad ideas.

> How much do you think this followup comment lies? Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

Writing unclearly in almost every sentence is Percival's preference. Percival values fancy writing over honesty. His comment his mostly composed of lies.

> If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.

Alan

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Alan's Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 3:45:19 AM

This is a long post. You may want to reply to a few things at a time!

On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:16 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:

> On 27 Sep 2017, at 18:53, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
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Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

The first half of the sentence and the second half of the sentence contradict one another. This is a polite way of saying she thinks the post is crap.

I agree that's the general idea.

I think it's worth analyzing in a different more detailed way. Here's what I asked Justin about this sentence:

What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view? Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

What is LT more optimistic about?

How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is? How did LT compare these amounts?

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

> The material she's replying to isn't a formal argument. It doesn't have premises.

Why does LT talk about a premise?

Why does she phrase it as "There's a premise here that..."? over "Birner's premise is that..." ?

> This sentence is an endorsement of social networking and politicking disguised as part of an argument.

Where does it endorse social networking and politicking in that sentence? Which text says that?

I agree that LT endorses those things in her post as a whole.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

> This sentence is a brag about having lots of interests.

You mean that LT is (deniably) implying she has lots of interests? Yes I think so. And she's perhaps also trying to defend her interests as compatible with CR.

But what's the intended thing this sentence is supposed to communicate?

> Why would social networking and politicking be special?

> This would be more honest if she just wrote "I don't think social networking and politicking is special."

What type of specialness is LT talking about? What things are and aren't "special", and why, and how is that relevant?

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,

This could be a sentence in its own right with a little rephrasing.

But it would be an unclear sentence.

Who is assuming that critical discussion is incompatible with social stuff? Is it the author of the quote? Are the people discussed in the quote making that assumption?

She's trying to answer arguments nobody made to look clever, and to denigrate people who disagree with her.

Why does LT say "Maybe"? Why is she guessing?

Why does she use the word "endeavours"?

> but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

This is unclear. Lulie's trying to look clever without actually explaining stuff.

If LT is guessing what the author meant from a variety of interpretations, why did she choose a guess she considers false? Do you think it's a good guess?

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

The laws of physics don't forbid people from disliking criticism. At present, getting many people to like criticism requires knowledge that doesn't exist. So this assertion is misleading.

LT's lengthy sentence had 6 negatives: isn't, don't, isn't, off-putting, not, dislike.

What do you think of that writing?

Were you able to read it? Was it hard? Did you mentally translate it into more straightforward text?

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.
>
> These are excuses for people avoiding criticism. Treating them as legitimate reasons to avoid criticism is bad.

Who is "they"? All people? All people who appear to dislike criticism? Some people who appear to dislike criticism (which?)?

Why does LT write "something", singular, and then give a list of multiple things?

What's the point of saying something is more like "etc."? What purpose does mentioning "etc." have in general, and here?

> There are situations where a person won't like criticism. A person doesn't like feeling bad. Some criticism undermines that person's current standards. He doesn't want to give up those standards and so he feels bad if he gets that criticism. This is a problem with critical discussion that needs to be solved. Denying its existence is a bad idea.
>
> Also, Lulie knows that there are people with such ideas. She knows about anti-rational memes since she has read BoI. People who hold anti-rational memes often feel bad about criticism. So this sentence is a lie.
>
> It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
>
> The laws of physics allow critical discussions that don't hurt people if the participants have the right knowledge. But that is not the current situation.

Why does it matter that this is *possible*? Is LT saying it's achievable? Today? Under what circumstances? Does LT think she knows how to accomplish it?

When it's not achieved, who is to blame and why?

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

This sentence is about looking clever and denigrating disagreement. No attempt to refute the idea.

What's a typical appeal to social status look like? What sort of people is it effective on (in a role with some similarities to persuasion)? What is the actual thing LT is talking about?

And what's a typical appeal to bureaucracy?

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Note that this appeal to the social status of Percival follows a denial that such appeals are necessary.

The sentence insinuates that Percival has an argument against the need to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. But Lulie doesn't give the argument or refer to any place where we could find it. Lulie's trying to get away with denying a position without giving any substantive arguments, which is dishonest.

Percival wrote a bad book, which he refused to discuss (while lying heavily), which says no one has a closed mind. LT is referring to that book and sucking up to him.

One implication of this sort of reference is that she gave enough information. Her choice to write it this way suggests she thinks readers should be able to follow it. So she's blaming people for not knowing. She's trying to say that she's so sure any educated, people know about Percival's arguments already that there's no need to mention them. This makes it suck up to Percival better, and does some other things (what?).

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

Lulie doesn't discuss any flaws. She is pulling her punches to avoid annoying people.

Why do you think she has punches to pull?

Why does LT think that premise is apparent? Do you, Alan, find it apparent? Do you, on reflection and analysis, agree about its presence?

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

> She doesn't refer to any particular communities or organisations. But she is aware of the existence of a group where people discuss critical rationalism: FI.

Does LT find it easy to do books, blogs, videos, and forums?

Who finds such things easy?

What CR intellectual communities and organizations have been built? Are there many? Were they easy to build? Are they doing a good job of keeping CR ideas going?

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

> Lots of academics don't engage in critical discussion, see

> http://curi.us/2038-breaking-people

If you're not an academic, sometimes academia ignores you. Why doesn't LT mention this and address it? Is she unaware of it? Did she think about it and couldn't think of it? Did she not stop and think? Does she know about the issue but didn't think it mattered?

> Problems are soluble.

> This is true, but no explanation is given. Nor does Lulie give the source she got it from so people can learn more.

Why does she say it here? What purpose does it have in the bigger picture of what she's writing?

> There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without

> > > doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

> She knows of a group where this is happening, but doesn't mention it.

Is LT correct that, due to BoI's arguments, there must be a solution to that problem?

> > > The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

> Lulie keeps makes up a position without knowing or asking if anyone holds them.

Why doesn't LT quote specific parts she's talking about and offer analysis? Why does she choose vague references followed by unanalyzed pronouncements?

> > > (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

> The sentence sez that critical rationalists might not adopt ideas from other traditions. That is not the same as not taking ideas seriously. People who take ideas seriously don't adopt bad ideas just to appease their advocates.

Why do you think LT used such an awkward reference ("the final sentence of the second paragraph") instead of a quote?

Why is this an aside?

Why does LT state what that text seems to say? LT doesn't state any opinion of the statement. Why not? What is her opinion? How do you know?

> > > But truth is connected.

> This is too brief and is not explained. It is fake intellectual filler.

What does LT think truth is connected to, and why is that relevant?

> Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

Lulie doesn't mention DD's idea that if you refute and idea you're no longer tempted to act on it. So you don't necessarily need to appeal to bad ideas to spread critical rationalism.

Lulie also doesn't mention Elliot's attempts to spread good ideas including critical rationalism.

LT uses a "Why not X?" phrasing. Who, in LT's view, is opposed to X or failing at X? Who is doing X well?

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

Most of DD's fans don't understand critical rationalism. It's not clear how much success he is having at spreading CR.

What does it communicate for LT to state these things as facts?

Why is the diversity of the intellectual backgrounds important?

Why does LT mention what DD is writing? Is she referring to public or private writing? Is she talking about tweets or articles or books?

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,

Most of those communities reject critical rationalism, e.g. - Less Wrong. Lulie either knows this or hasn't spent much time looking. Either way this is a lie.

Why do you think LT is telling this lie? What do you think LT would say her reason for stating this was? How is it relevant to her point? What is her point? And how does she know what she's claiming here? What thought process, if any, did she use to know it? Has she told us anything about such a thought process? What should she have said about that?

> > > a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy,

> Dissatisfaction with academic philosophy doesn't imply support for critical rationalism.

What is LT trying to imply and communicate by bringing up this dissatisfaction? Then, whatever that is, is it true?

> > > people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on.

> Lulie doesn't explain how this is relevant. Lots of people seem satisfied with their current ideas and aren't shopping around.

Why is LT writing this? What is she talking about? What is its purpose?

> > > It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

> It might be possible to explain critical rationalism to lots of people so they adopt it. But the knowledge required to do this hasn't been discovered. So this sentence is dishonest.

What does the "next generation" refer to? Who is included in it, and who isn't? Is LT part of it?

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Ray Scott Percival:

> > I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.

> Translation: I like the fact that Lulie mentioned me.

Yes, something like that. But you're skipping some steps. You don't directly connect this comment to what Percival (RSP) wrote.

He begins with "I think". Did he think?

He says LT's message is "dead on". What sort of thought process went into that assessment? How was that conclusion reached? For these questions, one should consider both what actually happened and what RSP intends his audience to think happened.

> The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

> Percival sez the Birner quote is verbose.

How does RSP know the quote is largely incorrect? What are readers supposed to take away from that statement?

> I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted.

> He doesn't know much about most of the people in the group, so he doesn't know how much they go out.

Who cares how much people get out? (Real question, not rhetorical. RSP cares and thinks many audience members care, which is why he's talking about it. What's going on there? What is RSP's opinion of introverts? What's the "I grant" part about?)

> Just look at me!

> This sentence is bragging.

Yes, but it's worse than that. How is one supposed to look at RSP, exactly? It's like he's offering himself up as evidence – to people who have never met him and have no way to look at his life.

> Or David McDonagh!

Same issue: look at McDonagh by what means?

And suppose we could look at them. And we disagreed. And we therefore wrote personal criticism of them. Would that be allowed on the forum? Even if it was an unmoderated forum, how would they respond to that kind of rebuttal?

> > I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁

> This is another brag.

Is he *completely* happy being surrounded by people he disagrees with? Is that true or false?

What is brag? I agree there is one, but you haven't stated it.

> > When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position.

> He is not clear about what happened.

> Did he convince these Marxists of better ideas? If so, he should be using that ability. He's currently wasting it on academia while the West commits suicide through socialism.

Why does he mention Warwick?

Why call them "Marxist-Lenninists"? Why not, say, "Marxists"?

In what sense did he love this? Presumably not the same way he loves his wife.

Why does he think of presenting arguments as "throwing"?

What did he like about these conversations? What was the purpose of them in his mind? The value?

> And why explain two difficult issues at the same time to the same people who have very different ideas?

I think he did two arguments at once to try to hit them harder, as suggested by his next

sentence.

> > Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂

> He thinks of criticism as hurting people. He likes hurting people and he's boasting about doing it easily.

Yeah. It's weird. If it's easy (they had *glass* jaws), what's there to brag about? He wants us to believe it was easy *for him*, but that many others would have had a harder time of it.

What do you think his so-called punching-victims would say about his account of events?

> Note that this disagrees with Lulie's position despite his claim to agree with her.

What is LT's position, and what's the disagreement?

> > As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

> How did he come to this conclusion? Lots of entrenched ideas are 'applied', e.g. - Keynesian ideas are applied to govt economic policy.

> I don't think he has an argument. He just wanted to say this as a pat on the back for himself and others.

Why did RSP put the word "entrenched" in quotes?

Does RSP think entrenchment is good or bad? What's his reasoning?

When he says "get out there", what place does "there" refer to? What activities is he proposing be done? Who does he think is and isn't doing the right activities?

The phrases "various problems" and "different domains" are very vague. Why did he choose to be vague here?

> > I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir

> > John Eccles,
>
> > He describes Medawar and Eccles as Popperian knights, but he doesn't explain any of their achievements.
>
> > Just repeating stuff that Popper said is not doing much for critical rationalism.
>
> > He's doing this as a social thing to hint that failing to do new stuff is okay.

Why did he call them Knights? Were they knighted by the Queen in the UK or something? Or does he mean, more generically, that they were warriors? He put the "Sir" for one of them but not the other. Does he even mean the same type of Knight for both of them?

Who is the "we" in "we lost"? Does that "we" include Alan?

> > > but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.
>
> > Tipler is a Bayesian, not a critical rationalist:
>
> > https://arxiv.org/abs/quant-ph/0611245
>
> > Mentioning Popper's name isn't a sign of being a critical rationalist. He's lying about Tipler.
>
> > Also, this is an appeal to authority.

What sort of thought process was involved in RSP judging Tipler to be a CRist and judging this a good thing to write about? How did he select Tipler over e.g. Richard Feynman or DD?

> > Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book.
>
> > Arguments only work when people choose to listen to them. Also, if Percival was convinced of the importance of argument he wouldn't be making appeals to authority or likening arguments to violence.

What sort of force does "a force" refer to?

Does his book contain deep arguments?

> > Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age.

> This is an unclear simile about violence and argument. What is the similarity supposed to be?

Can you think of anything he may mean? Do you think the entire audience is mystified by this?

> He's more concerned with fancy writing than clarity. This is not honest.

RSP wrote, "Having ... is like being given ..."? Did you notice? What does it mean?

Also the idea of strong arguments is refuted in my Yes or No Philosophy.

> > You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.

> If he can't wait to use argument why is there no argument in this paragraph?

Heh, yeah.

What is he saying here about how he conducts his life? Is that true?

Who is and isn't included in "you"?

Where is "out there"?

> > That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR.

> He is more concerned with feeling good than with arguments.

> Also, if he feels so good about the ECA and CR why is he limiting his activities to academia?

What is ECA? Why does he write "ECA" without telling us what it means?

Why is he mentioning Warwick and his past feelings ("felt")?

What does "The same" refer to?

> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

> This is a bad sentence. It contains a metaphor and a simile and both are unclear. If he valued argument so much then he would celebrate getting better ideas, not mourn losing bad ideas.

In America, we say "corruption of" not "corruption to". Is it different in other English speaking countries, or is RSP screwing up standard English idiom?

I agree the sentence is bad. Want to try to untangle it?

What motivated RSP to write his comment? What was the point of it?

> How much do you think this followup comment lies? Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

> Writing unclearly in almost every sentence is Percival's preference.

Why didn't you write this as, "Percival's preference is writing unclearly in almost every sentence."?

> Percival values fancy writing over honesty. His comment his mostly composed of lies.

Do you think he believes his own lies?

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From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 10:11:12 AM

FYI curi i'm gonna analyze some early stuff i skipped over initially, will return to other stuff later.

Update I added at end of writing: I made it all the way through the first sentence of Lulie stuff, lol. Will do more after reply.

On Sep 27, 2017, at 9:13 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 5:12 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>
>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/101557110406699 04/? comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22 R%22%7D
>>>>
>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> I don't know what you had in mind by lies, but I had criticisms, so I figured I'd start there.
>>
>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>>
>>> Danny Frederick:
>>>
>>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>>>
>>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the

The quote starts by saying that the nature of critical rationalism attracts people who believe in the force of critical argument. By "force", I assume something is meant like "ability to persuade". Ah yeah just checked m-w.com dictionary for force, one definition is: "capacity to persuade or convince."

So basically the idea is something like, if you're drawn to a philosophy that emphasizes the role of reason, criticism, and discussion, then you're gonna be the sort of person who thinks that critical argument can actually be effective.

BTW, what is "critical argument"? That's not a standard everyday term. In Realism and the Aim of Science, Popper talks about critical arguments in the following passages (which I found doing a quick search, so take note that this is not a systematic attempt to discuss every passage that mentions critical arguments)

> For my proposed solution to the new problem is compatible with the view that our knowledge—our conjectural knowledge—may grow, and that it may do so by the use of reason: of critical argument.

So here Popper seems to say critical argument is equivalent to reason or an application of reason.

> This persuasion, this belief, this preference, is reasonable because it is based upon the result of the present state of the critical discussion; and a preference for a theory may be called 'reasonable' if it is arguable, and if it withstands searching critical argument—ingenious attempts to show that it is not true, or not nearer to the truth than its competitors.

Here, Popper qualifies critical argument with "searching". He thinks searching critical arguments are ingenious attempts to refute a theory.

> Rational discussion, that is, critical argument in the interest of getting nearer to the truth, would be pointless without an objective reality, a world which we make it our task to discover: unknown, or largely unknown: a challenge to our intellectual ingenuity, courage, and integrity.

Here, Popper defines rational discussion as "critical argument in the interest of getting nearer to the truth." The preposition phrase "in the interest of getting nearer to the truth" qualifies "critical argument". You could conceivably have pointless critical arguments that are just meant to annoy other people or something like that. But again we see (as in the

first passage I quoted) that Popper's idea of critical argument is closely connected with reason.

> The method of looking for verifications was not only uncritical: it also furthered an uncritical attitude in both expositor and reader. It thus threatened to destroy the attitude of rationality, of critical argument.

This is another example of Popper's idea that critical discussion and reason are connected/inseparable.

So if I were to guess a meaning from these passages of what Popper meant by critical argument, it'd be something like "the use of criticism and discussion in the search for truth."

So basically the idea of the first line of the FB quote means something like, if you're drawn to a philosophy that emphasizes the role of reason, criticism, and discussion, then you're gonna be the sort of person who thinks that criticism and discussion can actually be effective.

> Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

This needs to be broken up into two thoughts.

The first thought claims that people who believe in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion in the search for truth are less likely to do social networking and academic politicking. That seems like a reasonable claim.

The second part claims that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for creating an environment in which one's intellectual offspring survive.

Intellectual offspring is a term I find vague and confusing. I'm not even sure whether it is talking about ideas or people, honestly. I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.

In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?

From a CR perspective, either an idea can stand up to all criticisms, or it can't and is

refuted. Social status games are irrelevant to its epistemological survival. So there is a different standard of survival than the epistemological standard which is being assumed.

If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like writing

> Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the Objectivist ethics is less prone than the average person to devote resources to the altruistic and socially cooperative endeavors that are needed to create an environment in which human flourishing can occur…

Well, yes they are less likely to devote resources in those ways, cuz they reject the whole premise on which devoting their resources that way is based!

> > > > > "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work),

He seems to think that being a philosopher makes you *less able* than scientists to do stuff he thinks is vital and important (the cultivation of social conditions stuff). He also says immediately after this that science has gotten worse for CR. So, it seems like the CR scientists in the field weren't good at cultivating the right social conditions in the long term??

Maybe the issue is CR philosophers are more likely to stand up to bad/harmful stuff and thus bad at winning popularity contests.

I think there's an interesting contrast here too. Like he's contrasting CR scientists with CR philosophers, and saying CR scientists more effective. But are there CR scientists who are effective and don't know much philosophy?

> > > > > too, supported critical rationalism.

Note this discussion of what scientists support. I will return to it later.

> > > > > This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations.

So he's claiming that the cultivation of social conditions (through, presumably, social networking and academic politicking) allowed CR to have some success at getting

established for a while.

My only comment here is that this whole discussion could use way more examples. Maybe they are in the original source material, i dunno.

> In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased.

So the CR tradition successfully established by the social networkers and academic politickers should be percolating through these new fields, right?

> The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists.

Since he seems to think that being a philosopher makes you *less able* than scientists to do the cultivation of social conditions stuff, this change should help the cause of non-philosophical CR science (whatever that is) right?

> The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly.

Selection pressure against what? He doesn't mean "selection pressure against mistaken ideas." 😔

> In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking

Again we see the author focusing on what scientists are supporting.

The author seems to view science not as a quest for truth but as a sort of pressure-group warfare, in which support, networking, and self-propagation matter more than truth. As a description of what modern academia *is actually like*, I think that's fair, but it's not something we should take as a given!

> while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics

Like integrity, honesty, a focus on truth-seeking over social games.

> that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

As far as I can tell, there's some really nasty con game being played that starts here.

CR people are GREAT at engaging with different traditions and having access to them.

E.g. Popper engaged meaningfully with tons of traditions in his scholarship. Like he engages with the classical Greek tradition, Marxism, modern philosophy…and does lots of commentary on all that stuff…

The tradition the author thinks CR has some big problem with isn't explicitly stated at the end here, but given the focus of the quote, I assume he means something like the modern, bureaucratized, social-games-heavy academe...

> The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions.

Wait, what?

This seems to say that if CR people can't adopt/have access to alternative traditions, those alternative traditions don't exist. But he doesn't qualify it as "don't exist for CR people" or something. As written it sounds like CR people can wipe out alternative traditions by not being able to engage with them. I don't think that's what he could mean though. I think he means those alternative traditions don't *effectively exist* for CR people.

It's like, if someone has some emotional blocker about learning PUA, you could say that for them, the PUA community doesn't exist.

I think that's kind of a silly way to put it. Cuz the PUA community DOES exist. Knowledge exists objectively, regardless of whether it exists in the mind of a particular subject.

There's also the issue of whether the tradition in question is *worth engaging with and has value*. And since the *tradition itself* is left unspecified, how are we to judge that?

There's also the issue of treating "adopting" and "having access to" alternative traditions together. And what do those even mean? I have access to, say, the Islamic tradition in that I can its source materials and commentary about them. I don't have access to it in the way even a *former* practicing Muslim would — as something which served as a real active thing in my life and informed my every action. So what sort of access does the author have in mind?

> If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least

> > > > > elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched –

Entrenched how, in what way? The author was talking about how CR is DYING in academia, and now is saying it might get entrenched?

> > > and extinct."
>
> > > Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.
>
> > Source:
>
> > https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches
>
> > Lulie Tanett:
>
> > > While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

> What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?

Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."

> Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.

> What is LT more optimistic about?

She says later:

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

> How did LT compare these amounts?

No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 12:38:20 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 7:11 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 9:13 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>
> So basically the idea is something like, if you're drawn to a philosophy that emphasizes the role of reason, criticism, and discussion, then you're gonna be the sort of person who thinks that critical argument can actually be effective.

> BTW, what is "critical argument"?

An argument which tries to show something is false or bad, rather than good or true.

> So basically the idea of the first line of the FB quote means something like, if you're drawn to a philosophy that emphasizes the role of reason, criticism, and discussion, then you're gonna be the sort of person who thinks that criticism and discussion can actually be effective.

Did LT understand this in a similar way to you, or a different way? Don't answer now, but keep this in mind when reading her text.

> Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

> This needs to be broken up into two thoughts.

> The first thought claims that people who believe in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion in the search for truth are less likely to do social networking and academic politicking. That seems like a reasonable claim.

What does LT think of that claim, and why? (Don't answer now, but keep it in mind when reading her text.)

> The second part claims that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for creating an environment in which one's intellectual offspring survive.

> Intellectual offspring is a term I find vague and confusing. I'm not even sure whether it is talking about ideas or people, honestly.

Yeah!

> I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt

> one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.
>
> In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?

Academic journal gatekeepers and university administrators in charge of hiring don't care about critical tests.

> From a CR perspective, either an idea can stand up to all criticisms, or it can't and is refuted.

That is a perspective of several people, but not of Popper or of anyone being interpreted.

> Social status games are irrelevant to its epistemological survival. So there is a different standard of survival than the epistemological standard which is being assumed.
>
> If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like writing

Maybe they think critical arguments are effective for some things and not other things.

> Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the Objectivist ethics is less prone than the average person to devote resources to the altruistic and socially cooperative endeavors that are needed to create an environment in which human flourishing can occur…
>
> Well, yes they are less likely to devote resources in those ways, cuz they reject the whole premise on which devoting their resources that way is based!

Most CR-interested people don't see anything wrong with academia.

I think he's saying CR has a *weakness* when it comes to academia. There's upsides

(for truth seeking) and downsides (for networking) to being a critical type of person. And LT's reply claims CR people can be great at academia/social/networking/etc.

That's different than with Oism. I haven't talked with any Oists who think altruism-incompatibility is a downside of being an Oist.

> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work),

He seems to think that being a philosopher makes you *less able* than scientists to do stuff he thinks is vital and important (the cultivation of social conditions stuff).

He said "likely" not "able".

> The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly.

Selection pressure against what? He doesn't mean "selection pressure against mistaken ideas." 😔

it could mean something like: "In the past there was tons of money to go around, so anyone could get a job in academia. But now budgets are tight so only the fittest candidates get jobs." The idea would be that more competition and scarcity led to harsher, stricter selection. There were some selection criteria but they were relaxed and now they've become more pressuring.

> The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions.

Wait, what?

This seems to say that if CR people can't adopt/have access to alternative traditions, those alternative traditions don't exist. But he doesn't qualify it as "don't exist for CR people" or something.

Even with the qualification, it'd still make no sense. If the people in some alternative tradition spend all the university hiring budget, or compete for book sales and public attention, that affects you even if you have no access to their tradition. (To be similar to non-existent, something should have *no effect* on you.)

> > If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched –

> Entrenched how, in what way? The author was talking about how CR is DYING in academia, and now is saying it might get entrenched?

maybe he just likes writing big words 🙃

(i'm not trying to analyze the Birner part super seriously cuz i want to keep the activity more limited and manageable.)

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> > While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?
>
> Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."

Why might LT call that a "spirit" instead of a "point" or "argument"?

> Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.

How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing? What sort of thought process do you think it was? Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?

> What is LT more optimistic about?

She says later:

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

> How did LT compare these amounts?

No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right? What's the purpose of writing "far"? How does "far" change the meaning?

Do you think LT is optimistic? Is LT engaged in any public activities in accordance with her optimism? Is anyone else?

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 1:20:10 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 28, 2017, at 7:11 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>>> Danny Frederick:
>>>>
>>>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>>>>
>>>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument.

>>>> The quote starts by saying that the nature of critical rationalism attracts people who believe in the force of critical argument. By "force", I assume something is meant like "ability to persuade". Ah yeah just checked m-w.com dictionary for force, one definition is: "capacity to persuade or convince."
>>>>
>>>> So basically the idea is something like, if you're drawn to a philosophy that

emphasizes the role of reason, criticism, and discussion, then you're gonna be the sort of person who thinks that critical argument can actually be effective.

BTW, what is "critical argument"?

An argument which tries to show something is false or bad, rather than good or true.

Okay.

So basically the idea of the first line of the FB quote means something like, if you're drawn to a philosophy that emphasizes the role of reason, criticism, and discussion, then you're gonna be the sort of person who thinks that criticism and discussion can actually be effective.

Did LT understand this in a similar way to you, or a different way? Don't answer now, but keep this in mind when reading her text.

Okay.

Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

This needs to be broken up into two thoughts.

The first thought claims that people who believe in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion in the search for truth are less likely to do social networking and academic politicking. That seems like a reasonable claim.

What does LT think of that claim, and why? (Don't answer now, but keep it in mind when reading her text.)

The second part claims that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for creating an environment in which one's intellectual offspring survive.

Intellectual offspring is a term I find vague and confusing. I'm not even sure whether it is talking about ideas or people, honestly.

> Yeah!
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> > I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.
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> > In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?
>
> Academic journal gatekeepers and university administrators in charge of hiring don't care about critical tests.

Right okay, but then they seem to be playing a totally different kind of game than a CR person would care about, and using a different criteria of survival.

A consistent CR type person is interested in truth and in criticisms and refutations, not status games. In the view of a CR person, a refuted theory would stay refuted even if it was popular with gatekeepers, and a true theory would be true even if it was unpopular with gatekeepers.

From a CR perspective, you could say a refuted theory didn't survive criticism — that'd be a reasonable way to put in. But that's an epistemological status issue, not a social status issue.

> > From a CR perspective, either an idea can stand up to all criticisms, or it can't and is refuted.
>
> That is a perspective of several people, but not of Popper or of anyone being interpreted.

Oh fair point.

> > Social status games are irrelevant to its epistemological survival. So there is a different standard of survival than the epistemological standard which is being assumed.
> >
> > If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like

> writing

> Maybe they think critical arguments are effective for some things and not other things.

Well, okay, but I think I'd need clarity on what they mean by a theory surviving.

Like, from a CR perspective, knowledge exists objectively, in books (and online), and its true independently of whether believes it, right? Presumably they're not afraid of certain knowledge not surviving in the sense of being completely destroyed. So what is the criteria of survival they are using, and why is that a good focus?

>> Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the Objectivist ethics is less prone than the average person to devote resources to the altruistic and socially cooperative endeavors that are needed to create an environment in which human flourishing can occur…

>> Well, yes they are less likely to devote resources in those ways, cuz they reject the whole premise on which devoting their resources that way is based!

> Most CR-interested people don't see anything wrong with academia.

> I think he's saying CR has a *weakness* when it comes to academia. There's upsides (for truth seeking) and downsides (for networking) to being a critical type of person. And LT's reply claims CR people can be great at academia/social/networking/etc.

Yes, your reading seems correct.

> That's different than with Oism. I haven't talked with any Oists who think altruism-incompatibility is a downside of being an Oist.

Right.

>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work),

>> He seems to think that being a philosopher makes you *less able* than scientists to do stuff he thinks is vital and important (the cultivation of social conditions stuff).

> He said "likely" not "able".

OK.

> The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly.

Selection pressure against what? He doesn't mean "selection pressure against mistaken ideas." 😔

it could mean something like: "In the past there was tons of money to go around, so anyone could get a job in academia. But now budgets are tight so only the fittest candidates get jobs." The idea would be that more competition and scarcity led to harsher, stricter selection. There were some selection criteria but they were relaxed and now they've become more pressuring.

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Even with the qualification, it'd still make no sense. If the people in some alternative tradition spend all the university hiring budget, or compete for book sales and public attention, that affects you even if you have no access to their tradition. (To be similar to non-existent, something should have *no effect* on you.)

Yes.

> If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched –

Entrenched how, in what way? The author was talking about how CR is DYING in academia, and now is saying it might get entrenched?

maybe he just likes writing big words 🙃

(i'm not trying to analyze the Birner part super seriously cuz i want to keep the activity

> > more limited and manageable.)

OK.

> > > > and extinct."
> > > >
> > > > Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.
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> > > Lulie Tanett:
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> > > > While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
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> > What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?
>
> Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."

> Why might LT call that a "spirit" instead of a "point" or "argument"?

Well, one reason might be that it makes it easier for her to deny a criticism that applies to the quote also applies to her, cuz she can say she was just agreeing with the SPIRIT

> > Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?
>
> I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.

> How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing?

I'm not sure how to characterize amounts of thought put into an emotion in a meaningful way.

I can sometimes guess if someone wrote something thoughtlessly or if it seems like someone put a LOT of thought into writing something. But even that assessment is

more at the level of assessing effort that went into writing. It is not assessing mental energy that went into specific emotional states as they were writing. I have no idea how to do that.

> What sort of thought process do you think it was?

I don't know what different types of thought processes there are.

> Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?

She seems pretty sympathetic to the idea that "lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have." She spends time addressing this concern in the post. These parts seem directly focused on addressing that concern:

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

>> > What is LT more optimistic about?
>>
>> She says later:
>>
>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>
>> So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

> Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?

I did not see any indication that she had.

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

> He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

> How did LT compare these amounts?

> No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right?

Yes.

What's the purpose of writing "far"?

Maybe she's trying to convey some emotional attitude?

How does "far" change the meaning?

I'm not sure. In the context of how I read it, "far" doesn't make sense.

Do you think LT is optimistic?

I have no reason to think that she is.

Is LT engaged in any public activities in accordance with her optimism?

I am not aware of her being so involved.

Is anyone else?

In terms of CR people? Don't know of any notable efforts besides yours atm.

-JM

From: Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 28, 2017 at 2:00:25 PM

I am sending this before reading other people's replies.

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us
[fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?

I don't understand why you use the word "lie" instead of "mistake" or
something. To me "lie" implies a conscious effort to deceive. What do
you mean?

> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>
>
> Danny Frederick:
>
>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>
>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>>
>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased.

> The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

She doesn't seem to sympathize with the spirit of the post, but rather she sympathizes with the poster (Danny Frederick) and/or the author of the exerpt (Jack Birner). She wants to assure the poster that she doesn't want to hurt him.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

The premise is actually that someone who is attracted to critical rationalism is less likely than someone who isn't to engage in social networking and politicking, not that the two things are completely incompatible.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social

> endeavours, but I don't think that's true:

Here she says that *maybe* the assumption is that critical debate
isn't compatible with these social endeavors. But above she said that
the premise *is* that critical rationalism is incompatible with them.
Is critical debate necessarily a part of critical rationalism?

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

I am a big fan of being nice but I wouldn't go as far as to say
"always" here. I don't know if she believes this "always" or is
exaggerating or is engaging in wishful thinking or is saying we ought
to always *try* to explain ideas in a way that isn't off-putting.

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

Hmm. I don't know.

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having
> problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems
> and still have a critical discussion.)

Yes, people dislike these things. I want it to be possible to avoid
them and still have a critical discussion. I don't know enough to know
if it's always possible though.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead
> you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

Maybe.

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Mentioning Ray Scott Percival is probably reaching out for a social
connection since she knows he'll read her comment. It's not a lie
though. He does agree, from what I've seen.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through
> institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever
> easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build
> intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need
> to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will

> be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

I don't see a problem with this paragraph.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

Maybe. I don't think "exuberant" is necessary to "social networking and academic politicking." Also, the "personal characteristics" line is far away from the "social networking and academic politicking" line so it's not clear to me if the author meant them to be linked. The "personal characteristics" part says that personal characteristics "make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions," which is about the individual's learning, not promoting done by the individual.

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

I think what it's saying is more like "critical rationalists aren't seeking out or adopting alternative traditions" (new ideas). Or is this the same as what she is saying?

> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?
>
> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

Is David Deutsch still writing about critical rationalism? I don't know. Are new people from diverse intellectual backgrounds regularly getting interested in Popper via Deutsch? I don't know.

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

I don't know if this stuff is true or not.

Posted by: Anne B <anne52984@gmail.com>

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 2:05:57 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 10:20 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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>> I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.
>>
>> In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?
>
> Academic journal gatekeepers and university administrators in charge of hiring don't care about critical tests.

> Right okay, but then they seem to be playing a totally different kind of game than a CR person would care about, and using a different criteria of survival.

People often see stuff as mixed. E.g. you can have some criticisms of academic journal gatekeeping while also valuing the substance of the articles and wanting to participate in those discussions.

>> Social status games are irrelevant to its epistemological survival. So there is a different standard of survival than the epistemological standard which is being assumed.
>>
>> If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like writing

>> Maybe they think critical arguments are effective for some things and not other things.

> Well, okay, but I think I'd need clarity on what they mean by a theory surviving.

I don't think you're going to get what you want. I don't think their thought process works that way. E.g. I think you want *one* meaning (and would consider that an essential part of clarity), but I think they mean different things at different times.

> Source:
>
> https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

> Lulie Tanett:

>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

> > What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?
> >
> > Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."
>
> Why might LT call that a "spirit" instead of a "point" or "argument"?
>
> Well, one reason might be that it makes it easier for her to deny a criticism that applies to the quote also applies to her, cuz she can say she was just agreeing with the SPIRIT

Why does it give her more deniability?

> > Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?
> >
> > I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.
>
> How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing?
>
> I'm not sure how to characterize amounts of thought put into an emotion in a meaningful way.

I was thinking of sympathy as an intellectual opinion. You bring up another possibility which is worth considering! OK, so:

Do you think LT *felt* a sympathy emotion, vividly, in the same kind of way one might very noticeably feel fear, joy or anger? Do you think she had that *experience*, and that's what she's reporting with her statement?

> Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?
>
> She seems pretty sympathetic to the idea that "lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have." She spends time addressing this concern in the post. These parts seem directly focused on addressing that concern:

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

That looks more *argumentative* than sympathetic to me.

E.g., do you see sympathy in a "Why would [that thing you believe]?" type question? Do you see sympathy in how LT used "But"?

Imagine a person who felt sympathy with the poor. Imagine he vividly felt it, and had that emotional experience on his mind for the next few minutes while writing comments. What sort of tone would he use?

Would he say, e.g., "But rich people can be moral in all sorts of ways, and why would poverty be special?" (This is not an exact analogy!)

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Does calling the other guy's view an "assumption", and then calling it false, sound sympathetic to you?

Which text struck you as sympathetic?

>> What is LT more optimistic about?
>
> She says later:
>
>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity,

> presumably?)

> Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?

I did not see any indication that she had.

I agree, which is notable considering she's been told about it multiple times and read Rand.

So what sort of thought process is behind LT's optimism? Evasion? Lack of thinking? Thinking about some things and not others? And what sort of thought process is she trying to communicate to most readers? What would be a reasonable thought process, in general, for a reader to expect to have gone into a statement similar to LT's?

Can you come up with some thought process, in her mind, which would make sense from her perspective, that would lead a reasonable person to write what LT wrote?

>> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

>> He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

>> How did LT compare these amounts?

>> No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

> Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right?

Yes.

> What's the purpose of writing "far"?

Maybe she's trying to convey some emotional attitude?

> How does "far" change the meaning?

> I'm not sure. In the context of how I read it, "far" doesn't make sense.

What's the point of the statement as a whole? Why is it relevant to mention her or Danny's optimism? What does she want a reader to take away?

> Do you think LT is optimistic?

> I have no reason to think that she is.

Do you think she's lying about her optimism?

Why might she do that? And why wouldn't she?

> Is LT engaged in any public activities in accordance with her optimism?

> I am not aware of her being so involved.

Why would a person be optimistic but then not act like it? Think she's lying? Or perhaps it's a failure of introspection? Think she put a reasonable effort into introspection?

> Is anyone else?

> In terms of CR people? Don't know of any notable efforts besides yours atm.

Do you think my efforts are the source of LT's optimism? 🙃

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

Again, I am sending this before reading anyone else's answers.

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us
[fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

> Ray Scott Percival:

> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.

This is a social response to Lulie's comment about him. He is also
putting himself on the same side as Lulie, building up a social bond
with her and with anyone else who feels like they are on the same side
as she is. It may also be a true statement, although he makes
different points than she does in what he writes here.

> The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

I agree with verbose. I don't know about largely incorrect. However,
if Percival is going to say that Birner's piece is largely incorrect,
he should try to address all the points it's making and not just a
few.

> I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are
> many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh!

He gives two examples, not enough to justify his claim of "many."

> I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at
> them all at once. When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of
> Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the
> impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was
> easy though - they all had glass jaws.

I'm not sure I understand what justificationists are, but I'm guessing they are not the same as Marxist-Lenninists, as this passage implies. I think he is saying that he likes being the only person in a room who believes something important and true that no one else in the room does, because he likes arguing with them and winning. He is implying that critical rationalism is such a thing (something important and true), and that people reading this comment are critical rationalists and are therefore all on his side and that his/their side is right and that arguing involves winning against the other side rather than together discovering more truth.

> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

> I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles,

I don't know them to say if they were Popperian Knights.

> but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

It would be nice to have more than one example to support the "many others" comment.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

He seems pretty sure that he's right about everything. He thinks it is other people's cherished beliefs that will fall and wither and not his. I don't know how right or wrong he is about this.

Overall, this post has a team-building element. He wants all of us reading it to feel like we are on the same, winning team. The sweet thing about this is that most people like being on a winning team and

being part of a community. People will like him for this. The dangerous thing about this is that people may feel less inclined to criticize what he says and what each other say.

> How much do you think this followup comment lies? Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

> If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.

I don't know if I'll learn much from this exercise but I'm willing to give it a try and see what I think.

Posted by: Anne B <anne52984@gmail.com>

Yahoo Groups Links

<*> To visit your group on the web, go to:
    http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fallible-ideas/

<*> Your email settings:
    Individual Email | Traditional

<*> To change settings online go to:
    http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fallible-ideas/join
    (Yahoo! ID required)

<*> To change settings via email:
    fallible-ideas-digest@yahoogroups.com
    fallible-ideas-fullfeatured@yahoogroups.com

<*> To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:

fallible-ideas-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

<*> Your use of Yahoo Groups is subject to:
https://info.yahoo.com/legal/us/yahoo/utos/terms/

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 2:44 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us
[fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> I think *close reading* is a really important skill which people don't work on enough –
> and usually haphazardly. I don't think people will get very far with learning if they don't
> try to methodically build up some skills. Being able to read passages and understand
> individual sentences is a skill people should get good at prior to thinking they
> understand a bunch of whole books they read. Before you can read a book *and
> understand it*, you need to be able to read a sentence *and understand it*.
>
> Why don't people do this?

I'll give you my answers. I'm not sure about other people.

> Is it ignorance of the option to try to do precise readings and post about them and get
> feedback? Unwillingness to ask me for help in a persistent thread over time?

Yes.

> Is it lack of humility? Thinking they already understand long texts like BoI, let alone
> individual passages in it, let alone basically all the sentences?

No.

> Is it thinking they'll fail at reading the passages above well (knowing something about
> their own inability), and not wanting to face that failure?

Partly. I know I'll get a lot wrong the first time through, which is a
little disappointing to face but not enough to stop me from trying.

> Is it being busy and not considering it a priority to make some serious effort at being
> able to understand written passages? They don't see the point? If someone wants to
> close read a non-philosophical passage and try to discuss the social lies and other
> features of it, that'd work too. But I think the passages above are particularly good
> samples to use.

These are also good passages because I know you've read them and thought about them some already.

> Is it thinking that rigorous, methodical study is for students in schools, not for competent, independent adults? Or just having negative associations with serious thinking or organized studying, due to school?

In a way it does feel like a chore. On the other hand, thinking of it like a school assignment also encourages me to do it because I have a history of wanting to please the teacher.

Will I want to follow through and keep posting until we're both satisfied? It seems unlikely but we'll see.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 28, 2017 at 2:47:20 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 11:00 AM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> I don't understand why you use the word "lie" instead of "mistake" or something. To me "lie" implies a conscious effort to deceive. What do you mean?

I think it's full of lies, not just mistakes.

Some lies don't involve a conscious effort to deceive at the time they are told. For example, you might knowingly tell a lie a bunch of times, but then start saying the same thing habitually without consciously thinking about the fact that it's a lie. Do you think it's reasonable to count that as a lie?

Another issue is when someone doesn't make a reasonable effort to find out if something is true or false. If you say something is true, then (in many contexts) you imply you made some reasonable effort to consider and investigate whether it's true or false. You're saying your belief that it's true was the result of a thought process, and you're implying various things about the nature of that thought process. If you didn't make that effort – e.g. if you just said it carelessly/thoughtlessly but in a writing style suggesting you gave it careful consideration – then I think it's a lie. Does that make sense to you? Even if the person didn't consciously think this all through?

> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone

critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

Danny Frederick:

> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>
> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>
> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

> She doesn't seem to sympathize with the spirit of the post, but rather she sympathizes with the poster (Danny Frederick) and/or the author of the exerpt (Jack Birner). She wants to assure the poster that she doesn't want to hurt him.

I agree there's an assuring aspect, similar to saying, "I'm not your enemy."

But if LT had written, "I don't want to hurt you", how would people read that differently than what she actually wrote? Is it equivalent or different?

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

> The premise is actually that someone who is attracted to critical rationalism is less likely than someone who isn't to engage in social networking and politicking, not that the two things are completely incompatible.

Yeah. How do you think this mistake happened?

Was LT going quickly, misremembered, and didn't double check?

Was LT being careless?

Did LT misunderstand?

Was LT trying to be precisely accurate?

Was LT rewriting the position she was arguing with, in her own words? With some changes? Why might someone do that?

Does the mistaken change LT introduced make Birner's position better or worse? Does it help or harm LT's arguments?

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true:

> Here she says that *maybe* the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavors. But above she said that the premise *is* that critical rationalism is incompatible with them.

Why do you think LT wrote "maybe"? What sort of thought processes might have gone into it? Perhaps you could think a list of possibilities, and then rule some out. With stuff like this, it can be hard to read an author's mind exactly, so you may have several possibilities left over which you aren't able to choose between.

> Is critical debate necessarily a part of critical rationalism?

Pretty much, yes. Popper says critical debate is a key part of how we learn, make scientific progress, etc.

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

> I am a big fan of being nice but I wouldn't go as far as to say "always" here. I don't know if she believes this "always" or is exaggerating or is engaging in wishful thinking or is saying we ought to always *try* to explain ideas in a way that isn't off-putting.

I know that she believes it's always possible in the sense that it doesn't violate the laws of physics. Basically, if you had unlimited knowledge/wisdom/intelligence/time/energy/etc, then you could do it. She got this view from DD and his book BoI.

I think your interpretations make sense as possibilities, too.

I think LT's text has multiple meanings at the same time. On the one hand, it means what Anne read. But on the other hand, if challenged, LT can say it meant the argument from BoI.

Make sense?

Do you think this double meaning is an accident or random mistake? If not, what else

might it be?

> > it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

> Hmm. I don't know.

Do you know what LT's claim is?

Does she mean that all people like criticism or are neutral about it, at all times? Some people at some times (which people, when?)?

Does the word "fundamentally" change the meaning in some way?

> > > (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> Yes, people dislike these things. I want it to be possible to avoid them and still have a critical discussion. I don't know enough to know if it's always possible though.

Did you find LT's text well-argued? Did you find it had useful explanations to help you learn something? What's it like?

And what might LT's text look like to a typical person who quickly reads it once?

> > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

> Maybe.

> > Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

> Mentioning Ray Scott Percival is probably reaching out for a social connection since she knows he'll read her comment. It's not a lie though. He does agree, from what I've seen.

What does he agree with? Has he thought it through and attempted to find out whether his view is true or not?

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

I don't see a problem with this paragraph.

Have you found many good CR books, blogs, videos, forums, etc? Do you have the same experience LT is talking about?

Would you like more of those things? Did you consider asking LT to link you to refer you to some? What would you expect to happen next if you asked?

(This part may be hard for you, Anne, because you don't have the 15+ years of context with LT and the CR community, which Justin, Alan and I have.)

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

Maybe. I don't think "exuberant" is necessary to "social networking and academic politicking." Also, the "personal characteristics" line is far away from the "social networking and academic politicking" line so it's not clear to me if the author meant them to be linked. The "personal characteristics" part says that personal characteristics "make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions," which is about the individual's learning, not promoting done by the individual.

LT provided several speculations on what the Birner quote meant.

Do you think she wrote a good list of speculations? Were they roughly how you would have interpreted the quote?

Do you think LT did a good job of textual analysis?

> > (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

> I think what it's saying is more like "critical rationalists aren't seeking out or adopting alternative traditions" (new ideas). Or is this the same as what she is saying?

Well let's see. I'm going to go get the actual quote since no one else has! It says:

> If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct.

I don't see anything about the "clash of ideas" which LT mentioned. Isn't that odd? Or what's going on there?

Anne's interpretation makes way more sense to me. It even uses some of the same words from the text like "adopt[ing] alternative traditions"!

I think the Birner sentence is incoherent. I won't get into it now. If you want to analyze it, make a new thread.

> > But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

What do you think of that question? Is it nice or off-putting?

> > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

> Is David Deutsch still writing about critical rationalism? I don't know. Are new people from diverse intellectual backgrounds regularly getting interested in Popper via Deutsch? I don't know.

LT and I both have a lot of information about this topic. It'd be a big tangent to share that info. Let's drop it for now and focus on the other parts. Bring it up again later if you want to.

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.
>
> I don't know if this stuff is true or not.

LT and I both have a lot of information about this topic. It'd be a big tangent to share that info. Let's drop it for now and focus on the other parts. Bring it up again later if you want to.

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Anne's answers (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 3:12:26 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 11:04 AM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> Again, I am sending this before reading anyone else's answers.
>
> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us
> [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>
>> Ray Scott Percival:
>>
>>> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.
>>
>> This is a social response to Lulie's comment about him. He is also
>> putting himself on the same side as Lulie, building up a social bond
>> with her and with anyone else who feels like they are on the same side
>> as she is. It may also be a true statement, although he makes
>> different points than she does in what he writes here.

I agree with your hesitation to regard the sentence as true. I can imagine someone writing this, for social reasons, even if he didn't believe it.

Here's what I suspect: because he'd want to write this regardless, he didn't think about whether he agrees with LT or not. Thinking about it would take effort. Then, after thinking, he might agree and write the same thing, so what was the point of thinking about it? Or he might disagree, which is inconvenient because then he has to lie or say something less positive (or maybe even argue with LT). If he would disagree, does he really want to find that out?

If you want to respond socially, it's easier and safer to say you agree without thinking about it!

So I suspect the "I think" part is a lie, and he didn't think about it. Do you think that's a

reasonable guess? A possible interpretation which isn't contradicted by any evidence?

> > The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

> I agree with verbose. I don't know about largely incorrect. However, if Percival is going to say that Birner's piece is largely incorrect, he should try to address all the points it's making and not just a few.

He should at least address *most* of the points to match his *largely* incorrect claim.

What do you think might be the reason he didn't address more points? And given that he didn't do it, why do you think he wrote this?

> > > I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh!

> > He gives two examples, not enough to justify his claim of "many."

Yes.

Are these two examples any good? Do you find them convincing? If he had more examples of the same nature, would you be satisfied and persuaded?

> > > I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws.

> > I'm not sure I understand what justificationists are,

Justificationism is the name of a philosophical position, identified and criticized by Popper, which is accepted by almost everyone. It's so well established that people take it for granted, and are unaware it's a debatable position. It didn't even have a name before Popper named it, because people hadn't been discussing it (if they were discussing it, then they would have wanted a word to call it by).

> but I'm guessing
> they are not the same as Marxist-Lenninists, as this passage implies.

I think every Marxist-Lenninists he encountered was a justificationist.

> I think he is saying that he likes being the only person in a room who
> believes something important and true that no one else in the room
> does, because he likes arguing with them and winning.

yes

> He is implying
> that critical rationalism is such a thing (something important and
> true),

yes. another such thing he mentioned is the economic calculation argument, which is a criticism of socialism from the economist Ludwig von Mises.

the economic calculation argument is a phrase that most people won't recognize, and it's not obvious it's something with a very specific meaning which you could look up.

it's also a right-wing argument which clashes with Popper's politics and with the politics of many members of the CR FB forum where RSP is posting. (Popper is a socialist sympathizer, whereas Mises is basically *maximally* anti-socialist.)

> and that people reading this comment are critical rationalists
> and are therefore all on his side and that his/their side is right and
> that arguing involves winning against the other side rather than
> together discovering more truth.

>> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and
>> apply it to various problems in different domains.

>> I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir
>> John Eccles,

> I don't know them to say if they were Popperian Knights.

>> but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to
>> Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of
>> Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for

> > example, and many others.

> It would be nice to have more than one example to support the "many others" comment.

yes. also, Alan's email pointed out that Tipler is not a Critical Rationalist. Alan provided a source link for his claim, unlike RSP.

> > Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

> He seems pretty sure that he's right about everything.

yeah!

> He thinks it is
> other people's cherished beliefs that will fall and wither and not
> his. I don't know how right or wrong he is about this.

here's my review of RSP's (bad) book, which he was unwilling to discuss with me:

http://curi.us/archives/list_category/69

he repeatedly claimed he did want to discuss, but then refused to do it. i thought that, plus some other things he said, indicated severe dishonesty.

> Overall, this post has a team-building element. He wants all of us
> reading it to feel like we are on the same, winning team. The sweet
> thing about this is that most people like being on a winning team and
> being part of a community. People will like him for this. The
> dangerous thing about this is that people may feel less inclined to
> criticize what he says and what each other say.

What impression does he want his readers to have of his text? Does he want them to read and think RSP likes team-building and is friendly with CR people? Or something else?

What's the post supposed to be about, and for?

> How much do you think this followup comment lies? Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

> If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.

> I don't know if I'll learn much from this exercise but I'm willing to give it a try and see what I think.

I think it's very important to be able to read text carefully, break things down into smaller pieces, and figure out what it says. I think going in depth on some text is a good way to work on that skill. (Better than doing a lot of text halfway.)

Lying is also a good topic to learn something about, but less important.

Elliot Temple
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From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: September 28, 2017 at 3:17:48 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 11:14 AM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 2:44 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> I think *close reading* is a really important skill which people don't work on enough – and usually haphazardly. I don't think people will get very far with learning if they don't try to methodically build up some skills. Being able to read passages and understand individual sentences is a skill people should get good at prior to thinking they understand a bunch of whole books they read. Before you can read a book *and understand it*, you need to be able to read a sentence *and understand it*.
>>
>> Why don't people do this?
>
> I'll give you my answers. I'm not sure about other people.
>
>> Is it ignorance of the option to try to do precise readings and post about them and get feedback? Unwillingness to ask me for help in a persistent thread over time?
>
> Yes.
>
>> Is it lack of humility? Thinking they already understand long texts like BoI, let alone individual passages in it, let alone basically all the sentences?
>
> No.
>
>> Is it thinking they'll fail at reading the passages above well (knowing something about their own inability), and not wanting to face that failure?
>
> Partly. I know I'll get a lot wrong the first time through, which is a little disappointing to face but not enough to stop me from trying.

FWIW I didn't think your comments so far had "a lot wrong". I thought what you said was mostly right, but incomplete.

> Is it being busy and not considering it a priority to make some serious effort at being able to understand written passages? They don't see the point? If someone wants to close read a non-philosophical passage and try to discuss the social lies and other features of it, that'd work too. But I think the passages above are particularly good samples to use.

These are also good passages because I know you've read them and thought about them some already.

> Is it thinking that rigorous, methodical study is for students in schools, not for competent, independent adults? Or just having negative associations with serious thinking or organized studying, due to school?

In a way it does feel like a chore. On the other hand, thinking of it like a school assignment also encourages me to do it because I have a history of wanting to please the teacher.

Will I want to follow through and keep posting until we're both satisfied? It seems unlikely but we'll see.

If someone does, perhaps you can learn a lot from reading the other posts later.

I would expect you to learn a lot from reading the answers (instead of figuring them out yourself) *after* you've already thought about it a lot.

It's one thing to just read an answer and go "that makes sense". IT's different if you first think about it a lot and miss it. Then you can see how you missed it, where you went wrong, and try to adjust your approach so you wouldn't miss it in the future.

Putting in some significant effort/thought at some point is really helpful to learning much. But I don't think you (Anne) should worry about doing it in a complete way at this time. If you just do at least one round of effortful thinking per topic, then I think you'll learn a lot more than if you read something passively.

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From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 4:45:17 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

First, I'm going to try to understand the quote by Jack Birner.

> Danny Frederick:
>
> > INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
> >
> > "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument.

makes sense. in general, if you don't believe in the power of critical argument, then you won't be attracted to CR which says to use critical argument.

> > Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

he thinks because of their pro-criticism personalities, CR ppl are less prone to do the social networking needed for their work to survive (compared to the average academic).

my thoughts:

- I agree there's a conflict between pro-criticism truth-seeking vs social.

- Why, though, is doing social networking needed in order for one's work to survive? I wouldn't be surprised if social networking is needed for your work to survive in the *academic* world. That's probably the only context he is considering.

> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations.

he thinks that until recently, CR was supported not only by philosophers, but also *scientists* who were willing to do the social stuff needed for their work to survive. this allowed CR to survive for awhile, too.

my thoughts:

- this seems to contradict what he said earlier, though. if these outstanding scientists were actually pro-crit ppl who supported CR, then they should have been *less prone* to do social networking. this was his claim at the start. that pro-crit ppl are less prone to do social.

- he didn't give any examples

> In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists.

he thinks that recently there's been these changes to the academic scientific environment and scientists are now less interested in CR philosophy.

> The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly.

he thinks it's now harder for some ideas to survive in this new academic environment.

> In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

this part is really confusing.

he thinks that in this new academic environment:

- the scientists' support of CR is lacking.

- (my guess at what he might be trying to say) the pro-crit nature of CR doesn't allow it survive well in this environment which requires ppl to possibly adopt or have access to elements of different traditions.

my thoughts:

- suppose CR is pro-crit and this conflicts with social networking. even if this is so, it doesn't mean CR ppl are resistant to adopting or having accessing to elements of different traditions. even if they don't do social networking, they can still access lots of different traditions. if anything, i'd think CR ppl would be *more* open to seeking out, considering, and adopting different traditions.

- i have a question about selection pressure. my understanding is that the environment creates selection pressure. and then different ideas (or genes) survive or die depending on how well they do when faced with the selection pressure.

so i think the author is saying that the selection pressures have increased in the academic environment.

but then he says "the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics…"

does this make sense? should it be that the *environment* is what selects against CR and it's pro-crit nature. doesn't the environment do the selecting? yet he's saying that the contents of CR do the selecting?

> The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

my guess is that he thinks that because CR ppl don't do social networking, this means they have no access to alternative traditions. this seems dumb. they can read about alternative traditions even if they don't do social networking.

also, i don't know how he made the jump from CR ppl being pro-crit and anti-social networking → to CR ppl being incapable of adopting alternative traditions. CR ppl care about truth-seeking more than others do. Presumably, they should be *better* at

changing their minds and adopting alternative traditions.

(left context)

> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the

personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism). And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 4:58:19 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 1:45 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>
> First, I'm going to try to understand the quote by Jack Birner.

I think the Birner quote is a mess and i don't care about it much. I thought your comments were generally OK, except you didn't include an overall summary of what it says/means. It's important, after doing a bunch of detail analysis, to also consider the big picture. Especially when your plan is to understand it so you can use it for a later project. To have a useful understanding of the quote to keep in your mind, you need to integrate the details into some overall concept you can then treat as one unit (or at least a small number of units, like 1-3). that way you can have it active in your mind with it only taking up a little space, and still have space in your mind leftover to analyze the LT text.

>> The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

> my guess is that he thinks that because CR ppl don't do social networking, this means they have no access to alternative traditions. this seems dumb. they can read about alternative traditions even if they don't do social networking.
>
> also, i don't know how he made the jump from CR ppl being pro-crit and anti-social networking → to CR ppl being incapable of adopting alternative traditions. CR ppl care about truth-seeking more than others do. Presumably, they should be *better* at changing their minds and adopting alternative traditions.

what does he even mean by *adopting* an alternative tradition? does that mean switching to it, so that you aren't CR anymore?

what does he mean about "entrenched"? aren't entrenched things hard to get rid of? but he says entrenchment would make it extinct.

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From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 7:04:09 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:58 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Sep 28, 2017, at 1:45 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>>
>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
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>> First, I'm going to try to understand the quote by Jack Birner.
>
> I think the Birner quote is a mess and i don't care about it much. I thought your comments were generally OK, except you didn't include an overall summary of what it says/means. It's important, after doing a bunch of detail analysis, to also consider the big picture. Especially when your plan is to understand it so you can use it for a later project. To have a useful understanding of the quote to keep in your mind, you need to integrate the details into some overall concept you can then treat as one unit (or at least a small number of units, like 1-3). that way you can have it active in your mind with it only taking up a little space, and still have space in your mind leftover to analyze the LT text.

yeah, gp.

my summary of the Birner quote:

social networking is necessary for your ideas to survive in the academic world. in general, CR ppl are pro-crit and (hence) *less* prone to do this required social networking.

then there's a bunch of messy confusion where Birner seems to claim that (pro-crit and anti-social) CR keeps it's adherents from being able to adopt or have access to alternative traditions. and this somehow puts CR at risk for both(?) entrenchment and extinction.

> > > The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

> my guess is that he thinks that because CR ppl don't do social networking, this means they have no access to alternative traditions. this seems dumb. they can read about alternative traditions even if they don't do social networking.
>
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> what does he even mean by *adopting* an alternative tradition? does that mean switching to it, so that you aren't CR anymore?
>
> what does he mean about "entrenched"? aren't entrenched things hard to get rid of? but he says entrenchment would make it extinct.

oh yeah. heh.

———

one thing i noticed while doing a slow read of the Birner quote is that once I noticed some nonsense, i found it harder to put in the effort in trying to understand *potentially more nonsense*.

it's easier to do a slow, effortful read with Rand quotes cuz you know you'll probably get some useful knowledge out of it. knowledge you can build on and use again.

but with quotes like this, it's harder to want to put in that much effort.

i'm going to start doing more of these exercises with Oism quotes, btw. i'm going to aim for doing this 5 days a week and see how it goes.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Reading Interpretation Variation
Date: September 28, 2017 at 8:26:55 PM

So far everyone's comments on the text analysis (subject: "Exercise: Analyzing Lies")
have been *different*.

And there's lots of step-skipping – skip *stating what you think the text means* to
replying to what you think the text means.

But that doesn't work well when everyone is reading the text differently.

I think this is a huge problem in tons of conversations. People aren't on the same page
about what lots of the statements mean, then try to debate the statements.

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From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 8:31:32 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 2:05 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 28, 2017, at 10:20 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 7:11 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 9:13 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 5:12 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

>>>> I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.
>>>>
>>>> In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?

> > Academic journal gatekeepers and university administrators in charge of hiring don't care about critical tests.

> Right okay, but then they seem to be playing a totally different kind of game than a CR person would care about, and using a different criteria of survival.

People often see stuff as mixed. E.g. you can have some criticisms of academic journal gatekeeping while also valuing the substance of the articles and wanting to participate in those discussions.

> > Social status games are irrelevant to its epistemological survival. So there is a different standard of survival than the epistemological standard which is being assumed.
> >
> > If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like writing

> > Maybe they think critical arguments are effective for some things and not other things.

> Well, okay, but I think I'd need clarity on what they mean by a theory surviving.

I don't think you're going to get what you want. I don't think their thought process works that way. E.g. I think you want *one* meaning (and would consider that an essential part of clarity), but I think they mean different things at different times.

I see :(

I do that sometimes too (use multiple meanings of the same word) but I don't realize it unless someone points it out.

> > > > > > Source:
> > > > > >
> > > > > > https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches
> > > > > >
> > > > > > Lulie Tanett:

> > > > > While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

> > > > What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?

> > > Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."

> > Why might LT call that a "spirit" instead of a "point" or "argument"?

> Well, one reason might be that it makes it easier for her to deny a criticism that applies to the quote also applies to her, cuz she can say she was just agreeing with the SPIRIT

Why does it give her more deniability?

If she says she agrees with the point or argument of the quote, then a criticism that applies to the quote would clearly apply to her. She would be putting herself out there.

But if she says she just likes the spirit, and then she sees a criticism that applies to the quote, she can come up with an ad hoc argument that she thinks will evade the criticism of the quote.

> > > Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

> > I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.

> How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing?

I'm not sure how to characterize amounts of thought put into an emotion in a meaningful way.

I was thinking of sympathy as an intellectual opinion. You bring up another possibility which is worth considering! OK, so:

Do you think LT *felt* a sympathy emotion, vividly, in the same kind of way one might very noticeably feel fear, joy or anger?

No. If she had, I would expect it to have been reflected in some way in what she wrote.

Do you think she had that *experience*, and that's what she's reporting with her

> statement?

No.

>> Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?

> She seems pretty sympathetic to the idea that "lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have." She spends time addressing this concern in the post. These parts seem directly focused on addressing that concern:

>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

> That looks more *argumentative* than sympathetic to me.

> E.g., do you see sympathy in a "Why would [that thing you believe]?" type question?

No.

> Do you see sympathy in how LT used "But"?

No.

> Imagine a person who felt sympathy with the poor. Imagine he vividly felt it, and had that emotional experience on his mind for the next few minutes while writing comments. What sort of tone would he use?

A tone that's less directly argumentative. Something like "I totally get where you are coming on this. One thing I would suggest you consider is…"

> Would he say, e.g., "But rich people can be moral in all sorts of ways, and why would poverty be special?" (This is not an exact analogy!)

Heh no, gp.

>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> Does calling the other guy's view an "assumption", and then calling it false, sound sympathetic to you?

No.

> Which text struck you as sympathetic?

I withdraw my claim that it's sympathetic.

>>> What is LT more optimistic about?
>>>
>>> She says later:
>>>
>>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>>
>>> So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)
>>
>> Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?
>
> I did not see any indication that she had.

I agree, which is notable considering she's been told about it multiple times and read Rand.

So what sort of thought process is behind LT's optimism? Evasion? Lack of thinking? Thinking about some things and not others?

I would say evasion since she's had it pointed out and read Rand. So she's on notice of the issue.

> And what sort of thought process is she trying to communicate to most readers? What would be a reasonable thought process, in general, for a reader to expect to have gone into a statement similar to LT's?

I'm not sure.

Can you come up with some thought process, in her mind, which would make sense from her perspective, that would lead a reasonable person to write what LT wrote?

No.

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

> How did LT compare these amounts?

No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right?

Yes.

What's the purpose of writing "far"?

Maybe she's trying to convey some emotional attitude?

How does "far" change the meaning?

I'm not sure. In the context of how I read it, "far" doesn't make sense.

What's the point of the statement as a whole? Why is it relevant to mention her or Danny's optimism? What does she want a reader to take away?

I don't know the answers to any of these questions.

Do you think LT is optimistic?

I have no reason to think that she is.

Do you think she's lying about her optimism?

I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.

> Why might she do that? And why wouldn't she?
>
> > Is LT engaged in any public activities in accordance with her optimism?
> >
> > I am not aware of her being so involved.
>
> Why would a person be optimistic but then not act like it? Think she's lying? Or perhaps it's a failure of introspection?

Lots of people have contradictory ideas and don't resolve the contradictions. So theoretically somebody could have some optimism that's disconnected from their other ideas and doesn't lead to much action. I guess you could call that the result of a failure of introspection.

> Think she put a reasonable effort into introspection?

I'd guess not

> > Is anyone else?
> >
> > In terms of CR people? Don't know of any notable efforts besides yours atm.
>
> Do you think my efforts are the source of LT's optimism? 🙃

No lol.

-JM

--
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For more options, visit https://groups.google.com/d/optout.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 28, 2017 at 10:02:01 PM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:04 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:58 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 1:45 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>>>
>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>>>
>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>>
>>> First, I'm going to try to understand the quote by Jack Birner.
>>
>> I think the Birner quote is a mess and i don't care about it much. I thought your comments were generally OK, except you didn't include an overall summary of what it says/means. It's important, after doing a bunch of detail analysis, to also consider the big picture. Especially when your plan is to understand it so you can use it for a later project. To have a useful understanding of the quote to keep in your mind, you need to integrate the details into some overall concept you can then treat as one unit (or at least a small number of units, like 1-3). that way you can have it active in your mind with it only taking up a little space, and still have space in your mind leftover to analyze the LT text.
>
> yeah, gp.
>
> my summary of the Birner quote:

> social networking is necessary for your ideas to survive in the academic world. in general, CR ppl are pro-crit and (hence) *less* prone to do this required social networking.

ok. i think that's tentatively good enough to continue. you could revise it if you run into a problem later.

> one thing i noticed while doing a slow read of the Birner quote is that once I noticed some nonsense, i found it harder to put in the effort in trying to understand *potentially more nonsense*.

you got progressively more bored while reading something bad? yeah i've run into that before... lol sigh

Elliot Temple
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From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 12:53:17 AM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 5:31 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 28, 2017, at 2:05 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 10:20 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 7:11 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 9:13 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 5:12 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
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>>>> I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.
>>>>
>>>> In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing

certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?

Academic journal gatekeepers and university administrators in charge of hiring don't care about critical tests.

Right okay, but then they seem to be playing a totally different kind of game than a CR person would care about, and using a different criteria of survival.

People often see stuff as mixed. E.g. you can have some criticisms of academic journal gatekeeping while also valuing the substance of the articles and wanting to participate in those discussions.

Social status games are irrelevant to its epistemological survival. So there is a different standard of survival than the epistemological standard which is being assumed.

If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like writing

Maybe they think critical arguments are effective for some things and not other things.

Well, okay, but I think I'd need clarity on what they mean by a theory surviving.

I don't think you're going to get what you want. I don't think their thought process works that way. E.g. I think you want *one* meaning (and would consider that an essential part of clarity), but I think they mean different things at different times.

I see :(

I do that sometimes too (use multiple meanings of the same word) but I don't realize it unless someone points it out.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

> > > > Lulie Tanett:
> > > >
> > > > > While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
> > >
> > > What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?
> >
> > Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."
>
> Why might LT call that a "spirit" instead of a "point" or "argument"?

Well, one reason might be that it makes it easier for her to deny a criticism that applies to the quote also applies to her, cuz she can say she was just agreeing with the SPIRIT

Why does it give her more deniability?

If she says she agrees with the point or argument of the quote, then a criticism that applies to the quote would clearly apply to her. She would be putting herself out there.

But if she says she just likes the spirit, and then she sees a criticism that applies to the quote, she can come up with an ad hoc argument that she thinks will evade the criticism of the quote.

right. so LT hasn't actually said she agrees with any of the arguments or conclusions. so what *has* she said? what does sympathizing with, or liking, the spirit actually involve?

> > > Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?
> >
> > I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.
>
> How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing?

I'm not sure how to characterize amounts of thought put into an emotion in a meaningful way.

I was thinking of sympathy as an intellectual opinion. You bring up another possibility

> which is worth considering! OK, so:
>
> Do you think LT *felt* a sympathy emotion, vividly, in the same kind of way one might very noticeably feel fear, joy or anger?

No. If she had, I would expect it to have been reflected in some way in what she wrote.

> Do you think she had that *experience*, and that's what she's reporting with her statement?

No.

So did she say she felt sympathy, but she didn't, and therefore she's lying? Or something else?

> > Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?
>
> She seems pretty sympathetic to the idea that "lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have." She spends time addressing this concern in the post. These parts seem directly focused on addressing that concern:
>
> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> That looks more *argumentative* than sympathetic to me.
>
> E.g., do you see sympathy in a "Why would [that thing you believe]?" type question?

No.

> Do you see sympathy in how LT used "But"?

No.

> Imagine a person who felt sympathy with the poor. Imagine he vividly felt it, and had that emotional experience on his mind for the next few minutes while writing comments. What sort of tone would he use?

A tone that's less directly argumentative. Something like "I totally get where you are coming on this. One thing I would suggest you consider is…"

> Would he say, e.g., "But rich people can be moral in all sorts of ways, and why would poverty be special?" (This is not an exact analogy!)

Heh no, gp.

>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> Does calling the other guy's view an "assumption", and then calling it false, sound sympathetic to you?

No.

> Which text struck you as sympathetic?

I withdraw my claim that it's sympathetic.

Any idea what interpreting mistake(s) you made and how to avoid them in the future?

> What is LT more optimistic about?

She says later:

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?

> > I did not see any indication that she had.

> I agree, which is notable considering she's been told about it multiple times and read Rand.
>
> So what sort of thought process is behind LT's optimism? Evasion? Lack of thinking? Thinking about some things and not others?

I would say evasion since she's had it pointed out and read Rand. So she's on notice of the issue.

> And what sort of thought process is she trying to communicate to most readers? What would be a reasonable thought process, in general, for a reader to expect to have gone into a statement similar to LT's?

I'm not sure.

> Can you come up with some thought process, in her mind, which would make sense from her perspective, that would lead a reasonable person to write what LT wrote?

No.

Does she come off more unsure or confident? Wise or newbie? Lecturing or trying to learn? Knowing what she's talking about, or trying to figure it out as she goes along?

What indicators communicate these things, and is LT responsible for them and in control of them?

Whatever way she comes off, consider what it implies about her thought processes. E.g. if she presents herself as wise, she's communicating that her conclusions had some sort of wise, reasonable thought process that went into them. But if she communicates she's a beginner, then people might expect some of her conclusions to be some crap she made up and didn't know how to figure out if it's any good or not. Whatever the implications, are they true?

> > > > How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

> > > > He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

> How did LT compare these amounts?

No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right?

Yes.

> What's the purpose of writing "far"?

Maybe she's trying to convey some emotional attitude?

> How does "far" change the meaning?

I'm not sure. In the context of how I read it, "far" doesn't make sense.

What's the point of the statement as a whole? Why is it relevant to mention her or Danny's optimism? What does she want a reader to take away?

I don't know the answers to any of these questions.

Part of one reading: LT's saying she *disagrees*. Her talk of optimism is an indirect way to challenge Danny (or Birner) and start arguing against him and his perspective. In this reading, "far" is an intensifier which helps indicate she disagrees a lot instead of a little.

Do you want to continue from here?

If you want me to give more answers, feel free to ask.

> Do you think LT is optimistic?

I have no reason to think that she is.

Do you think she's lying about her optimism?

> I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.

In short: is what they said false? And should they have known it was false?

>> Why might she do that? And why wouldn't she?
>>
>>> Is LT engaged in any public activities in accordance with her optimism?
>>
>>> I am not aware of her being so involved.
>>
>> Why would a person be optimistic but then not act like it? Think she's lying? Or perhaps it's a failure of introspection?

> Lots of people have contradictory ideas and don't resolve the contradictions. So theoretically somebody could have some optimism that's disconnected from their other ideas and doesn't lead to much action. I guess you could call that the result of a failure of introspection.

People are often confused. But they have a choice for how arrogant or humble to be. They have a choice of whether to try to play the role of the wise non-confused person, and present themselves that way, or not. So I think there's a dishonesty issue here.

Elliot Temple
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From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 9:55:44 AM

On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:45 PM, Kate Sams ksams434@gmail.com [fallible-ideas]
<fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>
>>> Lulie Tanett:
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>>>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

LT doesn't say what she thinks the spirit of Birner's post is. i think the spirit is something like CR is doomed cuz CR ppl don't want to do the social networking required.

maybe LT sympathizes with the idea that it's *hard* to be a critical rationalist who also does social networking. maybe she agrees there's some conflict there, yet she's more optimistic that CR can find a way to survive.

but then reading on just in the next section, LT treats social networking as nothing special. she implies it's like any other interest in terms of it's compatibility with CR. so it's doesn't make sense for her to sympathize with the idea that it's hard to mesh CR and social networking.

so, at a minimum, it's unclear what she's sympathizing with and why. but it also could be that she's lying about sympathizing with the spirit of the post.

>>>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social

> > networking and politicking.
>
> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

LT is lying to herself if she thinks that social networking and politicking is just like any other interest a critical rationalist can have.

> > Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

there's not always a way of explaining an idea *which criticizes a pro-social-network-type person* which isn't off-putting to that person.

why not?

consider how ppl succeed at social networking.

successful social networking requires orienting to people. it requires significant thinking about what other ppl's thoughts might be, what their expectations might be, what their desires might be, what they are feeling, etc.

to be successful at social networking, you often need to tell them what they want to hear, even if it's untrue. you often need to remain silent, even if there's something you want to say (e.g. a criticism).

this isn't truth-seeking. this isn't genuine critical debate.

and, in general, if you value social networking, i think you *are* going to be off-put by criticisms of certain ideas of yours.

> > it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm

ok. but most people don't know how to receive unbounded crit or crit on certain ideas of theirs without feeling destabilized. so they do end up disliking criticism.

> ; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

with ppl who care about and are trying to succeed at social networking?

meta-comment on these last 4 sections of my text: LT seems biased. maybe she's wants social stuff to be compatible with CR. consequently, her arguments are actually dishonest rationalizations used to "support" her preferred conclusion.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

this isn't an argument, but is what LT wrote dishonest? maybe it's dishonest to pretend that making an assertion and a name drop are acceptable replacements for an explanation.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

i agree that Birner seems to hold this premise.

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

my guess is this is true.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

idk if this is true or not.

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

idk if the phrase "unpleasant academic tedium" is dishonest or not. i think the phrase tries to minimize the issue of this general incompatibility between CR and social networking. grading papers could be thought of as "unpleasant academic tedium".

but, otoh, if LT doesn't think there's an incompatibility there, then maybe that's how she sees it. but i guess you could ask *how* she's able to not see any incompatibility there...

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

this is a dishonest portrayal of the quote.

Birner doesn't think the problem is that CR ppl fail to reach the *higher* levels of social networking skill and interest, which you might see in the exuberant promoter/social type.

instead, Birner's quote says that CR ppl are less prone than even the *average* academic to devote resources to social networking.

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

idk if this sentence is an argument for doing social networking? or if it's purpose is to counter Birner's idea that CR ppl aren't accessing nor adopting alternative traditions?

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

i'm not aware that DD is currently still writing about CR, but he might be. idk.

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

idk if this is true or not

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 1:14:35 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:45 PM, Kate Sams ksams434@gmail.com [fallible-ideas]
> <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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> > required.

And because they're bad at social politicking, which may be why they don't want to.
Birner was vague (at least in that specific quote), but I think this is part of the issue.

> maybe LT sympathizes with the idea that it's *hard* to be a critical rationalist who also
> does social networking. maybe she agrees there's some conflict there, yet she's more
> optimistic that CR can find a way to survive.
>
> but then reading on just in the next section, LT treats social networking as nothing

> special. she implies it's like any other interest in terms of it's compatibility with CR. so it's doesn't make sense for her to sympathize with the idea that it's hard to mesh CR and social networking.
>
> so, at a minimum, it's unclear what she's sympathizing with and why. but it also could be that she's lying about sympathizing with the spirit of the post.

Do you think Birner's goal was to have readers sympathize with the spirit of what he wrote?

What would you think if someone read Atlas Shrugged and said, "I sympathize with the spirit of this book, but I'm far more optimistic than Ayn Rand."?

> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
> >
> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> LT is lying to herself if she thinks that social networking and politicking is just like any other interest a critical rationalist can have.

Why did you make this an "if" statement?

Do you think LT is lying to herself? How do you read her passage?

Social politicking is *different* than various other things. E.g. a blacksmith might say, "You don't need to use a hammer? That's so different!"

The issue is: what sort of differences are important? When LT says it's "not special" she's allowing it to have some unimportant differences. So she's not claiming it's "...just like any other interest..."

LT is saying social politicking doesn't have some crucial, important ("special") differences from other interests. E.g. LT may think it has nothing special to make it critical-argument-incompatible.

So, you should try to figure out what differences LT is denying, and then point out what cases she's mistaken about.

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

there's not always a way of explaining an idea *which criticizes a pro-social-network-type person* which isn't off-putting to that person.

why not?

consider how ppl succeed at social networking.

successful social networking requires orienting to people. it requires significant thinking about what other ppl's thoughts might be, what their expectations might be, what their desires might be, what they are feeling, etc.

to be successful at social networking, you often need to tell them what they want to hear, even if it's untrue. you often need to remain silent, even if there's something you want to say (e.g. a criticism).

this isn't truth-seeking. this isn't genuine critical debate.

and, in general, if you value social networking, i think you *are* going to be off-put by criticisms of certain ideas of yours.

You're trying to debate LT. If the debate continued, I think I know roughly what LT would reply. She would use a problems-are-soluble type argument from BoI. She would say that sharing better ideas with these people, in some way that they like, doesn't violate the laws of physics. (I think that exact statement, about the laws of physics, is correct.)

One reason you may be unaware that LT had this argument in mind is that she didn't write it.

I suggest trying to analyze what she did write. How is it supposed to persuade anyone? What discussion methods is LT's text trying to use? How's it supposed to work? Are there arguments, assertions, questions, unwritten implications, a mix, or what?

Why is LT talking about an assumption? Why is she guessing its content?

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm

> ok. but most people don't know how to receive unbounded crit or crit on certain ideas of theirs without feeling destabilized. so they do end up disliking criticism.

When You say "ok. but..." I think you're skipping steps.

What's OK? LT's passage. What does LT's passage say? You skipped the step of writing your interpretation of what LT said and went straight to replying to the interpretation in your head.

There are some problems with doing this:

- the current activity goal is analysis, not debate

- if you interpret incorrectly, then reply to your unwritten interpretation, it will be really hard for people to understand you (this is a common problem in discussions in general)

- if you interpret correctly, but other people interpret incorrectly, they'll have a hard time understanding you. that's common.

- the author might have written X and meant Y. if you reply to X without stating X, that'll lead to confusion. that's common.

- you aren't sharing your interpretation to discussion and criticism

in general (when not trying to do textual analysis), you aren't going to state interpretations of everything. it'd be too wordy. it's unnecessary. but you need to watch out for confusing parts, tricky parts, ambiguous parts, etc, and then take extra steps to avoid misunderstandings about those parts.

in philosophy conversations, commonly no one is understanding each other. people should write way more simply and also state their interpretations of writing more.

here, LT's passage has some common indicators that it's time to slow down and be careful (e.g. by writing out how you read her text before continuing).

one indicator is the "not ... dislike" double negative. when you see many negative phrasings, even without a double negative, be careful! those often make text confusing. there's other negatives too like the "dislike ... being called bad".

another indicator to be careful is, when quoting, you broke up LT's text mid-sentence. and part of why you did that is she wrote a long, complicated sentence.

> > ; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
>
> with ppl who care about and are trying to succeed at social networking?
>
> meta-comment on these last 4 sections of my text: LT seems biased. maybe she's wants social stuff to be compatible with CR. consequently, her arguments are actually dishonest rationalizations used to "support" her preferred conclusion.

i agree, but i don't think you've adequately written out and explained how you determined that.

> > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.
>
> this isn't an argument, but is what LT wrote dishonest? maybe it's dishonest to pretend that making an assertion and a name drop are acceptable replacements for an explanation.

Here you could try to analyze the text by considering who "people" refers to. All people?

> > Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).
>
> i agree that Birner seems to hold this premise.
>
> > But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.
>
> my guess is this is true.

Why is LT saying this?

What is LT's reasoning for it?

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

idk if this is true or not.

Why does LT think it's true? How did she expect her text to persuade you?

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

idk if the phrase "unpleasant academic tedium" is dishonest or not. i think the phrase tries to minimize the issue of this general incompatibility between CR and social networking. grading papers could be thought of as "unpleasant academic tedium".

but, otoh, if LT doesn't think there's an incompatibility there, then maybe that's how she sees it. but i guess you could ask *how* she's able to not see any incompatibility there...

How does LT know that the problem, "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?" has a solution? what's she trying to say? is she correct? do you agree with her?

as above, i think Kate is skipping steps and debating rather than doing textual analysis.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

this is a dishonest portrayal of the quote.

Birner doesn't think the problem is that CR ppl fail to reach the *higher* levels of social networking skill and interest, which you might see in the exuberant promoter/social type.

instead, Birner's quote says that CR ppl are less prone than even the *average*

> academic to devote resources to social networking.

I find Kate's text hard to follow here. I think it's replying to an unstated reading of LT's text which differs from mine.

>>> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
>>> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

> idk if this sentence is an argument for doing social networking? or if it's purpose is to counter Birner's idea that CR ppl aren't accessing nor adopting alternative traditions?

Try to break this text down. What does each piece mean, and then what is LT trying to say overall? You could analyze it grammatically and figure out the phrases and clauses if necessary.

>>> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

> i'm not aware that DD is currently still writing about CR, but he might be. idk.

Why is LT saying this? Why does (and does?) LT expect readers to find it convincing? What's her point, and how does it relate to the rest of her message?

>>> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

> idk if this is true or not

Do you think you understood LT's message as a whole? If so, please share that understanding! If not, what steps would you take next if you wanted to understand it by yourself (no asking me or LT!)? (I'm not saying to do those steps, just state them.)

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: figg <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 6:53:53 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 12:53 AM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

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>>>>>> I could see it meaning either one's ideas, or the followers one persuades to adopt one's ideas. I'm going to assume it means ideas from hereon out since that makes more sense to me.

> > In the context of someone who believes in the power of critical argument, what is meant by their intellectual offspring *surviving*? And how could a lack of playing certain social games *threaten the survival* of an idea that can stand up to critical tests?

> Academic journal gatekeepers and university administrators in charge of hiring don't care about critical tests.

Right okay, but then they seem to be playing a totally different kind of game than a CR person would care about, and using a different criteria of survival.

People often see stuff as mixed. E.g. you can have some criticisms of academic journal gatekeeping while also valuing the substance of the articles and wanting to participate in those discussions.

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> > If someone actually believed in the effectiveness of criticism and discussion, why would they accept the premise that social networking and academic politicking are necessary for their intellectual offspring to survive? If the second part of the sentence is true, then the belief in the power of critical argument is mistaken. It's sort of like writing

> Maybe they think critical arguments are effective for some things and not other things.

Well, okay, but I think I'd need clarity on what they mean by a theory surviving.

I don't think you're going to get what you want. I don't think their thought process works that way. E.g. I think you want *one* meaning (and would consider that an essential part of clarity), but I think they mean different things at different times.

I see :(

I do that sometimes too (use multiple meanings of the same word) but I don't realize it unless someone points it out.

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Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?

Something like "CR is maybe gonna die cuz we can't do social stuffs good enough in academia."

Why might LT call that a "spirit" instead of a "point" or "argument"?

Well, one reason might be that it makes it easier for her to deny a criticism that applies to the quote also applies to her, cuz she can say she was just agreeing with the SPIRIT

Why does it give her more deniability?

If she says she agrees with the point or argument of the quote, then a criticism that applies to the quote would clearly apply to her. She would be putting herself out there.

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right. so LT hasn't actually said she agrees with any of the arguments or conclusions. so what *has* she said? what does sympathizing with, or liking, the spirit actually involve?

hmm 🤔🤔🤔

Does it not really mean anything of substance?

Is it just a socially-calibrated attempt to trick people into treating claims more favorably by pretending to be on their side?

Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.

How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing?

I'm not sure how to characterize amounts of thought put into an emotion in a meaningful way.

I was thinking of sympathy as an intellectual opinion. You bring up another possibility which is worth considering! OK, so:

Do you think LT *felt* a sympathy emotion, vividly, in the same kind of way one might very noticeably feel fear, joy or anger?

No. If she had, I would expect it to have been reflected in some way in what she wrote.

Do you think she had that *experience*, and that's what she's reporting with her statement?

No.

So did she say she felt sympathy, but she didn't, and therefore she's lying? Or something else?

Lying sounds plausible.

Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?

She seems pretty sympathetic to the idea that "lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have." She spends time addressing this concern in the post. These parts seem directly focused on addressing that concern:

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

That looks more *argumentative* than sympathetic to me.

E.g., do you see sympathy in a "Why would [that thing you believe]?" type question?

No.

> Do you see sympathy in how LT used "But"?

No.

> Imagine a person who felt sympathy with the poor. Imagine he vividly felt it, and had that emotional experience on his mind for the next few minutes while writing comments. What sort of tone would he use?

A tone that's less directly argumentative. Something like "I totally get where you are coming on this. One thing I would suggest you consider is…"

> Would he say, e.g., "But rich people can be moral in all sorts of ways, and why would poverty be special?" (This is not an exact analogy!)

Heh no, gp.

>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> Does calling the other guy's view an "assumption", and then calling it false, sound sympathetic to you?

No.

> Which text struck you as sympathetic?

I withdraw my claim that it's sympathetic.

Any idea what interpreting mistake(s) you made and how to avoid them in the future?

I think I accept people's framing of their own comments very easily. Not sure what to do about that.

> What is LT more optimistic about?

> > She says later:

> > > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

> > > So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

> > Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?

> I did not see any indication that she had.

I agree, which is notable considering she's been told about it multiple times and read Rand.

So what sort of thought process is behind LT's optimism? Evasion? Lack of thinking? Thinking about some things and not others?

I would say evasion since she's had it pointed out and read Rand. So she's on notice of the issue.

> And what sort of thought process is she trying to communicate to most readers? What would be a reasonable thought process, in general, for a reader to expect to have gone into a statement similar to LT's?

I'm not sure.

> Can you come up with some thought process, in her mind, which would make sense from her perspective, that would lead a reasonable person to write what LT wrote?

No.

Does she come off more unsure or confident? Wise or newbie? Lecturing or trying to learn? Knowing what she's talking about, or trying to figure it out as she goes along?

Definitely trying to come off as lecturing.

> What indicators communicate these things,

One indication is there's no genuine questions. There's some rhetorical question-asking but it's about setting up a question to answer, not about learning about and engaging with the perspective of the other participant in the discussion. (e.g. "Why would social networking and politicking be special?" followed by an answer)

Another indicator is assuming agreement from people who seem like authorities ("Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.")

Another indicator is speaking from a position of authority on critical rationalism ("But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. ")

> and is LT responsible for them and in control of them?

sure.

> Whatever way she comes off, consider what it implies about her thought processes. E.g. if she presents herself as wise, she's communicating that her conclusions had some sort of wise, reasonable thought process that went into them. But if she communicates she's a beginner, then people might expect some of her conclusions to be some crap she made up and didn't know how to figure out if it's any good or not. Whatever the implications, are they true?

She presents as an expert but I don't think she is.

>> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

>> How did LT compare these amounts?

No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right?

Yes.

> What's the purpose of writing "far"?

Maybe she's trying to convey some emotional attitude?

> How does "far" change the meaning?

I'm not sure. In the context of how I read it, "far" doesn't make sense.

What's the point of the statement as a whole? Why is it relevant to mention her or Danny's optimism? What does she want a reader to take away?

I don't know the answers to any of these questions.

Part of one reading: LT's saying she *disagrees*. Her talk of optimism is an indirect way to challenge Danny (or Birner) and start arguing against him and his perspective. In this reading, "far" is an intensifier which helps indicate she disagrees a lot instead of a little.

Do you want to continue from here?

If you want me to give more answers, feel free to ask.

I'm not sure I get it. Why indirectly challenge someone instead of saying you disagree, but then (indirectly) say you disagree a LOT? If you wanna say you disagree with someone, wouldn't it be much better to state so openly instead of doing intensified indirectness??

> Do you think LT is optimistic?

I have no reason to think that she is.

Do you think she's lying about her optimism?

I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.

In short: is what they said false? And should they have known it was false?

Ah so "should they have known" is where I think some part of me disagrees.

Since I think when evaluating when someone is lying, I typically ask "DID they know?"

> Why might she do that? And why wouldn't she?

>> Is LT engaged in any public activities in accordance with her optimism?

>> I am not aware of her being so involved.

> Why would a person be optimistic but then not act like it? Think she's lying? Or perhaps it's a failure of introspection?

> Lots of people have contradictory ideas and don't resolve the contradictions. So theoretically somebody could have some optimism that's disconnected from their other ideas and doesn't lead to much action. I guess you could call that the result of a failure of introspection.

> People are often confused. But they have a choice for how arrogant or humble to be. They have a choice of whether to try to play the role of the wise non-confused person, and present themselves that way, or not. So I think there's a dishonesty issue here.

I agree with that, yeah.

-JM

From: 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] Alan's Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 6:58:39 PM

On 28 Sep 2017, at 08:45, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

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> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
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Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

The first half of the sentence and the second half of the sentence contradict one another. This is a polite way of saying she thinks the post is crap.

I agree that's the general idea.

I think it's worth analyzing in a different more detailed way. Here's what I asked Justin about this sentence:

What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?

The spirit of the post is that CR is dying cuz CR people don't do enough

politicking/social stuff.

> Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

She thinks that it would be good for CR people to do more politicking/social stuff.

> What is LT more optimistic about?

LT thinks that CR people could learn to do politicking/social stuff.

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is?

LT thinks Frederick is very pessimistic: he thinks CR will die.

> How optimistic does LT think LT is?

LT thinks she is very optimistic. She thinks CR can thrive.

> How did LT compare these amounts?

She claims CR can spread to many more kinds of people than just academics, e.g. - skeptics. But she thinks Fredericks' position is that even academics will dump CR.

Alan

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Alan's Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 7:16:15 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:58 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:

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If that's what LT meant, why didn't she make any clear statement like, "I agree with you that politicking/social stuff is important."?

LT expressed some doubts about how important academia is. Influence in academia is what the politicking/social stuff being discussed is for, so she may not be in favor of politicking/social stuff (though she does also say CR people can do it). She has a paragraph challenging academia's importance, saying academia has flaws, and mentioning blogs positively. LT also said people from diverse (that is, including non-academic) backgrounds were getting into CR.

I think you may be getting this reading more from trying to make sense of LT's position, rather than from what she wrote. I don't think LT actually tried to express a reasonable position. Most of her post is making non-textually-based guesses about what DF/JB meant and then attacking those (which leaves me doubting her sympathy!)

> What is LT more optimistic about?

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I agree with your comments except for what I said above. I have another question about this part:

Why does LT sympathize with the *spirit of the post* instead of *the post*? Why the indirection?

Elliot Temple
Get my philosophy newsletter:
www.fallibleideas.com/newsletter

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 7:45:08 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:53 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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> Is it just a socially-calibrated attempt to trick people into treating claims more favorably by pretending to be on their side?

I think it's along those lines, plus it's a lie. There's lots of ways to do social calibration stuff without lying, so I think the lying aspect is notable (you do mention "trick", which could indicate lying, but you could do a socially-calibrated trick for getting attention for your message without lying about anything).

> > > > > > Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?
> > > > > >
> > > > > > I'd guess she thinks lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have.
> > > > >
> > > > > How much thought do you think LT put into sympathizing?
> > > >
> > > > I'm not sure how to characterize amounts of thought put into an emotion in a meaningful way.
> > >
> > > I was thinking of sympathy as an intellectual opinion. You bring up another possibility which is worth considering! OK, so:
> > >
> > > Do you think LT *felt* a sympathy emotion, vividly, in the same kind of way one might very noticeably feel fear, joy or anger?
> >
> > No. If she had, I would expect it to have been reflected in some way in what she wrote.
> >
> > > Do you think she had that *experience*, and that's what she's reporting with her statement?
> >
> > No.
> >
> > So did she say she felt sympathy, but she didn't, and therefore she's lying? Or something else?
>
> Lying sounds plausible.
>
> > > > Do you see any signs of sympathy later in her post?

> > She seems pretty sympathetic to the idea that "lack of success at social stuff in academia is a reasonable concern for CR people to have." She spends time addressing this concern in the post. These parts seem directly focused on addressing that concern:
>
> > > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> That looks more *argumentative* than sympathetic to me.
>
> E.g., do you see sympathy in a "Why would [that thing you believe]?" type question?

No.

> Do you see sympathy in how LT used "But"?

No.

> Imagine a person who felt sympathy with the poor. Imagine he vividly felt it, and had that emotional experience on his mind for the next few minutes while writing comments. What sort of tone would he use?

A tone that's less directly argumentative. Something like "I totally get where you are coming on this. One thing I would suggest you consider is…"

> Would he say, e.g., "But rich people can be moral in all sorts of ways, and why would poverty be special?" (This is not an exact analogy!)

Heh no, gp.

> > Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> Does calling the other guy's view an "assumption", and then calling it false, sound sympathetic to you?

No.

Which text struck you as sympathetic?

I withdraw my claim that it's sympathetic.

Any idea what interpreting mistake(s) you made and how to avoid them in the future?

I think I accept people's framing of their own comments very easily. Not sure what to do about that.

Ah, that makes sense.

I think that's common and is why dishonest framings are often effective. People also commonly do dishonest *reframings*, both of things they said in the past and of stuff other people said. They will talk about something you said (or their own past comments) *as if* it said something different than what it actually said – then lots of the audience will accept that framing.

To get better at this, I'd suggest doing more close reading stuff, and also specifically trying to look at how people are framing stuff (e.g. what they want you to think) and whether that's true.

What is LT more optimistic about?

She says later:

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

So maybe she's optimistic cuz she thinks CR people can be the academic version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

Do you think LT thought about that integrity issue?

I did not see any indication that she had.

I agree, which is notable considering she's been told about it multiple times and

> > read Rand.
> >
> > So what sort of thought process is behind LT's optimism? Evasion? Lack of thinking? Thinking about some things and not others?
>
> I would say evasion since she's had it pointed out and read Rand. So she's on notice of the issue.
>
> > And what sort of thought process is she trying to communicate to most readers? What would be a reasonable thought process, in general, for a reader to expect to have gone into a statement similar to LT's?
>
> I'm not sure.
>
> > Can you come up with some thought process, in her mind, which would make sense from her perspective, that would lead a reasonable person to write what LT wrote?
>
> No.

> Does she come off more unsure or confident? Wise or newbie? Lecturing or trying to learn? Knowing what she's talking about, or trying to figure it out as she goes along?

> Definitely trying to come off as lecturing.

i agree

> What indicators communicate these things,

> One indication is there's no genuine questions. There's some rhetorical question-asking but it's about setting up a question to answer, not about learning about and engaging with the perspective of the other participant in the discussion. (e.g. "Why would social networking and politicking be special?" followed by an answer)

yeah

> Another indicator is assuming agreement from people who seem like authorities ("Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.")

FYI that's partly b/c LT's position is similar to the thesis of RSP's book. _The Myth of the Closed Mind_ says some nice stuff about the possibility of productive critical discussions, persuading people, etc...

> Another indicator is speaking from a position of authority on critical rationalism ("But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. ")

Yes. LT basically speaks from authority regarding all her claims.

> > and is LT responsible for them and in control of them?

> sure.

> > Whatever way she comes off, consider what it implies about her thought processes. E.g. if she presents herself as wise, she's communicating that her conclusions had some sort of wise, reasonable thought process that went into them. But if she communicates she's a beginner, then people might expect some of her conclusions to be some crap she made up and didn't know how to figure out if it's any good or not. Whatever the implications, are they true?

> She presents as an expert but I don't think she is.

Right! So, lying? Intentionally?

> > > > > > How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is? How optimistic does LT think LT is?

> > > > > > He seemed pessimistic. LT seems optimistic (by her criteria of what she's counting as a cause for optimism)

> > > > > > How did LT compare these amounts?

> > > > > > No idea. It seems kinda binary to me - like Danny's quote was pessimistic, LT was optimistic. Being optimistic at all is more optimistic than the zero optimism that pessimism has, but phrasing it as "far more optimistic" seems weird. "I'm optimistic, not pessimistic" would seem more accurate a statement.

> Given what you say, "more optimistic" would be a reasonable characterization, right?

Yes.

> What's the purpose of writing "far"?

Maybe she's trying to convey some emotional attitude?

> How does "far" change the meaning?

I'm not sure. In the context of how I read it, "far" doesn't make sense.

What's the point of the statement as a whole? Why is it relevant to mention her or Danny's optimism? What does she want a reader to take away?

I don't know the answers to any of these questions.

Part of one reading: LT's saying she *disagrees*. Her talk of optimism is an indirect way to challenge Danny (or Birner) and start arguing against him and his perspective. In this reading, "far" is an intensifier which helps indicate she disagrees a lot instead of a little.

Do you want to continue from here?

If you want me to give more answers, feel free to ask.

I'm not sure I get it. Why indirectly challenge someone instead of saying you disagree, but then (indirectly) say you disagree a LOT? If you wanna say you disagree with someone, wouldn't it be much better to state so openly instead of doing intensified indirectness??

As you may have heard before, it's hard to keep track of webs of lies! In this reading, this is an example.

Here's some notes I wrote when I was trying to decide what questions to ask you (these continue from the paragraph I already shared above):

Might LT have written "far" because what she meant is "I disagree, you're SUPER wrong", and she mixed up her actual meaning (which she wanted to intensify) with what she was actually writing (and for her actual text, the intensifier doesn't make

> sense, as you say).

Sometimes people write according to what they mean (or reply but what they take you to mean) instead of by what the text actually says. It's hard to consistently stick to a false narrative that contradicts reality.

Related example from The Fountainhead (not about lying, but has someone replying according to what's implied):

> "I should like to work for you," said Roark quietly. The voice said: "I should like to work for you." The tone of the voice said: "I'm going to work for you."
> "Are you?" said Cameron, not realizing that he answered the unpronounced sentence.

Another note:

> Or, here's an alternative reading: LT thinks Danny is a pessimistic person, and she thinks LT is a very optimistic person, and she thinks these personality traits are influencing or causing the intellectual opinions being discussed. She could view optimism as a source of ideas.

In this reading, "far" means that Danny's personality is *far* from the right one, and that's why he's so badly wrong. (Again this intensifies the disagreement rather than being sympathetic. That shouldn't be too surprising since the literal purpose of "far" is to intensify a difference between LT and Danny.)

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: [Explanation] What's a lie? (was: J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT***)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 7:45:47 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:53 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 12:53 AM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> Do you think LT is optimistic?
>>>>
>>>> I have no reason to think that she is.
>>>
>>>> Do you think she's lying about her optimism?
>>
>>> I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.
>
>> In short: is what they said false? And should they have known it was false?
>
> Ah so "should they have known" is where I think some part of me disagrees.
>
> Since I think when evaluating when someone is lying, I typically ask "DID they know?"

Yes, people typically *consciously* disagree about that method of evaluating lies, but actually use it in many cases.

Suppose you said you checked the safety readings. And you didn't, and you forgot that. And when you were saying you checked them, you were being irresponsible and just bullshitting, instead of thinking about whether you actually checked them. You didn't

consciously remember if you checked them or not, and didn't care to consider the matter, you just wanted your boss off your back. Lots of people are comfortable calling that guy a liar.

People would NOT analyze it this way in words, but the guy was implying he went through a thought process of confidently remembering he did it. That was false. He didn't go through that thought process.

In general, when you make a claim you're also implying that you went through some sort of reasonable thought process to reach that conclusion. If you didn't, that's lying!

People kinda understand this. If you say "This is my wild guess..." they recognize that's different than just saying it straight (and saying you're "damn sure" is something else again). They know the difference. Well, if it *is* your wild guess, and you say it straight, you're a liar. (You might plead omitting that due to irrelevance in some cases, or that you thought it was implied that it was a wild guess cuz you already said you were a beginner. There's some defenses, and analyzing particular situations can be tricky, but you hopefully get the general concept.)

It's your job as a speaker to correctly communicate (as relevant) things like how confident and knowledgeable you are, whether you thought it through or didn't give the matter any thought, etc. Or, if you don't bring up some of those things, OK, but at least don't communicate *false* things about them!

People do in fact communicate about those things all the time. And readers/listeners notice the difference. It's a big, common part of communication. And some people communicate about it honestly and others lie (e.g. to try to sound smarter than they are).

This stuff may seem kinda subtle b/c you aren't used to analyzing it consciously and putting it into English words in a discussion. But lots of it *isn't actually very subtle*. Lots of LT's and RSP's signals about this stuff were blatant and clear (there were also some more subtle ones).

People sometimes deny blatant, clear stuff if they think they can get away with it. That's much easier with this kind of between-the-lines signaling. But the amount you can get away with a bullshit denial doesn't change the actual facts – that the signals exist, are controlled by communicators, and have meanings know to everyone.

People might object and say it's done by habit not by conscious intention. That's often true, but so what? You're responsible for your automated behaviors which you choose to keep doing instead of change. You developed them to e.g. lie to people about how smart you are. You aren't absolved of responsibility just because, after years of intentional lying, it became an automated habit that you no longer had to consciously think about in

order to keep doing.

Elliot Temple
Get my philosophy newsletter:
www.fallibleideas.com/newsletter

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 8:41:25 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:45 PM, Kate Sams ksams434@gmail.com [fallible-ideas]
>> <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-
>>> ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/101557110406699
>>>> 04/?
>>>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22
>>>> R%22%7D
>>>>
>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can
>>>> you find any? Lots?
>>>>
>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone
>>>> critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here
>>>> instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>>>
>>>> Lulie Tanett:
>>>>
>>>>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>
>> LT doesn't say what she thinks the spirit of Birner's post is. i think the spirit is
>> something like CR is doomed cuz CR ppl don't want to do the social networking
>> required.
>
> And because they're bad at social politicking, which may be why they don't want to.
> Birner was vague (at least in that specific quote), but I think this is part of the issue.
>
>> maybe LT sympathizes with the idea that it's *hard* to be a critical rationalist who
>> also does social networking. maybe she agrees there's some conflict there, yet she's
>> more optimistic that CR can find a way to survive.
>>
>> but then reading on just in the next section, LT treats social networking as nothing

> > special. she implies it's like any other interest in terms of it's compatibility with CR. so it's doesn't make sense for her to sympathize with the idea that it's hard to mesh CR and social networking.
> >
> > so, at a minimum, it's unclear what she's sympathizing with and why. but it also could be that she's lying about sympathizing with the spirit of the post.

> Do you think Birner's goal was to have readers sympathize with the spirit of what he wrote?

No, I don't think he thought about readers sympathizing with the spirit of what he wrote. When ppl say they sympathize with the spirit of something, there's always a "but" to it. There's something they then disagree with. So I don't think this was Birner's goal.

Instead, I think his goal was to convince people of his ideas. This includes the idea that CR is doomed cuz CR ppl are bad at and don't want to do the social networking and politicking required (iow, the spirit of his post).

> What would you think if someone read Atlas Shrugged and said, "I sympathize with the spirit of this book, but I'm far more optimistic than Ayn Rand."?

i'd be skeptical that the person actually understood AS and the consequences of irrationality on a societal level.

i'd wonder what they thought the spirit of AS was and how they ended up being far more optimistic than Rand. one way they could end up being far more optimistic is if they didn't actually understand AS.

> > > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
> > >
> > > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
> >
> > LT is lying to herself if she thinks that social networking and politicking is just like any other interest a critical rationalist can have.

> Why did you make this an "if" statement?

i think because i was replying to the gist of what i read and the "if" statement is how I first thought of the idea.

i should have carefully and precisely interpreted the passage and then carefully and precisely replied to *that* interpretation.

> Do you think LT is lying to herself?

yes

> How do you read her passage?

the passage says and implies this: as a critical rationalist, you can have all sorts of interests, including social networking and politicking. there's nothing problematic about a social networking and politicking interest in terms of CR-compatibility.

> Social politicking is *different* than various other things. E.g. a blacksmith might say, "You don't need to use a hammer? That's so different!"
>
> The issue is: what sort of differences are important? When LT says it's "not special" she's allowing it to have some unimportant differences. So she's not claiming it's "...just like any other interest…"

yeah

> LT is saying social politicking doesn't have some crucial, important ("special") differences from other interests. E.g. LT may think it has nothing special to make it critical-argument-incompatible.
>
> So, you should try to figure out what differences LT is denying, and then point out what cases she's mistaken about.

ok.

an interest in social networking and politicking is different from other interests (such as painting, cooking, math) in terms of CR-compatibility.

here are some of the differences:

successful social networking and politicking requires orienting to people. it requires significant thinking about what other ppl's thoughts might be, what their expectations might be, what their desires might be, what their feelings might be, etc.

to be successful at social networking and politicking, you often need to tell other ppl what they want to hear, even if it's untrue. you often need to remain silent, even if there's

something you want to say (e.g. a criticism).

https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/politick

> to engage in often partisan political discussion or activity

http://www.dictionary.com/browse/politicking

> activity undertaken for political reasons or ends, as campaigning for votes before an election, making speeches, etc., or otherwise promoting oneself or one's policies.

politicking is anti-truth-seeking *by definition*.

an interest in social networking and politicking is incompatible with CR.

otoh, succeeding at interests such as painting, cooking and math doesn't require CR-incompatible actions.

———

btw, i'm going to reply to your post in sections since there's a lot to say.

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT*** (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 9:09:20 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 7:45 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

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>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 7:11 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

>>>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 9:13 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

>>>>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 5:12 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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Ya. that is common. If someone tries to reframe my stuff I tend to push back way more than if they're just framing their own stuff. Cuz I have stronger opinion about what the meaning of what I said is.

> To get better at this, I'd suggest doing more close reading stuff, and also specifically trying to look at how people are framing stuff (e.g. what they want you to think) and whether that's true.

hmm ok.

> > > > > > What is LT more optimistic about?
>
> > > > > She says later:
>
> > > > > > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
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version of chill alpha bros who win at social games (without endangering their integrity, presumably?)

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This reading sounds plausible too.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>, FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 29, 2017 at 9:27:51 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 5:41 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

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>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:45 PM, Kate Sams ksams434@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>>>>
>>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
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>>>>>
>>>>>> Lulie Tanett:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>>>
>>>> LT doesn't say what she thinks the spirit of Birner's post is. i think the spirit is something like CR is doomed cuz CR ppl don't want to do the social networking required.
>>
>> And because they're bad at social politicking, which may be why they don't want to. Birner was vague (at least in that specific quote), but I think this is part of the issue.
>
> maybe LT sympathizes with the idea that it's *hard* to be a critical rationalist who also does social networking. maybe she agrees there's some conflict there, yet

> > she's more optimistic that CR can find a way to survive.
> >
> > but then reading on just in the next section, LT treats social networking as nothing special. she implies it's like any other interest in terms of it's compatibility with CR. so it's doesn't make sense for her to sympathize with the idea that it's hard to mesh CR and social networking.
> >
> > so, at a minimum, it's unclear what she's sympathizing with and why. but it also could be that she's lying about sympathizing with the spirit of the post.
>
> Do you think Birner's goal was to have readers sympathize with the spirit of what he wrote?

> No, I don't think he thought about readers sympathizing with the spirit of what he wrote. When ppl say they sympathize with the spirit of something, there's always a "but" to it. There's something they then disagree with. So I don't think this was Birner's goal.

Right. If there was no "but", they would just sympathize with the thing itself, rather than the spirit of the thing.

The *spirit* of the Birner quote refers to some aspects of it but not all aspects. It's *limiting* what's being sympathized with. (Also, commonly, praising the "spirit" of something refers to a *reinterpretation* which the author would reject, rather than actually agreeing with even part of it as the author meant it.)

> Instead, I think his goal was to convince people of his ideas. This includes the idea that CR is doomed cuz CR ppl are bad at and don't want to do the social networking and politicking required (iow, the spirit of his post).
>
> > What would you think if someone read Atlas Shrugged and said, "I sympathize with the spirit of this book, but I'm far more optimistic than Ayn Rand."?
>
> i'd be skeptical that the person actually understood AS and the consequences of irrationality on a societal level.
>
> i'd wonder what they thought the spirit of AS was and how they ended up being far more optimistic than Rand. one way they could end up being far more optimistic is if they didn't actually understand AS.

Off-topic: I guess lots of AS readers would say they are more optimistic than AR cuz

they don't think society is going to fall apart like it does in the book. They have a higher opinion of our government, of altruists, of socialist sympathizers, etc., than AR does. So they see less danger than AR sees, and therefore they're more optimistic about the future!

> an interest in social networking and politicking is incompatible with CR.

That's an imprecise statement. A CR person could be interested in the topic, and read about it and discuss it (and even criticize it ;) without actually doing it. At least that much is compatible.

Elliot Temple
Get my philosophy newsletter:
www.fallibleideas.com/newsletter

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 10:45:05 AM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
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[…]

>>>>>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>>>>>>
>>>>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

[…]

>>>>>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social

> > > endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;
>
> > there's not always a way of explaining an idea *which criticizes a pro-social-network-type person* which isn't off-putting to that person.
>
> > why not?
>
> > consider how ppl succeed at social networking.
>
> > successful social networking requires orienting to people. it requires significant thinking about what other ppl's thoughts might be, what their expectations might be, what their desires might be, what they are feeling, etc.
>
> > to be successful at social networking, you often need to tell them what they want to hear, even if it's untrue. you often need to remain silent, even if there's something you want to say (e.g. a criticism).
>
> > this isn't truth-seeking. this isn't genuine critical debate.
>
> > and, in general, if you value social networking, i think you *are* going to be off-put by criticisms of certain ideas of yours.

You're trying to debate LT. If the debate continued, I think I know roughly what LT would reply. She would use a problems-are-soluble type argument from BoI. She would say that sharing better ideas with these people, in some way that they like, doesn't violate the laws of physics. (I think that exact statement, about the laws of physics, is correct.)

One reason you may be unaware that LT had this argument in mind is that she didn't write it.

I suggest trying to analyze what she did write. How is it supposed to persuade anyone? What discussion methods is LT's text trying to use? How's it supposed to work? Are there arguments, assertions, questions, unwritten implications, a mix, or what?

ok

> Why is LT talking about an assumption?

Rather than an "idea"? Does calling ideas "assumptions" aim to delegitimize them?

I think because Birner doesn't explain what ideas underlie the assumption he's asking the reader to make. so LT is trying to guess what those ideas are.

Here's my understanding:

Birner asks the reader to assume that (legitimately) pro-crit personalities are less prone to do social stuff.

This implies that he thinks there's some sort of incompatibility between pro-crit CR and social stuff.

But why? What are some potential reasons explaining why he'd think that? I think this what LT was trying to guess at.

Here's LT's full paragraph again. Now I'll comment on her discussion methods:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

My interpretation: Maybe Birner thinks that it's critical debate itself which is incompatible with social stuff. LT disagrees. She thinks there's always a way to explain/criticize that isn't off-putting to others. It doesn't have to be the case the ppl dislike criticism. Instead, what they dislike is being trapped, being called bad, feeling destabilized/overwhelmed. It's possible to separate this out so ppl can have critical discussions (i.e. be criticized) while avoiding the stuff they actually dislike.

My comments on LT's discussion methods: I think LT's argument omits key parts of the context. The context involves criticizing people *who are trying to succeed at social stuff*. Most of them care about status. Most of them are dishonest and lack integrity, because that's what's required to succeed at social networking and politicking. Most of them don't know how to receive crit on some ideas without feeling destabilized.

So how is *the actual situation as it exists* compatible with genuine critical debate? It's not.

I think LT is trying to persuade ppl with a (technically true?) argument about what's theoretically possible.

LT says "there's always a way…", "it's not fundamentally the case that…", "It's possible…".

It's hard to argue with these technically true points. And maybe that was by design.

But the problem is that her argument omits key parts of context. It omits what social stuff is *actually like*.

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 12:17:34 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>
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>>>>>
>>>>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all

> > > > these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

[…]

> > > > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

My interpretation of this paragraph: Maybe Birner thinks there's an incompatibility between CR and social because he thinks that ppl aren't persuaded by argument. Instead, ppl are persuaded by social stuff. LT thinks this idea is false and says that Ray Scott Percival may agree with her.

> this isn't an argument, but is what LT wrote dishonest? maybe it's dishonest to pretend that making an assertion and a name drop are acceptable replacements for an explanation.

> Here you could try to analyze the text by considering who "people" refers to. All people?

My comments: LT asserts that the idea in question is false. Yet instead of providing an argument, she says that some guy might agree with her. This is a blatant appeal to status/authority in order to try to persuade readers. This is ironic because she's claiming that ppl are persuaded by *argument*, not social status stuff.

Not all people are persuaded by rational argument. Instead, many/most rely on social stuff for their beliefs. (which LT must know on some level because she tried to use social tactics to "persuade" ppl)

Similar to her earlier comments, LT is continuing to evade how irrational social networking and politicking people actually are.

Instead, she's focusing on the (true) idea that *some* ppl are rational and will change their mind based on argument. But this isn't how all people are. It's not even how most people are.

To view this discussion on the web visit https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/fallible-ideas/54ABBED5-8159-4A5E-A72C-DADF4B8FE59B%40gmail.com.
For more options, visit https://groups.google.com/d/optout.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 2:25:50 PM

On Sep 30, 2017, at 9:17 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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Yeah and that applies to LT's entire message. It's also social stuff, instead of argument. Which contradicts her theme about the power of rational argument.

Not all people are persuaded by rational argument. Instead, many/most rely on social stuff for their beliefs. (which LT must know on some level because she tried to use social tactics to "persuade" ppl)

Similar to her earlier comments, LT is continuing to evade how irrational social networking and politicking people actually are.

Instead, she's focusing on the (true) idea that *some* ppl are rational and will change their mind based on argument. But this isn't how all people are. It's not even how most

LT also brings up some other true-but-limited points:

- the laws of physics don't prevent people from liking criticism
- the laws of physics don't outlaw painless fixes to people's current intellectual problems
- there are things other than criticism that people dislike and associate with criticism
- critical rationalists can have a variety of interests

Those are all true if you read them in a strict, literal way. But the point of LT saying them is to imply some stronger claims, which she doesn't actually argue for.

Using true-but-limited points is a common tactic used by DD. If you say lots of small, true things then it's hard for people to argue with you. When they try to resist, you focus on how your claims are true and undeniable.

DD often implied that some bigger claim could be built up to, and the smaller claims were starting points and the debate needs to go one step at a time. After someone accepted the smaller points – which were indeed true – they could continue to build to bigger points. Often that was true, and sometimes false. Either way, the continuation phase rarely actually got very far.

Elliot Temple
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From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 2:37:43 PM

On Sep 30, 2017, at 7:45 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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there's not always a way of explaining an idea *which criticizes a pro-social-network-type person* which isn't off-putting to that person.

why not?

consider how ppl succeed at social networking.

successful social networking requires orienting to people. it requires significant thinking about what other ppl's thoughts might be, what their expectations might be, what their desires might be, what they are feeling, etc.

to be successful at social networking, you often need to tell them what they want to hear, even if it's untrue. you often need to remain silent, even if there's something you want to say (e.g. a criticism).

this isn't truth-seeking. this isn't genuine critical debate.

and, in general, if you value social networking, i think you *are* going to be off-put by criticisms of certain ideas of yours.

You're trying to debate LT. If the debate continued, I think I know roughly what LT would reply. She would use a problems-are-soluble type argument from BoI. She would say that sharing better ideas with these people, in some way that they like, doesn't violate the laws of physics. (I think that exact statement, about the laws of physics, is correct.)

One reason you may be unaware that LT had this argument in mind is that she didn't write it.

I suggest trying to analyze what she did write. How is it supposed to persuade anyone? What discussion methods is LT's text trying to use? How's it supposed to work? Are there arguments, assertions, questions, unwritten implications, a mix, or what?

ok

Rather than an "idea"? Does calling ideas "assumptions" aim to delegitimize them?

yes.

LT isn't like "you got arguments and i got arguments" (fair, neutral). she's presenting it like "you got assumptions and premises which are vague and poorly communicated, so i have to try to make guesses to even make sense of your text. i, on the other have, have wise arguments." (such a lopsided and meaningful framing that LT is pretty much using it instead of actual arguments)

Why is she guessing its content?

I think because Birner doesn't explain what ideas underlie the assumption he's asking the reader to make. so LT is trying to guess what those ideas are.

LT took the opportunity to make unkind guesses, disguised as generosity. LT had alternatives such as reading more of the surrounding text from Birner, or using quotes from Birner to help make her guesses more related to what Birner actually said.

Here's my understanding:

Birner asks the reader to assume that (legitimately) pro-crit personalities are less prone to do social stuff.

This implies that he thinks there's some sort of incompatibility between pro-crit CR and social stuff.

But why? What are some potential reasons explaining why he'd think that? I think this what LT was trying to guess at.

Here's LT's full paragraph again. Now I'll comment on her discussion methods:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike

> criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> My interpretation: Maybe Birner thinks that it's critical debate itself which is incompatible with social stuff. LT disagrees. She thinks there's always a way to explain/criticize that isn't off-putting to others.

In what sense does LT mean "always"?

There's always a way, which you can think of in a short time and use effectively in your social politicking?

Or there's always a way in theory? But if so, that doesn't actually mean you can be effective at social politicking.

> It doesn't have to be the case the ppl dislike criticism. Instead, what they dislike is being trapped, being called bad, feeling destabilized/overwhelmed. It's possible to separate this out so ppl can have critical discussions (i.e. be criticized) while avoiding the stuff they actually dislike.

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> LT says "there's always a way…", "it's not fundamentally the case that…", "It's possible…".

> It's hard to argue with these technically true points. And maybe that was by design.

yeah.

> But the problem is that her argument omits key parts of context. It omits what social stuff is *actually like*.

LT does make some comments on the state of the world. they are limited comments about e.g. DD is reaching some unspecified people in some ways with unspecified effectiveness. and blogs are making some unspecified progress.

rather than discuss the state of the world (like what university politics are like today), LT avoids making direct, clear statements about it. instead she implies things about it by making some limited comments on minor side-issues. this way, LT's comments are hard to refute, but also they don't actually make the case she's hinting at.

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From: Max Kaye <m@xk.io>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] (Max's answers) (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 6:00:16 PM

I haven't read any of the spoiler threads yet, or ET's follow up emails to the main thread. My attempts below.

Sometimes I guess at a lie, other times I try to point out how a socially calibrated statement is used to mislead ppl.

On 28 Sep 2017, at 3:34, Elliot Temple wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
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>
>
> Danny Frederick:
>
>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>
>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>>
>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in

> philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

I take this to mean "CR ppl are less prone to politicking, but that doesn't mean CR risks becoming extinct". Not sure why she went meta instead of just saying this.

Lie guess: "I sympathise" - if phrased as above it becomes clear there's no sympathy.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

"Less prone" does not mean incompatible. If it did, why wouldn't Jack Birner just say that?

Lie guess: that's not the premise.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

There are many interests that are incompatible, like crystal healing.

Lie guess: that "many interests" are compatible with CR implies arbitrary interests are compatible.

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Lie guess: Criticism requires ppl to feel those sorts of things - they're part of the reason we think about things deeply (those feelings). Wrapping ppl up in cotton wool is not a good way to get them accept criticism.

Guess: "Problems that destabilise/overwhelm" don't come from criticism, they come from *not error correcting*.

Note: You might solve *some* problems by not giving the person direct criticism, e.g. they have some behaviour (B) that causes problems, and it's based on idea A, and by criticising A you might get them to stop doing B. That's not always possible, though, and if A is part of their identity they'll still feel bad while they sort through it.

It might be possible to avoid those problems in a critical discussion; that doesn't mean that "it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism", and twisting a criticism so that it's not off-putting will often lead to compromising that criticism.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Guess: that's not what it says. Maybe the claim is true, but the claim that it's an assumption is not.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

So many qualifications: "maybe", "apparent premise", etc.

Not sure here. Best guess is around "You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either": you do need to engage with academic traditions and things, there are concessions you need to make.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.
> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

This misses the point entirely. If you remove the parens, you get (paraphrased) 'ppl who get into CR aren't the exuberant promoter/social type. But truth is connected! Why not try selling CR in different ways to these ppl?' - There's no argument, and it's written in a way to mislead ppl into believing it without argument.

This (I think) is meant to appeal to everyone on the list who do not identify with that personality "type". I think there is merit in creating different ~on-ramps for ppl to CR, but this paragraph doesn't state it, just asserts (via a question) that it's something we should do.

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism). And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

Guess: "who is himself still writing about critical rationalism" - Where?

This is meant to make us feel better about things in a dishonest way - that it's not as big a problem as we think (the lack of CR adoption). Maybe it's "fertile ground" but we're not taking advantage of that. AFAIK there hasn't been some explosion of CR from rationalist/skeptic communities. Even communities like ARI that ET talks about aren't embracing this, and they've been around for years/decades.

I feel like a lot of my guesses here are stretches, and I'm trying to find things because ET asked us to find things.

I'm uncertain of myself in a lot of the claims I make above.

For reference & context, I read ET's original email, and skimmed through some of his pre-spoiler responses. Going to go have a look at other answers and things now.

Max Kaye
xk.io

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] [Explanation] What's a lie? (was: J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT***)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 7:00:06 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 7:45 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:53 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 12:53 AM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 10:20 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Do you think LT is optimistic?
>>>>>>
>>>>>> I have no reason to think that she is.
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>>>>> Do you think she's lying about her optimism?
>>>>
>>>> I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.
>>>
>>> In short: is what they said false? And should they have known it was false?
>>
>> Ah so "should they have known" is where I think some part of me disagrees.
>>
>> Since I think when evaluating when someone is lying, I typically ask "DID they know?"
>
> Yes, people typically *consciously* disagree about that method of evaluating lies, but actually use it in many cases.

> Suppose you said you checked the safety readings. And you didn't, and you forgot that. And when you were saying you checked them, you were being irresponsible and just bullshitting, instead of thinking about whether you actually checked them. You didn't consciously remember if you checked them or not, and didn't care to consider the matter, you just wanted your boss off your back. Lots of people are comfortable calling that guy a liar.
>
> People would NOT analyze it this way in words, but the guy was implying he went through a thought process of confidently remembering he did it. That was false. He didn't go through that thought process.
>
> In general, when you make a claim you're also implying that you went through some sort of reasonable thought process to reach that conclusion. If you didn't, that's lying!
>
> People kinda understand this. If you say "This is my wild guess..." they recognize that's different than just saying it straight (and saying you're "damn sure" is something else again). They know the difference. Well, if it *is* your wild guess, and you say it straight, you're a liar. (You might plead omitting that due to irrelevance in some cases, or that you thought it was implied that it was a wild guess cuz you already said you were a beginner. There's some defenses, and analyzing particular situations can be tricky, but you hopefully get the general concept.)

What you say makes sense, but I have a question ❓🤔❓ : why is there a disconnect between people's explicit method of evaluating lies, and the criteria they often actually use?

Is it just a lack of thinking about the issue, or do they want to let themselves or other people off the hook for lying, or what?

-JM

--
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For more options, visit https://groups.google.com/d/optout.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] [Explanation] What's a lie? (was: J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT***)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 7:07:56 PM

On Sep 30, 2017, at 4:00 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 7:45 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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> What you say makes sense, but I have a question ❓🤔❓ : why is there a disconnect between people's explicit method of evaluating lies, and the criteria they often actually use?
>
> Is it just a lack of thinking about the issue, or do they want to let themselves or other people off the hook for lying, or what?

I think a major reason is because lying is considered a sin, and calling someone a liar is considered a severe attack.

I've found people are more comfortable with alternative phrasings like calling something a "dishonest statement" or "untruthful" rather than a "lie". The word "lie" is more threatening to social status, so they're more reluctant to use it.

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] (Max's answers) (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: September 30, 2017 at 8:20:39 PM

On Sep 30, 2017, at 3:00 PM, Max Kaye <m@xk.io> wrote:

> I haven't read any of the spoiler threads yet, or ET's follow up emails to the main
> thread. My attempts below.
>
> Sometimes I guess at a lie, other times I try to point out how a socially calibrated
> statement is used to mislead ppl.
>
> On 28 Sep 2017, at 3:34, Elliot Temple wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/
>> ?
>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%
>> 22%7D
>>
>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you
>> find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone
>> critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here
>> instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>
>>
>> Danny Frederick:
>>
>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>>
>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the
>>> force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of
>>> personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the
>>> average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic
>>> politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual
>>> offspring can survive…
>>>
>>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists
>>> (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry

> on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

I take this to mean "CR ppl are less prone to politicking, but that doesn't mean CR risks becoming extinct". Not sure why she went meta instead of just saying this.

Lie guess: "I sympathise" - if phrased as above it becomes clear there's no sympathy.

i agree the sympathy is a lie.

the reason for LT's phrasing was, in short, to try to be "friendly".

i think LT denies CR people are less prone to politicking.

any idea why LT talks about the spirit of the post instead of about the post?

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social

> > networking and politicking.
>
> "Less prone" does not mean incompatible. If it did, why wouldn't Jack Birner just say that?
>
> Lie guess: that's not the premise.

yes and also calling it a "premise" (or later "assumption") is a denial that it's thought-out reasoning.

> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> There are many interests that are incompatible, like crystal healing.
>
> Lie guess: that "many interests" are compatible with CR implies arbitrary interests are compatible.

what does LT mean by "special"?

LT says you "can have", but the issue was about what CR people are more prone to do, rather than what's strictly impossible for them. LT is building on her false framing from the previous part.

> > Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
>
> Lie guess: Criticism requires ppl to feel those sorts of things - they're part of the reason we think about things deeply (those feelings). Wrapping ppl up in cotton wool is not a good way to get them accept criticism.
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> Guess: "Problems that destabilise/overwhelm" don't come from criticism, they come from *not error correcting*.
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> Note: You might solve *some* problems by not giving the person direct criticism, e.g.

> they have some behaviour (B) that causes problems, and it's based on idea A, and by criticising A you might get them to stop doing B. That's not always possible, though, and if A is part of their identity they'll still feel bad while they sort through it.
>
> It might be possible to avoid those problems in a critical discussion; that doesn't mean that "it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism", and twisting a criticism so that it's not off-putting will often lead to compromising that criticism.

I'd suggest doing more unpacking of what LT is saying prior to trying to judge or critique it.

> > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.
>
> Guess: that's not what it says. Maybe the claim is true, but the claim that it's an assumption is not.

LT did say "maybe". Why is she making stuff up? What's going on?

> > Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".
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> So many qualifications: "maybe", "apparent premise", etc.
>
> Not sure here. Best guess is around "You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either": you do need to engage with academic traditions and things, there are concessions you need to make.

why doesn't LT give links for some of the great stuff she's talking about? does it exist?

> > The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the

> > personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.
> > (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
> > But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

> This misses the point entirely. If you remove the parens, you get (paraphrased) 'ppl who get into CR aren't the exuberant promoter/social type. But truth is connected! Why not try selling CR in different ways to these ppl?' - There's no argument, and it's written in a way to mislead ppl into believing it without argument.

what truth is connected to what?

is "not ... the exuberant promoter/social type" equivalent to "not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions"? what sort of connection between those two things has LT communicated?

> This (I think) is meant to appeal to everyone on the list who do not identify with that personality "type". I think there is merit in creating different ~on-ramps for ppl to CR, but this paragraph doesn't state it, just asserts (via a question) that it's something we should do.

> > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism). And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

> Guess: "who is himself still writing about critical rationalism" - Where?

> This is meant to make us feel better about things in a dishonest way - that it's not as big a problem as we think (the lack of CR adoption). Maybe it's "fertile ground" but we're not taking advantage of that. AFAIK there hasn't been some explosion of CR from rationalist/skeptic communities. Even communities like ARI that ET talks about aren't embracing this, and they've been around for years/decades.

ARI is sorta awful. The good material is primarily from Rand and from a few others (especially Peikoff) when Rand was still alive and guiding them. There's also some remnants of Rand still, but the ARI community has been getting worse for decades

instead of building on Rand.

Where are the new, interested people? why doesn't LT provide evidence for any of this stuff? how is it supposed to convince anyone?

> ---
>
> I feel like a lot of my guesses here are stretches, and I'm trying to find things because ET asked us to find things.
>
> I'm uncertain of myself in a lot of the claims I make above.
>
> For reference & context, I read ET's original email, and skimmed through some of his pre-spoiler responses. Going to go have a look at other answers and things now.

parts are way easier for people with more background knowledge. e.g. from the first sentence, LT's optimism is a lie. but that'd be hard to catch without already knowing stuff about her.

Elliot Temple
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From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
Subject: Elliot's RSP Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 1, 2017 at 12:03:33 AM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

This will be easier to follow if you read the rest of the thread first. Since there's already been a lot of discussion, I didn't repeat some things.

I write less interpretation of what RSP means than you should, partly because I have the skill to do this, and also because of prior discussion. Please don't copy that. For your own textual analysis, I suggest you write out what you think the text means way more than I do below. On the other hand, *do* copy the three pass method.

> Ray Scott Percival:
>
>> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.

"I think" is a lie. He didn't think about it, he just reciprocated in the social ritual of sucking up to each other.

Note that it'd still be a lie if "I think" was deleted. Then, by stating a claim, he'd be implying that he'd thought about it a reasonable amount in order to reasonably reach his conclusion (that LT id dead on).

The "I think" shouldn't be there. It's a hedge that doesn't even help him stick his neck out any less. It's a hedge that doesn't even manage to hedge anything.

>> The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

RSP is implying he analyzed the text, and worked out what's correct or not. Now he's sharing the fruits of his labor.

This is a lie. He carelessly skimmed it and didn't give it much thought. He doesn't really care if it's correct or not. What he does care about is this: he identified it as being on a

different side of the debate than his own book. That's why he decided to say it's incorrect (without bothering to point out a single incorrect part.)

> I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh!

He's attacking introverts without argument, and bragging that he's an extrovert. Extroverts have higher social status.

He pretends he's being generous by "grant[ing]" something, but actually the "grant" is an attack. He's reframing DF/JB as saying "We are lame introverts like most CR people, and we think CR will have trouble spreading because introverts like us suck too much to spread ideas."

> I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once.

Lie. Not "complete" happy about that.

Also he's lying about debating all of them at the same time.

> 😄 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position.

I thought the Warwick mention might be a brag when I first read it, but it's subtle enough that it's hard to accuse him. Many brags are intentionally subtle. However he mentioned Warwick again later in the same short post, so that makes it blatant. LT is much more socially skilled than RSP. LT does significantly more by social implication while also being significantly more subtle about it.

RSP's attitude to debate is awful.

He's lying (exaggerating) about how much he loved it to brag about how successful and effective he was. He's presenting the story he'd like to have happened, and thinks will impress people, with no regard for what actually happened.

> Talk about a double punch to the jaw!

This isn't just a confession of his disrespect for reason. It's also a brag that he won the debates – without any evidence or argument.

I don't think the debates went as well for him as he's telling us. I think he's lying.

> It was easy though - they all had glass jaws.

He means it was easy *for him* because he's so great. More unargued, false bragging. Super dishonest.

> 😂As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

RSP begins this sentence as if he's going to reply to an issue with an argument. But then he pivots to just saying that what the world needs is more people like himself.

What do people like RSP do? Productive stuff of some kind in some areas. He was that vague about it.

> I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

Long sentence!

He's lying about how much scientists value Popper. Why? Because he wants more people to respect Popper and thinks the way to get respect is by bragging about what famous names agree with you.

And, as Alan pointed out, Tipler is actually a Bayesian not a Popperian.

And why didn't he mention Richard Feynman, who is way more famous than any of these people? Because he doesn't know that Feynman was a Popperian! Because he's not much of a scholar – either he hasn't read Feynman or he doesn't know enough about Popper to recognize Feynman's Popperian knowledge. (I recognized Feynman was a Popperian from reading Feynman books *first*, and then brought it up and found out that DD had knowledge of the matter *second*.)

RSP isn't naming anyone from firsthand knowledge. Medawar and Eccles are some of the most canonical names to use for this purpose. He just picked them up and

presumably, as with Tipler, never bothered to check their actual beliefs.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book.

He doesn't argue anything in depth in his book.

I think it's debatable whether his book even contains non-deep arguments. I don't remember the book very well. I do clearly recall, from several discussion encounters, that RSP is both unable and unwilling to participate in productive discussions. He doesn't understand the basics of how to discuss, argue, ask or answer questions, reply to text instead of talk past it, etc.

> Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age.

Among other things, he's lying about how effective he was.

Here's a difference: if you fought bronze age knights with a light saber, they would agree you'd won the fight (if they were still alive).

> You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.

RSP means something like: When you're as smart and as effective in debates as RSP, then critical debate is exciting and fun. It's always the other guy getting punched in the jaw, not you, so you're eager.

What about the other people? Here he is, supposedly on the side of saying people can like criticism and learn from debate. But then, contrary to that, he talks about how he's eager to go cut people up, in unfair fights where they're outgunned. Would RSP enjoy being on the receiving end of punches and light sabers? No. He's eager to go out and use *strong* arguments, not losing arguments.

So basically RSP is just like most people: he doesn't like losing arguments.

But his position is supposedly: criticism is wonderful, people don't have closed minds, people can enjoy receiving criticism. (That's the kind of thing LT was saying that he claims to consider dead on, and he said some stuff like that in his book.)

He's such a liar. He doesn't believe his own propaganda.

RSP also, by saying "you" can't wait to hurt people with light-saber-arguments, is

suggesting that people in general are cruel and use criticism as a weapon, not just him. I agree that is common. That's one of the reason many people dislike receiving criticism...

> That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA.

This implies that you should know what ECA is. If it was obscure jargon that educated people don't all know, then he'd have told us what ECA stands for. He's blaming you for not knowing what ECA is. He's saying educated people like him know what ECA is, and he's so used to dealing with smart, knowledgeable people that it didn't even occur to him to help the plebs out by letting them know what ECA is.

I suspect ECA = Economic Calculation Argument. Which, btw, RSP assumed familiarity with earlier. He was saying if you don't know what the Economic Calculation Argument is, then you're not a smart scholar like him. RSP wants to bait people to ask so they look weak and RSP looks wise. And RSP wants to confuse people so they think RSP knows stuff that's beyond them. And RSP needs some complexity and confusion to hide the lack of substance of what he writes.

> The same applies to CR.

This is unclear, bad writing.

He might mean: CR is a strong argument, so it's like a light saber that you'll be eager to hurt people with.

> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

RSP wrote everything as one paragraph. This final sentence is a non sequitur. Why is it here? What does it have to do with the rest? It's thematic though because it's more bragging. He's suggesting that other people are imprudent, but not himself. And his prudence is so effective that he's never left an argument unanswered, and never been corrupted, and never had problems like falling or withering. Because he's so much better and smarter than other people.

But even in this paragraph bragging about his rationality and intelligence, RSP reveals his irrationality. His attitude isn't to seek the truth, it's to punch people who challenge his cherished beliefs. He has some core beliefs which he's closed minded about. Rather than say something like "I either refute all criticism or change my mind" (a rational approach), RSP suggests he cherishes some of his beliefs (doesn't want to reconsider them) and his approach is to protect his beliefs with arguments. I think RSP has a

standard viewpoint which basically accepts that all our ideas are flawed, and as long as you can put up a pretty good debate then your idea is good enough, and the problem with the world is the ignorant plebs who have tons of beliefs they can't even argue a reasonable amount for.

After the details we can do a second pass to get more of an integrated, big-picture understanding of the text.

> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on. The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

RSP dishonestly claims to have thought about the issues. From this intro, you'd expect some arguments and intellectual discussion to follow. It doesn't (and he's hoping you won't notice that – he's trying to sound like an intellectual and give an impression of being a serious thinker who argues stuff, but he doesn't actually do it.)

> I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted.

Here he pivots to bragging that he's an extrovert. He never gets back on topic.

> Just look at me! Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws.

Extensive bragging, much of which is false, plus revealing that he views arguments like punches (contrary to LT's position, which RSP claimed to agree with, that people don't have to be off-put by criticism).

> 😂As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains. I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

The bragging continues with name dropping.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book.

And book plugging.

> Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.

And bragging that his argument-punches are as effective as light sabers.

> That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

And bragging about how great he is at dealing with counterarguments, while actually revealing he's irrational.

Finally i'll do a third pass for overall comments. I don't think it's necessary to quote RSP again since I won't be breaking up his text.

Overall he bragged a lot and had no arguments. But he opened by pretending to have thought about things. He wants you to have an impression something like this:

RSP is above the petty arguments. He thought them through and figured out the right conclusions. Rather than go over all the arguments (LT already did a nice job of that), he's willing to let you pull up a chair while he recounts his glorious accomplishments. He absolutely could argue all the issues – better than you – but he just found reminiscing fun and relevant. He's so wise, and has already dealt with so many challenges, that he takes lots of this stuff for granted.

That's basically all false.

It's interesting that he presents himself a lot like he's me. Lots of what he thinks would impress people is the same stuff I am/do (but he isn't/doesn't). And I, despite having the knowledge and substantive debate history (largely publicly available online and open to criticism), actually do write arguments. I like arguments and substance more than bragging ... if RSP was so good at debates wouldn't he feel the same way? RSP mostly just faked it his whole life.

I'm very happy with the three pass method and recommend it. People commonly do the first pass and third pass, but not the second one. The second pass is really important for seeing how to apply to details to the text and get from them to some bigger picture understanding. It helps you bridge the gap from details to final thoughts. There's too much here to integrate all at once with no intermediate stage.

(BTW, if you find something hard, one thing you could try is doing more than 3 passes.)

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 1, 2017 at 12:11:33 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
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>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
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>>>> Lulie Tanett:
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>>>>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
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>>>>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
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>>>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
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>>>>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all

> > > > these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> > > > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

> > > Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

> i agree that Birner seems to hold this premise.

> > > But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

> my guess is this is true.

> Why is LT saying this?

She's saying this to hint at the idea that CR doesn't need academia in order to survive.

> What is LT's reasoning for it?

She didn't include reasoning. It's an assertion.

This, too, could be an example of a true-but-limited point. It's hard to tell if it's limited, because she didn't give an explanation. Like she could have discussed specific books, blogs, videos, forums, etc that have been successful recently despite working outside the system.

> > > You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

> idk if this is true or not.

> Why does LT think it's true?

I don't know. She didn't explain.

> How did she expect her text to persuade you?

She wanted ppl to accept her assertions, rather than be persuaded by argument.

> > Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".
>
> idk if the phrase "unpleasant academic tedium" is dishonest or not. i think the phrase tries to minimize the issue of this general incompatibility between CR and social networking. grading papers could be thought of as "unpleasant academic tedium".
>
> but, otoh, if LT doesn't think there's an incompatibility there, then maybe that's how she sees it. but i guess you could ask *how* she's able to not see any incompatibility there...

> How does LT know that the problem, "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?" has a solution? what's she trying to say?

She's trying to say that the laws of physics don't forbid the existence of a solution to that problem.

> is she correct?

yes, technically

> do you agree with her?

I agree that it's theoretically possible to solve the problem. However, I see now how this is another example of a true-but-limited point.

> as above, i think Kate is skipping steps and debating rather than doing textual analysis.

LT's whole paragraph:

> > Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

my interpretation: Birner seems to have the premise that CR needs academia in order to survive. But it's becoming easier to work outside of academia. Also, you can still engage

with academia even if you aren't an academic. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?"

my comments: *Why* does LT think it's easier to work outside academia? *Why* does LT think you can still engage with academia without being an academic? *Why* is there a solution to ensuring CR's survival without doing unpleasant academic tedium?

Instead of providing explanations which address *what's actually going on* regarding academia (or social networking, social politicking, ppl disliking crit, etc), LT makes assertions and true-but-limited points (e.g. that problems are solvable). I can see this now.

Making true-but-limited points seems like a very common tactic many people use. Does it apply to some of the recent PAS discussion on FI?

Like it's *true* that there's a very slight chance that sharing some personal details under an anon account could cause harm to your life. e.g. if someone decides they want to piece clues together and try to hurt you.

But rationality is about looking at the full context *objectively*. Rather than clinging onto a technically true idea because it allows you to maintain your bias.

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: [FI] [Question] true-but-limited points (was: Kate's analysis)
Date: October 1, 2017 at 12:34:45 PM

On Oct 1, 2017, at 12:11 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> Making true-but-limited points seems like a very common tactic many people use.
> Does it apply to some of the recent PAS discussion on FI?

This is my question.

> Like it's *true* that there's a very slight chance that sharing some personal details
> under an anon account could cause harm to your life. e.g. if someone decides they
> want to piece clues together and try to hurt you.

I'm going to try to explain this better.

It's *true* that there's a very slight chance that sharing some personal info online under
an anon account can harm your life. e.g. if someone decides to try to piece clues
together and then try to hurt you.

But it's also a *limited* point. It doesn't imply the stronger claim that you should never
share personal info online, even when you've put some reasonable risk reduction
strategies in place.

> But rationality is about looking at the full context *objectively*. Rather than clinging
> onto a technically true idea because it allows you to maintain your bias.

left context

From: Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] [Explanation] What's a lie? (was: J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT***)
Date: October 1, 2017 at 3:21:10 PM

On Sat, Sep 30, 2017 at 7:07 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 30, 2017, at 4:00 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 7:45 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:53 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 2:05 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 10:20 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>> Do you think LT is optimistic?
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>>>>>>>> I have no reason to think that she is.
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>>>>>>> Do you think she's lying about her optimism?
>>>>>>
>>>>>> I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.
>>>>>
>>>>> In short: is what they said false? And should they have known it was false?
>>>>
>>>> Ah so "should they have known" is where I think some part of me disagrees.
>>>>
>>>> Since I think when evaluating when someone is lying, I typically ask "DID they

know?"

Yes, people typically *consciously* disagree about that method of evaluating lies, but actually use it in many cases.

Suppose you said you checked the safety readings. And you didn't, and you forgot that. And when you were saying you checked them, you were being irresponsible and just bullshitting, instead of thinking about whether you actually checked them. You didn't consciously remember if you checked them or not, and didn't care to consider the matter, you just wanted your boss off your back. Lots of people are comfortable calling that guy a liar.

People would NOT analyze it this way in words, but the guy was implying he went through a thought process of confidently remembering he did it. That was false. He didn't go through that thought process.

In general, when you make a claim you're also implying that you went through some sort of reasonable thought process to reach that conclusion. If you didn't, that's lying!

People kinda understand this. If you say "This is my wild guess..." they recognize that's different than just saying it straight (and saying you're "damn sure" is something else again). They know the difference. Well, if it *is* your wild guess, and you say it straight, you're a liar. (You might plead omitting that due to irrelevance in some cases, or that you thought it was implied that it was a wild guess cuz you already said you were a beginner. There's some defenses, and analyzing particular situations can be tricky, but you hopefully get the general concept.)

What you say makes sense, but I have a question ❓🤔❓ : why is there a disconnect between people's explicit method of evaluating lies, and the criteria they often actually use?

Is it just a lack of thinking about the issue, or do they want to let themselves or other people off the hook for lying, or what?

I think a major reason is because lying is considered a sin, and calling someone a liar is considered a severe attack.

I've found people are more comfortable with alternative phrasings like calling something a "dishonest statement" or "untruthful" rather than a "lie". The word "lie" is more threatening to social status, so they're more reluctant to use it.

I agree that people are usually more comfortable with "dishonest statement" or "untruthful" rather than "lie." Elliot, do you have a policy of always using the word "lie" rather than a phrasing that other people may be more comfortable with? If so, why?

On Oct 1, 2017, at 12:21 PM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sat, Sep 30, 2017 at 7:07 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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> I agree that people are usually more comfortable with "dishonest statement" or "untruthful" rather than "lie." Elliot, do you have a policy of always using the word "lie" rather than a phrasing that other people may be more comfortable with? If so, why?

No, I don't have a policy of always using the word "lie". I don't give it much thought and use words I find convenient. My focus is normally on objective communication, not on the social meaning of words.

"Lie" is a short word, so it ought to see more use than longer alternatives. Short words are usually core parts of the language that are really old and important, rather than imports from Latin or another language.

Most people don't pay attention to the origins of words they use (and I didn't pay much conscious attention to it until after I heard Peikoff mention it in his grammar course), but it matters. The dictionary says "lie" comes from Old English:

> Old English lyge (noun), lēogan (verb), of Germanic origin; related to Dutch liegen and German lügen.

Compare with "dishonest":

> late Middle English (in the sense 'dishonorable, unchaste'): from Old French deshoneste, Latin dehonestus.

The word "truth" is good:

> Old English trīewth, trēowth 'faithfulness, constancy' (see true, -th2).

But when you add *two* extra parts to it ("un" and "ful") then it's less good.

(This is just the New Oxford American Dictionary. You can use better dictionaries, like the OED, for more/better info.)

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Kate's analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 2, 2017 at 2:57:44 PM

On Sep 29, 2017, at 1:14 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 6:55 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 4:45 PM, Kate Sams ksams434@gmail.com [fallible-ideas]
>> <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>> ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can
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> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

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> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

my interpretation of this part: Maybe Birner is saying that CR ppl tend not to have an exuberant promoter/social type personality. (btw, he also seems to say CR ppl don't take idea conflicts seriously.)

But truth (reality?) is (inter-)connected.(?) We should try to express our ideas so they are appealing to other generations/traditions.(Implication?: We should try to be exuberant promoter/social types?)

my comments: I found LT's paragraph disjointed and poorly explained. Maybe I lack too much background info to make sense of it without help. I have some guesses, but I'm pretty lost.

I agree that Birner thinks CR ppl don't have super social personalities. My interpretation of Birner, however, is that CR ppl don't even meet like the average when it comes to social personalities. Regardless, how does this fit into the next part (after we omit the aside)?

When I read "truth is connected", I think of how reality is an interconnected whole. And so maybe LT's saying if we (become exuberant promoters and?) express ideas so they are appealing to other generations/traditions, then we'll still be making progress on truth-

seeking / figuring out interconnected reality. I don't know.

> > > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

> i'm not aware that DD is currently still writing about CR, but he might be. idk.

> Why is LT saying this?

to hint at the idea that Popper/CR ideas are going to survive partly cuz DD is still writing about CR and reaching ppl

> Why does (and does?) LT expect readers to find it convincing?

she expects ppl to accept her assertions

> What's her point, and how does it relate to the rest of her message?

her point is that DD is exposing ppl to CR so there's no need for pessimism regarding CR's ability to survive.

From: 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] Alan's Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 2, 2017 at 3:38:44 PM

On 30 Sep 2017, at 00:16, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:58 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:
>
>> On 28 Sep 2017, at 08:45, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> This is a long post. You may want to reply to a few things at a time!
>>>
>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:16 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:
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>>>> On 27 Sep 2017, at 18:53, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>>>>>
>>>>>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?

"By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

"Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

The first half of the sentence and the second half of the sentence contradict one another. This is a polite way of saying she thinks the post is crap.

> I agree that's the general idea.
>
> I think it's worth analyzing in a different more detailed way. Here's what I asked Justin about this sentence:
>
> What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?

The spirit of the post is that CR is dying cuz CR people don't do enough politicking/social stuff.

> Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

She thinks that it would be good for CR people to do more politicking/social stuff.

If that's what LT meant, why didn't she make any clear statement like, "I agree with you that politicking/social stuff is important."?

LT expressed some doubts about how important academia is. Influence in academia is what the politicking/social stuff being discussed is for, so she may not be in favor of politicking/social stuff (though she does also say CR people can do it). She has a paragraph challenging academia's importance, saying academia has flaws, and mentioning blogs positively. LT also said people from diverse (that is, including non-academic) backgrounds were getting into CR.

I think you may be getting this reading more from trying to make sense of LT's position, rather than from what she wrote. I don't think LT actually tried to express a reasonable position. Most of her post is making non-textually-based guesses about what DF/JB meant and then attacking those (which leaves me doubting her sympathy!)

> What is LT more optimistic about?

LT thinks that CR people could learn to do politicking/social stuff.

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is?

LT thinks Frederick is very pessimistic: he thinks CR will die.

> How optimistic does LT think LT is?

LT thinks she is very optimistic. She thinks CR can thrive.

> How did LT compare these amounts?

> She claims CR can spread to many more kinds of people than just academics, e.g. - skeptics. But she thinks Fredericks' position is that even academics will dump CR.
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> Why does LT sympathize with the *spirit of the post* instead of *the post*? Why the indirection?

The spirit of the post is that CR people suck at spreading their ideas.

The post sez CR is flawed cuz it attracts losers who can't play the social/academic game.

Lulie wants to spread CR. She doesn't want to say CR attracts anti-social losers cuz then she's a loser.

Alan

From: Jordan Talcot <jordan.talcot@gmail.com>
To: Alan Forrester <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Alan's Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 2, 2017 at 7:56:46 PM

On Oct 2, 2017, at 12:38 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:

> On 30 Sep 2017, at 00:16, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:58 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On 28 Sep 2017, at 08:45, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> This is a long post. You may want to reply to a few things at a time!
>>>>
>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:16 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> On 27 Sep 2017, at 18:53, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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>>>>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
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INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?

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>
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above you (Alan) said:

> The spirit of the post is that CR is dying cuz CR people don't do enough politicking/social stuff.

but here you seem to be saying that is part of what Lulie is trying to *avoid* agreeing with.

you identified the "spirit" as something different in each case.

why?

it may be worth looking at the idea of agreeing with the "spirit" of something more in general. like, when people talk about agreeing with the "spirit" of something, what do they normally mean? if someone says "i agree with the spirit of what you are saying", what do they mean? what kind of thing are they going to say?

Jordan

From: Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 3, 2017 at 9:17:05 AM

On Thu, Sep 28, 2017 at 3:17 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> I would expect you to learn a lot from reading the answers (instead of figuring them out yourself) *after* you've already thought about it a lot.
>
> It's one thing to just read an answer and go "that makes sense". IT's different if you first think about it a lot and miss it. Then you can see how you missed it, where you went wrong, and try to adjust your approach so you wouldn't miss it in the future.
>
> Putting in some significant effort/thought at some point is really helpful to learning much. But I don't think you (Anne) should worry about doing it in a complete way at this time. If you just do at least one round of effortful thinking per topic, then I think you'll learn a lot more than if you read something passively.

I did learn more by writing my own answer before looking at other people's answers. I don't think I would have thought as much about the passages if I hadn't been trying to write something about them. I might have wanted to, but I wouldn't have actually done it.

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fallible-ideas/join
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On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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This exercise helped me. I saw a post on another group. Before FI, I would have been uneasy about the post but not been able to explain to myself why.

Poster BB wrote something to the effect of "Poster AA's post was WONDERFUL!! She is talking about X." Then BB went on about X. But I don't think AA was talking about X at all.

In this case, I don't think BB really understood either X or what AA was saying. But I could imagine a situation where BB would do this with the goal of getting people to ignore what AA was trying to say, while also getting people to think that BB respected AA's ideas.

(I know this would be better if I shared a link and quoted directly, but it's from a private group where confidentiality is expected. Do you think I'm sharing too much here? Too little?)

(Did I cut too much from Elliot's original post that I quote above? Too little?)

Yahoo Groups Links

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From: Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] [Explanation] What's a lie? (was: J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT***)
Date: October 4, 2017 at 9:43:58 AM

On Sun, Oct 1, 2017 at 3:40 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Oct 1, 2017, at 12:21 PM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sat, Sep 30, 2017 at 7:07 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>> On Sep 30, 2017, at 4:00 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 7:45 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:53 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>>>>>
>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 5:31 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 2:05 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 10:20 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>>>> On Sep 28, 2017, at 12:38 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

>>>>>>>>>>> Do you think LT is optimistic?

>>>>>>>>>> I have no reason to think that she is.

>>>>>>>>> Do you think she's lying about her optimism?

>>>>>>>> I'm not sure how to evaluate when someone is lying.

> In short: is what they said false? And should they have known it was false?

Ah so "should they have known" is where I think some part of me disagrees.

Since I think when evaluating when someone is lying, I typically ask "DID they know?"

Yes, people typically *consciously* disagree about that method of evaluating lies, but actually use it in many cases.

Suppose you said you checked the safety readings. And you didn't, and you forgot that. And when you were saying you checked them, you were being irresponsible and just bullshitting, instead of thinking about whether you actually checked them. You didn't consciously remember if you checked them or not, and didn't care to consider the matter, you just wanted your boss off your back. Lots of people are comfortable calling that guy a liar.

People would NOT analyze it this way in words, but the guy was implying he went through a thought process of confidently remembering he did it. That was false. He didn't go through that thought process.

In general, when you make a claim you're also implying that you went through some sort of reasonable thought process to reach that conclusion. If you didn't, that's lying!

People kinda understand this. If you say "This is my wild guess..." they recognize that's different than just saying it straight (and saying you're "damn sure" is something else again). They know the difference. Well, if it *is* your wild guess, and you say it straight, you're a liar. (You might plead omitting that due to irrelevance in some cases, or that you thought it was implied that it was a wild guess cuz you already said you were a beginner. There's some defenses, and analyzing particular situations can be tricky, but you hopefully get the general concept.)

What you say makes sense, but I have a question ❓🤔❓ : why is there a disconnect between people's explicit method of evaluating lies, and the criteria they often actually use?

Is it just a lack of thinking about the issue, or do they want to let themselves or other people off the hook for lying, or what?

> > I think a major reason is because lying is considered a sin, and calling someone a liar is considered a severe attack.
> >
> > I've found people are more comfortable with alternative phrasings like calling something a "dishonest statement" or "untruthful" rather than a "lie". The word "lie" is more threatening to social status, so they're more reluctant to use it.
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> I agree that people are usually more comfortable with "dishonest statement" or "untruthful" rather than "lie." Elliot, do you have a policy of always using the word "lie" rather than a phrasing that other people may be more comfortable with? If so, why?

No, I don't have a policy of always using the word "lie". I don't give it much thought and use words I find convenient. My focus is normally on objective communication, not on the social meaning of words.

When you ignore social meanings of words, sometimes readers/listeners think you're an asshole and stop paying attention to what you say and/or stop discussions with you. You are okay with that happening because you only want to have discussions with other people who are willing to overlook the social meanings of words? Because you're trying to convince other people to ignore social meanings of words? Something else?

[left the below stuff for context]
> "Lie" is a short word, so it ought to see more use than longer alternatives. Short words are usually core parts of the language that are really old and important, rather than imports from Latin or another language.
>
> Most people don't pay attention to the origins of words they use (and I didn't pay much conscious attention to it until after I heard Peikoff mention it in his grammar course), but it matters. The dictionary says "lie" comes from Old English:
>
> > Old English lyge (noun), lēogan (verb), of Germanic origin; related to Dutch liegen and German lügen.
>
> Compare with "dishonest":
>
> > late Middle English (in the sense 'dishonorable, unchaste'): from Old French deshoneste, Latin dehonestus.

> The word "truth" is good:
>
> > Old English trīewth, trēowth'faithfulness, constancy'(see true, -th2).
>
> But when you add *two* extra parts to it ("un" and "ful") then it's less good.
>
> (This is just the New Oxford American Dictionary. You can use better dictionaries, like the OED, for more/better info.)

Posted by: Anne B <anne52984@gmail.com>

Yahoo Groups Links

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    (Yahoo! ID required)

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    fallible-ideas-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

<*> Your use of Yahoo Groups is subject to:
    https://info.yahoo.com/legal/us/yahoo/utos/terms/

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] [Explanation] What's a lie? (was: J's Answers ***SPOILER ALERT***)
Date: October 4, 2017 at 10:40:11 AM

On Oct 4, 2017, at 9:43 AM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sun, Oct 1, 2017 at 3:40 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us
> [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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> because you only want to have discussions with other people who are
> willing to overlook the social meanings of words? Because you're
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My guess is its something like:

1. Elliot is focused on truth-seeking.
2. Truth-seeking requires clear and precise discussion.
3. Clear and precise discussion requires clear and precise use of words.
4. Social meanings of words are often fuzzy and imprecise.
5. Therefore, clear and precise use of words contradicts using social meanings of words.
6. Therefore, clear and precise discussion contradicts using social meanings of words.
7. Therefore, truth-seeking contradicts using social meanings of words.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 4, 2017 at 2:05:46 PM

On Oct 4, 2017, at 6:28 AM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

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> (I know this would be better if I shared a link and quoted directly, but it's from a private group where confidentiality is expected. Do you think I'm sharing too much here? Too little?)

i think it's fine. i can't really tell anything about people AA or BB, or the contents of that

discussion.

> (Did I cut too much from Elliot's original post that I quote above? Too little?)

i think it's fine.

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: [Explanation] First-Handed (was: What's a lie?)
Date: October 4, 2017 at 2:20:26 PM

On Oct 4, 2017, at 6:43 AM, Anne B anne52984@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sun, Oct 1, 2017 at 3:40 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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Yesterday I was reading _The War on Guns_. I noticed the author called a statement "clearly false" rather than calling the politician a liar. He knew the politician was a liar, but didn't want to say it. The book is rather aggressive in general, but he still didn't want to cross that particular line.

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I don't want to spend my life being a slave to other people's opinions. I don't want to spend my life trying to read their minds and then do what they want me to do. I don't want to be second-handed. See _The Fountainhead_ by Ayn Rand.

I'm OK with coordinating with people in simple, clear, rational, mutually-beneficial ways. For example, I know the rule of thumb to walk on the right, which helps me coordinate the use of staircases and sometimes sidewalks with other people.

I'm not OK with coordinating with people by trying to figure out their unwritten, inconsistent rules [1], which don't benefit me, and then living my life according to their unreasonable ideas. I prefer to live by my own ideas and my own judgement.

[1] inconsistent from person to person, so you can't always please everyone when dealing with multiple people at once AND also inconsistent within an individual!

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Alan Forrester alanmichaelforrester@googlemail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] Alan's Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 4, 2017 at 6:00:07 PM

On 3 Oct 2017, at 00:56, 'Jordan Talcot' jordan.talcot@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

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>> On 30 Sep 2017, at 00:16, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 29, 2017, at 3:58 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> On 28 Sep 2017, at 08:45, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> This is a long post. You may want to reply to a few things at a time!
>>>>>
>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:16 PM, 'Alan Forrester' via Fallible Ideas <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>>> On 27 Sep 2017, at 18:53, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of

be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

Danny Frederick:

INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?

"By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

"Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

The first half of the sentence and the second half of the sentence contradict one another. This is a polite way of saying she thinks the post is crap.

I agree that's the general idea.

I think it's worth analyzing in a different more detailed way. Here's what I asked Justin about this sentence:

What do you think the spirit of the post is, in LT's view?

The spirit of the post is that CR is dying cuz CR people don't do enough politicking/social stuff.

> Why does LT sympathize with that spirit?

She thinks that it would be good for CR people to do more politicking/social stuff.

If that's what LT meant, why didn't she make any clear statement like, "I agree with you that politicking/social stuff is important."?

LT expressed some doubts about how important academia is. Influence in academia is what the politicking/social stuff being discussed is for, so she may not be in favor of politicking/social stuff (though she does also say CR people can do it). She has a paragraph challenging academia's importance, saying academia has flaws, and mentioning blogs positively. LT also said people from diverse (that is, including non-academic) backgrounds were getting into CR.

I think you may be getting this reading more from trying to make sense of LT's position, rather than from what she wrote. I don't think LT actually tried to express a reasonable position. Most of her post is making non-textually-based guesses about what DF/JB meant and then attacking those (which leaves me doubting her sympathy!)

> What is LT more optimistic about?

LT thinks that CR people could learn to do politicking/social stuff.

> How optimistic does LT think Danny Frederick is?

LT thinks Frederick is very pessimistic: he thinks CR will die.

> How optimistic does LT think LT is?

LT thinks she is very optimistic. She thinks CR can thrive.

> How did LT compare these amounts?

She claims CR can spread to many more kinds of people than just academics, e.g. - skeptics. But she thinks Fredericks' position is that even academics will dump CR.

I agree with your comments except for what I said above. I have another question about this part:

Why does LT sympathize with the *spirit of the post* instead of *the post*? Why the indirection?

The spirit of the post is that CR people suck at spreading their ideas.

The post sez CR is flawed cuz it attracts losers who can't play the social/academic game.

Lulie wants to spread CR. She doesn't want to say CR attracts anti-social losers cuz then she's a loser.

above you (Alan) said:

The spirit of the post is that CR is dying cuz CR people don't do

> enough politicking/social stuff.

>> but here you seem to be saying that is part of what Lulie is trying to
>> *avoid* agreeing with.

>> you identified the "spirit" as something different in each case.

>> why?

No. Lulie is saying she agrees with the spirit of the idea.

The spirit of the post as identified by Lulie is that CR people suck at spreading CR.

The post also sez that CR people are anti-social losers because CR has properties that attract anti-social losers. Lulie dislikes with this idea, so she leaves it out of the spirit of the post.

There are reasons why CR people might be anti-social losers that have nothing to do with CR. For example, CR might have been invented by an anti-social loser who only managed to spread his ideas to other anti-social losers.

> it may be worth looking at the idea of agreeing with the "spirit" of
> something more in general. like, when people talk about agreeing with
> the "spirit" of something, what do they normally mean? if someone
> says "i agree with the spirit of what you are saying", what do they
> mean? what kind of thing are they going to say?

When a person refers to the spirit of an idea the meaning of that term is left vague. The spirit is supposed to be something like the main point of an idea. The non-spirit parts of the idea are optional and can be discarded.

The vagueness of the concept of "the spirit of the idea" makes it useful as a way of manipulating people. Saying X and not Y is the spirit of an idea is a strategy for delegitimising Y. Since the spirit concept is so vague it's difficult for somebody to argue that X is not the spirit of the idea. This is not an advanced intellectual argument. It's just a kind of trick used by a person to fool himself and others.

Alan

Posted by: Alan Forrester <alanmichaelforrester@googlemail.com>

Yahoo Groups Links

<*> To visit your group on the web, go to:
    http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fallible-ideas/

<*> Your email settings:
    Individual Email | Traditional

<*> To change settings online go to:
    http://groups.yahoo.com/group/fallible-ideas/join
    (Yahoo! ID required)

<*> To change settings via email:
    fallible-ideas-digest@yahoogroups.com
    fallible-ideas-fullfeatured@yahoogroups.com

<*> To unsubscribe from this group, send an email to:
    fallible-ideas-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com

<*> Your use of Yahoo Groups is subject to:
    https://info.yahoo.com/legal/us/yahoo/utos/terms/

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 5, 2017 at 10:11:45 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

> Ray Scott Percival:

> > I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.

interpretation: He agrees with ~all of LT assertions in her reply to Birner's piece.

comment: LT didn't actually explain much in her response. So it's not like RSP read her explanations, thought about them, and then agreed with them. Instead, he liked her assertions.

> > The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect. I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh!

interpretation: Birner is mostly wrong. Sure, some critical rationalists don't get out much, but many do. Like me or DM!

comment: Birner's post is about CR being doomed cuz CR ppl don't do enough social stuff in academia.

RSP's response is like "But wait, I judge that I'm a critical rationalist who is extroverted!"

This doesn't contradict Birner's idea. First, Birner didn't claim that zero ppl who identify as critical rationalists also identify as being extroverted. Birner's point is that no one is doing the necessary social stuff in academia for CR to survive.

Just because RSP and DM are proclaimed by RSP to be extraverts doesn't mean they are doing what it takes for CR to survive in academia.

(Note: I don't know who these ppl are, maybe they *are* allowing CR to survive in academia. If so, they haven't actually argued for that claim.)

> I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁

such bragging. and i'm guessing lying, too.

when ppl brag, they are trying to boost their image in other's eyes. this typically involves some distorting of the truth.

> When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂

more bragging and lying.

he wants to impress readers by talking about stuff like the Economic Calculation Problem and how he could handle a bunch of people at once. he's putting on an *act*. a pretense. there's faking going on.

> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

I'd ask him what he means by "entrenched".

It's almost like he and Birner use the "entrenched" concept to refer to ideas which are like isolated away from other ideas/traditions and then consequently die off.

(why do they die off if entrenched means hard to change? maybe cuz the holders literally die. and since the ideas were isolated, ppl in the next generation didn't learn the ideas?)

I don't know enough about how they are thinking about this to say much.

> I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others. Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR.

interpretation: rational argument is a powerful force, which you should want to use.

comments: RSP isn't actually talking much about Birner's ideas. RSP isn't talking about the *actual* problems with academia or with ppl disliking criticism or with the requirements of social networking and politicking.

Instead, he's making assertions about rational argument being powerful. But he's not actually trying to explain anything and persuade ppl who agree with Birner. He's just talking past them.

> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

interpretation: if you can get them to agree with your counterargument, you'll be able to change their minds. even on big stuff.

comments: such a fancy sentence. more trying to impress ppl.

summary: RSP is trying to persuade ppl using social tactics, rather than rational argument. He brags a lot and tries to impress his readers. Rather than carefully addressing Birner's ideas, he asserts that rational argument has power and that he's an extrovert who can easily beat people in arguments.

It could be true that rational argument is powerful, but you aren't going to persuade anyone who sympathizes with Birner if you don't actually address some of Birner's ideas.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 5, 2017 at 10:40:16 PM

On Oct 5, 2017, at 7:11 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>> Ray Scott Percival:
>>
>>> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.
>>
>> interpretation: He agrees with ~all of LT assertions in her reply to Birner's piece.
>>
>> comment: LT didn't actually explain much in her response.

What did LT explain?

> So it's not like RSP read her explanations, thought about them, and then agreed with them. Instead, he liked her assertions.

Yes. Or, worse, he may not have even considered if he agreed with LT. If you want to agree with someone for social reasons (e.g. b/c they praised you and your book recently, and they are doing a good job of presenting as smart), it's easier to just say you agree now. Why make a whole intellectual effort (of thinking it over) just to risk finding out that you disagree? If you disagree, what do you gain? An awkward situation where you face a choice of sacrificing truth and integrity, or else sacrificing some social status considerations.

>> The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect. I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh!

> interpretation: Birner is mostly wrong. Sure, some critical rationalists don't get out much, but many do. Like me or DM!
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> Just because RSP and DM are proclaimed by RSP to be extraverts doesn't mean they are doing what it takes for CR to survive in academia.
>
> (Note: I don't know who these ppl are, maybe they *are* allowing CR to survive in academia. If so, they haven't actually argued for that claim.)

FYI, in reality, RSP doesn't know much about CR and is harming CR by his dishonest association with it.

His lack of seriousness about CR is one of the reasons he finds his conventional personality – including all sorts of irrationalities – compatible with CR.

> > I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁
>
> such bragging. and i'm guessing lying, too.
>
> when ppl brag, they are trying to boost their image in other's eyes. this typically involves some distorting of the truth.
>
> > > When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂
>
> more bragging and lying.

> he wants to impress readers by talking about stuff like the Economic Calculation Problem and how he could handle a bunch of people at once. he's putting on an *act*. a pretense. there's faking going on.

He provides no evidence of the truth of his interpretations of past events. Why should we accept them? Because of the confident swagger with which he delivers the claims..?

>> As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

> I'd ask him what he means by "entrenched".

It's explained in the Birner paper in a part no one quoted or seems to have bothered to look at (including RSP, I bet). Except me :)

>> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

> interpretation: if you can get them to agree with your counterargument, you'll be able to change their minds. even on big stuff.

> comments: such a fancy sentence. more trying to impress ppl.

> summary: RSP is trying to persuade ppl using social tactics, rather than rational argument. He brags a lot and tries to impress his readers. Rather than carefully addressing Birner's ideas, he asserts that rational argument has power and that he's an extrovert who can easily beat people in arguments.

RSP's whole post is about how impressive his life is and how clever it shows him to be, not about topical arguments.

btw if you search your email history, i think you'll be able to find some of my email discussions with Ray Scott Percival and see what an irrational bastard he is.

> It could be true that rational argument is powerful, but you aren't going to persuade anyone who sympathizes with Birner if you don't actually address some of Birner's ideas.

if rational argument is so powerful, why don't LT or RSP use it?

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 6, 2017 at 12:00:14 PM

On Oct 5, 2017, at 10:40 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Oct 5, 2017, at 7:11 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>>
>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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>>> Ray Scott Percival:
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>>> interpretation: He agrees with ~all of LT assertions in her reply to Birner's piece.
>>>
>>> comment: LT didn't actually explain much in her response.
>
> What did LT explain?

I didn't have any explanations in mind when I wrote that, but saying "LT explained nothing in her response." is a really strong (potentially false) statement.

I didn't know whether she literally explained *nothing*. So I wanted to hedge and say something that I believed to be true.

Saying "nothing" in this case would have been dishonest (unless I had gone back and studied her post again and determined that "nothing" is an accurate description).

This is a common way that ppl are dishonest. Often, ppl make claims about "always" or "every" or "nothing" in order to exaggerate (i.e. lie). I still do this, especially when talking to someone IRL.

--

From: anonymous FI <anonymousfallibleideas@gmail.com>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 6, 2017 at 1:31:38 PM

On Oct 6, 2017, at 9:00 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Oct 5, 2017, at 10:40 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> On Oct 5, 2017, at 7:11 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
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>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:53 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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Your wording indicates LT explained some, rather than being neutral about whether she explained anything or not.

The concept you may have wanted is: LT only explained a low amount AT MOST. Or: LT explained LESS THAN some specified low amount.

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: October 6, 2017 at 2:30:43 PM

On Oct 6, 2017, at 1:31 PM, 'anonymous FI' anonymousfallibleideas@gmail.com
[fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Oct 6, 2017, at 9:00 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Oct 5, 2017, at 10:40 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us
>> [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
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>>> On Oct 5, 2017, at 7:11 PM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:
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> Your wording indicates LT explained some, rather than being neutral about whether she explained anything or not.
>
> The concept you may have wanted is: LT only explained a low amount AT MOST. Or: LT explained LESS THAN some specified low amount.

a similar one: if anything, LT only explained a low amount of things in her response.

and yeah these are more accurate reflections of what my state of mind was.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: [important] Elliot's RSP Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 10, 2017 at 4:04:47 PM

Spoilers! Don't read this unless you're done trying to do your own analysis on your own!

(It appears that, as far as this thread goes, everyone's motors stopped pretty quickly without completing the project. Nor did anyone say they were choosing to stop on purpose and why. I'm unsurprised. I think there's some major problems there which people don't want to face! I thought Kate was the most persistent, and that people who think they are superior to Kate were less persistent, so I think that's notable.)

I wrote this a while ago, and one for the LT text. I'll send the LT one later after seeing if anyone wants to continue trying on my initiative instead of their own, which I don't especially recommend, but people do that kinda thing a lot. You ask them "Why didn't you reply to X?" and they don't answer your question and go reply to X, which is a terrible way to deal with the issue. They don't want to even think about the problem they have which is the reason they didn't reply to X, so they dishonestly pretend it was a rhetorical question meaning they should reply to X now, when it absolutely wasn't. Then they proceed to reply to X while leaving the reason-they-didn't-want-to problem unsolved, and so that problem (e.g. hostility) usually reoccurs promptly in the same discussion.

On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

This will be easier to follow if you read the rest of the thread first. Since there's already been a lot of discussion, I didn't repeat some things.

I write less interpretation of what RSP means than you should, partly because I have the skill to do this, and also because of prior discussion. Please don't copy that. For your own textual analysis, I suggest you write out what you think the text means way more than I do below. On the other hand, *do* copy the three pass method.

> ### Ray Scott Percival:
>
> > I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on.

"I think" is a lie. He didn't think about it, he just reciprocated in the social ritual of sucking up to each other.

Note that it'd still be a lie if "I think" was deleted. Then, by stating a claim, he'd be implying that he'd thought about it a reasonable amount in order to reasonably reach his conclusion (that LT id dead on).

The "I think" shouldn't be there. It's a hedge that doesn't even help him stick his neck out any less. It's a hedge that doesn't even manage to hedge anything.

> > The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

RSP is implying he analyzed the text, and worked out what's correct or not. Now he's sharing the fruits of his labor.

This is a lie. He carelessly skimmed it and didn't give it much thought. He doesn't really care if it's correct or not. What he does care about is this: he identified it as being on a different side of the debate than his own book. That's why he decided to say it's incorrect (without bothering to point out a single incorrect part.)

> > I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh!

He's attacking introverts without argument, and bragging that he's an extrovert. Extroverts have higher social status.

He pretends he's being generous by "grant[ing]" something, but actually the "grant" is an attack. He's reframing DF/JB as saying "We are lame introverts like most CR people, and we think CR will have trouble spreading because introverts like us suck too much to spread ideas."

> > I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once.

Lie. Not "complete" happy about that.

Also he's lying about debating all of them at the same time.

> 😁 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position.

I thought the Warwick mention might be a brag when I first read it, but it's subtle enough that it's hard to accuse him. Many brags are intentionally subtle. However he mentioned Warwick again later in the same short post, so that makes it blatant. LT is much more socially skilled than RSP. LT does significantly more by social implication while also being significantly more subtle about it.

RSP's attitude to debate is awful.

He's lying (exaggerating) about how much he loved it to brag about how successful and effective he was. He's presenting the story he'd like to have happened, and thinks will impress people, with no regard for what actually happened.

> Talk about a double punch to the jaw!

This isn't just a confession of his disrespect for reason. It's also a brag that he won the debates – without any evidence or argument.

I don't think the debates went as well for him as he's telling us. I think he's lying.

> It was easy though - they all had glass jaws.

He means it was easy *for him* because he's so great. More unargued, false bragging. Super dishonest.

> 😂 As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains.

RSP begins this sentence as if he's going to reply to an issue with an argument. But then he pivots to just saying that what the world needs is more people like himself.

What do people like RSP do? Productive some of some kind in some areas. He was that vague about it.

> I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir

> John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

Long sentence!

He's lying about how much scientists value Popper. Why? Because he wants more people to respect Popper and thinks the way to get respect is by bragging about what famous names agree with you.

And, as Alan pointed out, Tipler is actually a Bayesian not a Popperian.

And why didn't he mention Richard Feynman, who is way more famous than any of these people? Because he doesn't know that Feynman was a Popperian! Because he's not much of a scholar – either he hasn't read Feynman or he doesn't know enough about Popper to recognize Feynman's Popperian knowledge. (I recognized Feynman was a Popperian from reading Feynman books *first*, and then brought it up and found out that DD had knowledge of the matter *second*.)

RSP isn't naming anyone from firsthand knowledge. Medawar and Eccles are some of the most canonical names to use for this purpose. He just picked them up and presumably, as with Tipler, never bothered to check their actual beliefs.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book.

He doesn't argue anything in depth in his book.

I think it's debatable whether his book even contains non-deep arguments. I don't remember the book very well. I do clearly recall, from several discussion encounters, that RSP is both unable and unwilling to participate in productive discussions. He doesn't understand the basics of how to discuss, argue, ask or answer questions, reply to text instead of talk past it, etc.

> Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age.

Among other things, he's lying about how effective he was.

Here's a difference: if you fought bronze age knights with a light saber, they would agree

you'd won the fight (if they were still alive).

> You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.

RSP means something like: When you're as smart and as effective in debates as RSP, then critical debate is exciting and fun. It's always the other guy getting punched in the jaw, not you, so you're eager.

What about the other people? Here he is, supposedly on the side of saying people can like criticism and learn from debate. But then, contrary to that, he talks about how he's eager to go cut people up, in unfair fights where they're outgunned. Would RSP enjoy being on the receiving end of punches and light sabers? No. He's eager to go out and use *strong* arguments, not losing arguments.

So basically RSP is just like most people: he doesn't like losing arguments.

But his position is supposedly: criticism is wonderful, people don't have closed minds, people can enjoy receiving criticism. (That's the kind of thing LT was saying that he claims to consider dead on, and he said some stuff like that in his book.)

He's such a liar. He doesn't believe his own propaganda.

RSP also, by saying "you" can't wait to hurt people with light-saber-arguments, is suggesting that people in general are cruel and use criticism as a weapon, not just him. I agree that is common. That's one of the reason many people dislike receiving criticism...

> That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA.

This implies that you should know what ECA is. If it was obscure jargon that educated people don't all know, then he'd have told us what ECA stands for. He's blaming you for not knowing what ECA is. He's saying educated people like him know what ECA is, and he's so used to dealing with smart, knowledgeable people that it didn't even occur to him to help the plebs out by letting them know what ECA is.

I suspect ECA = Economic Calculation Argument. Which, btw, RSP assumed familiarity with earlier. He was saying if you don't know what the Economic Calculation Argument is, then you're not a smart scholar like him. RSP wants to bait people to ask so they look weak and RSP looks wise. And RSP wants to confuse people so they think RSP knows stuff that's beyond them. And RSP needs some complexity and confusion to hide the lack of substance of what he writes.

> The same applies to CR.

This is unclear, bad writing.

He might mean: CR is a strong argument, so it's like a light saber that you'll be eager to hurt people with.

> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

RSP wrote everything as one paragraph. This final sentence is a non sequitur. Why is it here? What does it have to do with the rest? It's thematic though because it's more bragging. He's suggesting that other people are imprudent, but not himself. And his prudence is so effective that he's never left an argument unanswered, and never been corrupted, and never had problems like falling or withering. Because he's so much better and smarter than other people.

But even in this paragraph bragging about his rationality and intelligence, RSP reveals his irrationality. His attitude isn't to seek the truth, it's to punch people who challenge his cherished beliefs. He has some core beliefs which he's closed minded about. Rather than say something like "I either refute all criticism or change my mind" (a rational approach), RSP suggests he cherishes some of his beliefs (doesn't want to reconsider them) and his approach is to protect his beliefs with arguments. I think RSP has a standard viewpoint which basically accepts that all our ideas are flawed, and as long as you can put up a pretty good debate then your idea is good enough, and the problem with the world is the ignorant plebs who have tons of beliefs they can't even argue a reasonable amount for.

After the details we can do a second pass to get more of an integrated, big-picture understanding of the text.

> I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on. The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect.

RSP dishonestly claims to have thought about the issues. From this intro, you'd expect some arguments and intellectual discussion to follow. It doesn't (and he's hoping you won't notice that – he's trying to sound like an intellectual and give an impression of being a serious thinker who argues stuff, but he doesn't actually do it.)

> I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted.

Here he pivots to bragging that he's an extrovert. He never gets back on topic.

> Just look at me! Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😄 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws.

Extensive bragging, much of which is false, plus revealing that he views arguments like punches (contrary to LT's position, which RSP claimed to agree with, that people don't have to be off-put by criticism).

> 😂As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains. I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others.

The bragging continues with name dropping.

> Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book.

And book plugging.

> Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.

And bragging that his argument-punches are as effective as light sabers.

> That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

And bragging about how great he is at dealing with counterarguments, while actually revealing he's irrational.

Finally i'll do a third pass for overall comments. I don't think it's necessary to quote RSP again since I won't be breaking up his text.

Overall he bragged a lot and had no arguments. But he opened by pretending to have thought about things. He wants you to have an impression something like this:

RSP is above the petty arguments. He thought them through and figured out the right conclusions. Rather than go over all the arguments (LT already did a nice job of that), he's willing to let you pull up a chair while he recounts his glorious accomplishments. He absolutely could argue all the issues – better than you – but he just found reminiscing fun and relevant. He's so wise, and has already dealt with so many challenges, that he takes lots of this stuff for granted.

That's basically all false.

It's interesting that he presents himself a lot like he's me. Lots of what he thinks would impress people is the same stuff I am/do (but he isn't/doesn't). And I, despite having the knowledge and substantive debate history (largely publicly available online and open to criticism), actually do write arguments. I like arguments and substance more than bragging ... if RSP was so good at debates wouldn't he feel the same way? RSP mostly just faked it his whole life.

I'm very happy with the three pass method and recommend it. People commonly do the first pass and third pass, but not the second one. The second pass is really important for seeing how to apply to details to the text and get from them to some bigger picture understanding. It helps you bridge the gap from details to final thoughts. There's too much here to integrate all at once with no intermediate stage.

(BTW, if you find something hard, one thing you could try is doing more than 3 passes.)

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

From: Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] [important] Elliot's RSP Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 11, 2017 at 12:36:30 PM

On Oct 10, 2017, at 4:04 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Ray Scott Percival:
>
>> Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age.
>
> Among other things, he's lying about how effective he was.
>
> Here's a difference: if you fought bronze age knights with a light saber, they would agree you'd won the fight (if they were still alive).
>
>> You simply can't wait to get out there and use it.
>
> RSP means something like: When you're as smart and as effective in debates as RSP, then critical debate is exciting and fun. It's always the other guy getting punched in the jaw, not you, so you're eager.
>
> What about the other people? Here he is, supposedly on the side of saying people can like criticism and learn from debate. But then, contrary to that, he talks about how he's eager to go cut people up, in unfair fights where they're outgunned. Would RSP enjoy being on the receiving end of punches and light sabers? No. He's eager to go out and use *strong* arguments, not losing arguments.
>
> So basically RSP is just like most people: he doesn't like losing arguments.

which fits with Birner's ideas

> But his position is supposedly: criticism is wonderful, people don't have closed minds,

> people can enjoy receiving criticism. (That's the kind of thing LT was saying that he claims to consider dead on, and he said some stuff like that in his book.)

> He's such a liar. He doesn't believe his own propaganda.

yeah!! where are his stories about how he was wrong and how he *loved* receiving criticism from others so he could learn better ideas?

> RSP also, by saying "you" can't wait to hurt people with light-saber-arguments, is suggesting that people in general are cruel and use criticism as a weapon, not just him. I agree that is common. That's one of the reason many people dislike receiving criticism…

yeah and how well would cruel light-saber-arguments work if you are trying to do social networking and politicking? not well.

RSP doesn't even try to address Birner's ideas. if anything, he's *helping* Birner's case, even though he thinks he is contradicting Birner.

[…]

>> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

> RSP wrote everything as one paragraph. This final sentence is a non sequitur. Why is it here? What does it have to do with the rest? It's thematic though because it's more bragging. He's suggesting that other people are imprudent, but not himself. And his prudence is so effective that he's never left an argument unanswered, and never been corrupted, and never had problems like falling or withering.

iow, he's never changed his mind about anything important to him?

> Because he's so much better and smarter than other people.

> But even in this paragraph bragging about his rationality and intelligence, RSP reveals his irrationality. His attitude isn't to seek the truth, it's to punch people who challenge his cherished beliefs. He has some core beliefs which he's closed minded about. Rather than say something like "I either refute all criticism or change my mind" (a rational approach), RSP suggests he cherishes some of his beliefs (doesn't want to reconsider them) and his approach is to protect his beliefs with arguments.

and if cherished beliefs are challenged, he thinks it's a bad thing. → "beware the corruption"

he's treating this like a dangerous situation one should prudently guard against.

(maybe that's how lots of ppl treat it, including himself. maybe that's one thing Birner noticed about people. but that's NOT what LT was claiming. and LT was supposedly "dead on" according to RSP.)

compare to: "One should eagerly seek out counterarguments so that one's beliefs have the wonderful opportunity to improve."

From: anonymous FI <anonymousfallibleideas@gmail.com>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] [important] Elliot's RSP Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 11, 2017 at 2:07:53 PM

On Oct 11, 2017, at 9:36 AM, Kate Sams <ksams434@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Oct 10, 2017, at 4:04 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>
>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>>> Ray Scott Percival:
>>
>>
>>> RSP also, by saying "you" can't wait to hurt people with light-saber-arguments, is suggesting that people in general are cruel and use criticism as a weapon, not just him. I agree that is common. That's one of the reason many people dislike receiving criticism…
>>
>> yeah and how well would cruel light-saber-arguments work if you are trying to do social networking and politicking? not well.

they work well in social networking when used in socially approved ways on the right people at the right times. sometimes in social status games – especially more intellectual ones – you can get ahead by putting others down. especially if they challenge you so you can plead self-defense.

>>> If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.
>>
>> RSP wrote everything as one paragraph. This final sentence is a non sequitur. Why is it here? What does it have to do with the rest? It's thematic though because it's

> more bragging. He's suggesting that other people are imprudent, but not himself. And
> his prudence is so effective that he's never left an argument unanswered, and never
> been corrupted, and never had problems like falling or withering.

> iow, he's never changed his mind about anything important to him?

he suggests he didn't change his mind that way (though i don't believe him). he might
still have changed his mind in other ways, e.g. under social pressure from his parents.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: Elliot's LT Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 15, 2017 at 1:35:42 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

Danny Frederick:

> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>
> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>
> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Lots of ground has already been covered in other posts in this thread, so I'll be somewhat brief instead of explaining everything in full. If you've read the other posts, then feel free to ask all the questions you want about tiny details.

BTW notice how I generally don't split quotes mid-sentence. I recommend that. When posting in general, most replies should go after a paragraph, some after a sentence, and few mid-sentence. I saw lots of replies to LT's text break up sentences when quoting, which made it hard to read and follow. (Since this is detailed analysis, I do lots of replies after sentences instead of paragraphs.)

> Lulie Tanett:
>
> > While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

LT doesn't sympathize. She's not optimistic. She's attacking DF/JB's position as caused by a pessimistic attitude, rather than being a rationally considered view.

The "spirit" of the post means: whatever unspecified parts/ideas/interpretation LT regards as the spirit. She doesn't agree with or even sympathize with the post or any particular argument in it. She's only claiming she has some interpretation that she sympathizes with. Commonly such interpretations about the "spirit" of the post, rather than the actual post, contradict the author's intentions and are rejected by the author.

People are like "I agree with the spirit of what you said, which is X" and authors often reply "No, I hate X, I was trying to say Y".

LT didn't even say what she thinks the spirit is to reduce her criticism exposure and give her more flexibility about what she says in the future. (Rather than actually decide what she means while writing, people often write ambiguous stuff. Then they determine its meaning later, using new information such as the replies they got to help decide which meaning they would prefer to have meant.)

> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking

> and politicking.

Characterizing an argument as a premise is nasty. LT does this repeatedly when she calls it a "premise" or an "assumption" and doesn't acknowledge there being an argument. She's being condescending.

Also she's misrepresenting DF/JB who didn't say "incompatible". A phrase DF/JB used was "less prone" which indicates it's a matter of degree, not strict incompatibility.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

Why? No argument.

This is in the *form* of an argument. LT presents it *as if* it were an argument. It's meant to appear to be an argument. She set the stage to make an argument. She used "but" to indicate she was arguing with the position she'd just stated. But this is an unargued assertion.

LT repeatedly uses the tactic of writing assertions while trying to give an overall impression that she's making arguments. That's dishonest.

> Why would social networking and politicking be special?

This isn't an argument, it's just implying the other side has no arguments.

And it's another dishonest reframing. DF/JB did not say social networking is "special". LT is changing their position to make it sound worse.

What they thought is more like: social networking involves being friendly with people instead of critical. So that's what's "special" about it. But "special" is the wrong word to describe this way that social networking is different than, say, art critiques or philosophy debates.

By using the wrong word to describe the difference, LT is trying to give the impression there's no (relevant) difference (rather than the reality: there is a difference that is relevant but isn't "special"). This is the kind of dishonest tactic LT uses instead of arguments.

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social

> endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

What a mess! It's a complicated sentence packed full of negatives. All of LT's previous text was readable, but all of a sudden we get this load of crap. Why? Because the complexity helps hide the lack of argument. If she made the whole post really simple, then people would read it and see there were no arguments. She needs some hard parts for people to get confused about, and which she can later say is where her arguments were.

What does it mean? Roughly:

Some people sometimes don't like some criticism, but it's possible to have productive discussions with people. And this refutes DF/JB somehow.

That doesn't refute DF/JB, and there's no real content. LT did also very vaguely imply she's talking about arguments from BoI (only an expert on the book, who knows LT, would be able to recognize that).

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

"They" is some poorly-specified people.

"What" and "something" are singular. LT presents a list of things but they're all indications of what one thing is like. It's confusing writing, and it's a bizarre claim: aren't there multiple things people dislike, which are related to their problems with criticism?

The "etc." has no productive purpose in the text and should be omitted. But it helps imply LT knows more than she's said, and it helps give LT flexibility to add more claims later and pretend they were part of her original argument.

The "It's possible..." sentence is another unargued assertion.

LT's tone is she's a wise person giving a lecture. She knows what she's talking about and she's telling it to you. The implication is she's seriously thought this through and has an informed opinion that some significant pondering went into. That's a lie. She hasn't earned the right to talk to people this way by doing the intellectual work. She's faking.

The tone isn't a subtle matter. This isn't a minor criticism. I'm not reading between the

lines to split hairs. LT is being blatant about it and most readers understand the messaging (even if they don't consciously state it). This may be easier to see if you compare it to what some other people write:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155688351614904/?comment_id=10155691777099904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R3%22%7D

PA:
> The quoted piece from Burke seems to me to demand og expect superhuman - if not suprahuman -reverence for the state.

Justin:
> do you have any criticism of Elliot Temple's criticism of that interpretation as presented in the article?

PA:
> thirty years ago I read read about critical rationalism and falsification, but I am in no way qualified to discuss Popper. Burke I know very little about. But maybe I shall learn more now starting to read Feyerabend's autobiography

See the difference between how PA and LT write?

PA is well aware he's clueless, and he writes like it. Lots of clueless people do write accordingly instead of hiding it. (Usually it's less blatant than PA, but still noticeably different than what LT is doing.)

PA opened with a "seems to me" to communicate limited confidence, and he wrote a very short thing which didn't pretend to be substantive, thoughtful wisdom.

PA, when challenged, stressed his novice status. LT, if challenged, would continue with the same tone of acting like a wiseman sharing her awesome knowledge.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

It's unfair of LT not to present it as her arguments against DF/JB's arguments.

And it's unfair how much LT pretends DF/JB were unclear and then just makes up a wide variety of false meanings to criticize.

LT avoids quoting them or doing textual analysis of what they meant. But she's trying to give a (false) impression that she read their text carefully, thought it through, and is being a generous Popperian doing her best to give them the benefit of the doubt, interpret positively, and make the most sense possible out of their flawed text. That's all a lie.

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Sucking up to a published author (with no actual regard for whether his ideas are any good, so that's dishonest), and yet another decoy to help pad out the post with things other than arguments.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

"indeed" is "used to emphasize a statement or response confirming something already suggested".

LT thinks academia is flawed. She's – without explanation or quoting – suggesting DF/JB already said LT's own claim. Rather than argue her point, she writes as if people already agree with her.

LT's use of "only way" is an exaggeration not found in DF/JB.

LT's use of "apparent premise" is to demean the DF/JB text as unclear and as based on premises rather than arguments.

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

If it's so easy, then why aren't LT or others doing this?

Is it honest to say this if LT can't name a single example of the intellectual communities and organizations she suggests are being built?

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

Most academics are constantly looking for excuses not to engage with criticism. Lack of

academic credentials (which have to be in the right field, too) is a common excuse.

LT hasn't solved the problem of engaging with academics. It's a difficult problem she doesn't know how to deal with, but LT implies it's more of an easy non-problem.

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

This is complete nonsense. It's like saying, "how do we ensure INDUCTIVISM survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?" Or the same with Bayesianism, positivism, postmodernism, skepticism, instrumentalism, infallibilism, etc. Or, "Because of BoI's argument that problems are soluble, there is a way to ensure socialism survives without unpleasant gulags."

No. You don't just get to assume the problem of making X survive is soluble. Maybe X is bad. Maybe X shouldn't survive.

Problems are soluble doesn't mean your favored things can and should survive. It just means there's a way forward for people, with or without CR, socialism, or anything else.

CR's survival is not necessarily required for a bright future (a bright future is possible. there are some sorts of solutions to humanity's problems. just no promises that LT's current favorite things are part of those solutions). Perhaps it will be replaced by something else which is better.

LT is being dishonest here. She's taking an unobjectionable "problems are soluble" statement (without crediting her source, BoI) and then following up with misleading terminology instead of an argument. Her trick is just to call something a problem and therefore to imply it must be soluble, even though BoI's argument doesn't say it is. BoI says there's some way forward, so we aren't screwed, but makes no guarantees the particular way forward LT brings up will be possible and work.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

Again LT uses inadequate quoting and doesn't attempt serious textual analysis. She just wants to make up interpretations to trash. She then immediately transitions into an aside, rather than discuss this in a serious way or give an argument.

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical

> rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

No, why would that be the meaning? LT doesn't quote it. It says:

>> If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct.

If you look at Birner's article, the meaning of "entrenched" is clarified:

> Popper defines a tradition as a set of behavioural patterns that remain stable even if and when alternative (and presumably viable) patterns of rules are available. A tradition may degener- ate into a genetically entrenched pattern of behaviour when viable alternative rules are no longer available or accessible. If a tradition in a particular ecological niche "becomes the spearhead of genetic entrenchment", the organisms in that niche risk extinction as a consequence of a change in the environment. Popper predicts that every genetic entrenchment becomes lethal in time (Popper 1994, p. 61). [italics omitted]

So Birner is saying (that he learned from Popper) that things which stop changing ("entrenched") eventually go extinct as their environment changes and they don't. An unchanging thing can't deal with a changing world indefinitely. This point has similarities to BoI. LT didn't understand it correctly.

Birner's sentence contains mistakes, but I'm not going to go into them now. Try it yourself if you're interested.

> But truth is connected.

What truth is connected to what?

> Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

This is one of the nastiest statements LT made. It's like "Why not be interested in not punching your wife again?" It assumes people aren't interested in something that's pretty clearly good. But they are, and they never said otherwise.

LT is misrepresenting her rivals as simply uninterested in "expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions". This is completely unfair, it's done by implication, and it's done instead of any actual argument. (LT doesn't even argue that "expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions" is good. She

just takes it for granted that it's good and that her opponents are uninterested in it. She's also baiting them to reply saying they are interested, at which point she will frame it as them conceding to her and trying to follow LT's lead in her proposed project.)

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

Who's getting interested? What evidence does LT have to know this? How regularly? How many people?

LT is trying to communicate a false impression of the current situation (which is actually not going so well). She's lying.

LT is also lying about DD's current activities. DD has withdrawn from critical discussion and, due to the lack of error correction (plus some other problems that LT has knowledge of), is falling apart and unable to do good work writing about CR.

LT is suggesting she's an expert on the CR community, on the status of outreach efforts, and on DD personally. She vaguely hints she is DD's representative with insider knowledge. (She does have some insider knowledge, but she's lying about how positive it is. LT is not DD's representative – neither substantively nor in DD's opinion – and she wouldn't explicitly claim to be if directly asked, but she's happy to hint at it to people who won't ask.)

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on.

Long sentence! Lots of vague claims with no examples.

There's "a lot of craving" for LT's ideas, but she has no audience, produces no essays or other content, and can't point to actual example people with this craving..?

What's one good rationalist/skeptic community? Where do I find these things LT says exist? Nowhere. She's lying.

> It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

Who is the "next generation"? Is LT part of it? Am I? What birth years does it refer to?

Why the "very" intensifier? That's bad writing. But good social vibes to help distract people from the lack of argument.

LT's method here is to make vague assertions, and avoid sticking her neck out. But, at the same time, to give strong impressions of what she's saying.

The "very" is non-specific. If criticized, LT can defend herself by retroactively adjusting how much fertility "very fertile" means. This is just like her use of "a lot" 3 times in the previous sentence.

Second pass

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

LT isn't sympathetic, and isn't optimistic. The "spirit" of the post means LT's adversarial reinterpretation.

> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking
> > and politicking.

LT implies her opponents have premises and assumptions, rather than arguments. This sort of implication is what LT uses instead of arguments.

> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social
> > networking and politicking be special?

This is an assertion and an unfair question.

> > Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social
> > endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea
> > that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
> > (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having
> > problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems
> > and still have a critical discussion.)

LT is putting words in her opponents' mouths and making assertions about the issue of

criticism.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

LT is putting words in her opponents' mouths and sucking up to RSP.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

LT is putting words in her opponents' mouths and making no-evidence assertions about how successful her kind of stuff is.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

LT continues her method of making up what her opponents mean to suit her convenience, without any serious attempt to analyze what they actually wrote. She asks an unfair question and still has no arguments.

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism). And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

LT lies about the current world situation. She keeps it vague enough – no arguments or examples to be found – that it'd be difficult to pin her down in a critical debate.

Third pass

(You can think of these passes roughly as sentence level, paragraph level, and then the whole thing.)

The themes of LT's post are misrepresenting her opponent's positions and making assertions.

Why would anyone listen to this garbage? Because people aren't very precise readers, and they judge lots of material by their impression of the author, by the social vibes involved, etc. LT is attempting to present as a wise authority in order to appeal to the audience. That's ironic given LT's theme is about how well critical discussion works with regular people. LT herself uses social games disguised as critical discussion, instead of actual critical discussion!

LT's post is highly socially calibrated. There's skill in it. It really will impress people and sound right/persuasive to many vague thinkers.

Elliot Temple
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No one adequately followed up on the LT and RSP analysis threads. As expected in my comments at the beginning (i wrote like 7 self-replies before anyone else posted), which got almost no discussion.

I think the reason, in many cases, is that analyzing what that text means – to the standard of detail and accuracy i suggested – is TOO HARD for people.

but are people responding to this by finding EASIER activities? no. they keep trying to read HARDER texts like BoI, OPAR or whatever. and then they generally seem to try to read much longer sections of text at a time than the facebook quotes.

one thing ppl don't seem to understand (even when told) is that a recommendation like "read BoI" or "read FH" is not a hard and fast "read to start to finish, now" recommendation. it's a START reading it recommendation. see how it goes. you need to be aware of things like if you're understanding it and if you're interested. if not, you need to STOP reading and address the problem, then go back to it later.

this is the GENERAL method of dealing with stuff: begin, find a problem, solve problem, continue, find another problem, solve problem, continue.

if you're reading a book that's way too hard for you, this still works OK if you can recognize problems. the problem will lead you to something easier. then you have a problem with that. trying to solve that leads you to more basic material, where you have another problem, which leads you to still more basic material. you just keep going until you aren't overreaching anymore. so it doesn't matter much where you start if you use this method.

Elliot Temple
Get my philosophy newsletter:
www.fallibleideas.com/newsletter

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Cc: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Elliot's LT Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: October 26, 2017 at 7:36:51 PM

On Oct 15, 2017, at 1:35 PM, Elliot Temple curi@curi.us [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
>
> Danny Frederick:
>
>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>
>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>>
>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks

Lots of ground has already been covered in other posts in this thread, so I'll be somewhat brief instead of explaining everything in full. If you've read the other posts, then feel free to ask all the questions you want about tiny details.

BTW notice how I generally don't split quotes mid-sentence. I recommend that. When posting in general, most replies should go after a paragraph, some after a sentence, and few mid-sentence. I saw lots of replies to LT's text break up sentences when quoting, which made it hard to read and follow. (Since this is detailed analysis, I do lots of replies after sentences instead of paragraphs.)

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

LT doesn't sympathize. She's not optimistic. She's attacking DF/JB's position as caused by a pessimistic attitude, rather than being a rationally considered view.

The "spirit" of the post means: whatever unspecified parts/ideas/interpretation LT regards as the spirit. She doesn't agree with or even sympathize with the post or any particular argument in it. She's only claiming she has some interpretation that she sympathizes with. Commonly such interpretations about the "spirit" of the post, rather than the actual post, contradict the author's intentions and are rejected by the author.

People are like "I agree with the spirit of what you said, which is X" and authors often reply "No, I hate X, I was trying to say Y".

LT didn't even say what she thinks the spirit is to reduce her criticism exposure and give her more flexibility about what she says in the future. (Rather than actually decide what she means while writing, people often write ambiguous stuff. Then they determine its meaning later, using new information such as the replies they got to help

I'm snipping a bunch. I just wanted to leave a bit of Elliot's analysis.

Elliot wrote a bunch of persuasive analysis. I don't have criticisms of his stuff. I also didn't see most of the issues he brought up, including the stuff at the beginning here.

i feel like i saw 2% of what Elliot saw, if that.

what to do?

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com
Bcc: curi@curi.us
Subject: [explanation] Making Progress (was: Elliot's LT Analysis)
Date: October 27, 2017 at 1:51:37 PM

On Oct 26, 2017, at 4:36 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> Elliot wrote a bunch of persuasive analysis. I don't have criticisms of his stuff. I also
> didn't see most of the issues he brought up, including the stuff at the beginning here.
>
> i feel like i saw 2% of what Elliot saw, if that.
>
> what to do?

find something that interests you, and work on it, step by step, without limit.

want to be able to analyze LT's facebook message? that'll do. but there's a million other
options, such as super smash bros. melee, starcraft, or mario odyssey speedrunning.
broadly any kind of learning stuff or becoming good at stuff can be a good project – if
you don't limit it.

even "how good can I get at X with my hands tied behind my back?" could potentially
work as a project, if you took it seriously. why do you want to tie your hands behind your
back? if you think it's an interesting constraint, ok... but if it's just to keep things limited,
unserious, non-competitive, etc – or because learning to use your hands sounds hard –
then that's a bad constraint. what people usually do is like: "i'll do some X, casually, and
not take it very seriously nor try too hard". *that* is bad.

you could go through things you missed in the LT message and try to figure out why you
missed them. what skills were you missing? how could you develop those skills? what
would be a good progression of stuff to practice on, read, etc, to improve in relevant
ways?

or you could do the same kinda thing with something else. want to write a fantasy
novel? want to speedrun a zelda game? want to program a significant app? want to do
some science? want to improve the anti-socialism arguments and help fight socialism?
want sex or money? want to be a great chef, or architect, or mechanic, or lawyer?

the important thing is to pick something and do a lot. don't just dabble a little here and
there. try to get somewhere on some major project. that will involve tangents and filling
in gaps in your background knowledge. it's better to have some goal you care about,

and you're working towards, instead of just learning grammar for no particular reason.

you need some kinda interest or motivation, and then you can figure out how stuff relates to your interest, and then you can do the stuff. it's like how Gail Wynand pursued the Banner initially:

> In the first years of the Banner's existence Gail Wynand spent more nights on his office couch than in his bedroom. The effort he demanded of his employees was hard to perform; the effort of himself was hard to believe. He drove them like an army; he drove himself like a slave. He paid them well; he got nothing but his rent and meals. He lived in a furnished room at the time when his best reporters lived in suites at expensive hotels. He spent money faster than it came in—and he spent it all on the Banner. The paper was like a luxurious mistress whose every need was satisfied without inquiry about the price.
>
> The Banner was first to get the newest typographical equipment.

can you do it *20%* like that? care 20% that much about something, try 20% that hard?

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Jordan Talcot <jordan.talcot@gmail.com>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: November 3, 2018 at 4:41:34 AM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>
> Danny Frederick:

>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>
>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>>
>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having

> access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

what is the spirit of the post? what does she sympathize with?

this statement is a social lie.

> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
> >
> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

this statement is technically true, but she is using it to imply something false. that is equivocation, which is lying.

> > Why would social networking and politicking be special?

she asks this as a question, but it's not a question. she means it as an argument. but she doesn't actually make an argument.

social networking and politicking are particularly bad & irrational in lots of ways.

she knows about this viewpoint. she fails to engage with it. she is lying here by pretending to be ignorant of it.

she's lying by pretending that she doesn't know the difference between social networking & tennis — she is talking about social networking as if it is just one kind of

activity, like skiing or swimming or tennis. but she knows there are differences.

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,

does she really think that's the problem? it's critical debate vs social endeavours? what about trying to be rational vs following irrational traditions?

she does not really think that the issue is just "social endeavours", which can apply to lots of rational socialization. she knows that social networking & politicking are different than just "social endeavours". they could fall under the definition of social endeavours, but they are a particularly bad kind of social endeavour.

she is purposely using vague terms like "social endeavours" instead of saying what is really meant. she is aware of the broader meaning of "social endeavours". this wasn't sloppiness. she is lying.

> but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

does she really think that? does she think you can actually explain the full idea in a non-off-putting way, or just that you can sort of get part of your point across in a non-off-putting way?

(she doesn't really think that. she is aware of arguments against it. she does not address those arguments. she is lying.)

for example, what about the idea, "i think that what you are doing to your baby is literally torture. i think what you are doing will cause lifelong damage to your child. in a better world, everybody would recognize it as torture and would be completely horrified by it, and it would be illegal."

what's the non-off-putting way to explain that to someone? you can't just say "maybe what you are doing isn't best… you could try this instead." that only gets across that you don't think their behaviour is *ideal*. but how do you nicely get across that you think they are *literally torturing their child*?

even the quote i gave above does not properly get the point across. people could hear/read that and not actually understand that by "literally torture" i actually *mean* "literally torture". they could very easily read it as hyperbole.

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

i don't think "fundamentally" is the right word there. i think something like "people don't inherently dislike criticism." would be better. (she should change both the word & the sentence structure.)

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad;

sometimes criticism calls people bad. so do they inherently dislike *that* kind of criticism? or does she think you should criticize people in a way that calls them or their ideas bad without them feeling like you called them bad? it's possible to do that by not being clear enough. you can criticize someone in an unclear way so that they don't fully understand the criticism. is that what Lulie is advocating?

she knows that sometimes criticism calls people or their ideas bad. she knows that there is no way to give that kind of criticism accurately without making it clear that you are calling the person or their ideas bad. she is lying be pretending that being called bad is some other issue unrelated to the criticism.

> having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

having a "critical discussion" is not the same thing as criticizing someone. it's possible to have a "critical discussion" without actually criticizing someone. but that isn't what was being talked about - she started the paragraph talking about criticism. and now she's just talking about "critical discussion"

i don't know if she changed words for style reasons or if she is trying to make her statement harder to criticize. it is much harder to avoid the problems she is talking about when you are directly criticizing someone than it is to avoid them in a "critical discussion" which does not include direct criticism.

she does know this though. she knows that "critical discussion" does not necessarily include direct criticism. i think she is doing something similar to what she did above when she used "social endeavours". she is lying.

Oh, wait, back to her opening sentence:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

is this her idea of criticizing someone in a way that avoids making them feel trapped, calling them bad, or destabilizing/overwhelming them?

instead of directly stating her criticisms of the post — instead of saying that she thinks it's wrong & why she thinks it's wrong — she just says that she "sympathizes" with the "spirit". which she leaves completely undefined. she doesn't say *what* she actually sympathizes with or what she thinks the spirit is. she doesn't directly say what parts she agrees or disagrees with.

she just says something socially nice, and then starts talking about her own ideas without actually connecting them to the thing she is replying to. so far she hasn't directly criticized anything in the post she is replying to. she is just saying her stuff like it kind of agrees with some part of the post she is replying to. the "spirit" of the post, whatever that is. she doesn't say.

she has purposely made her disagreements unclear.

so, i mean, i guess if you avoid actually directly criticizing people, and instead gloss over your disagreements and just say your ideas while pretending that you agree with the other person in some fundamental way — and then call that "critical discussion" — i guess it is possible to have "critical discussion" without making the other person feel bad. just avoid actual criticism & avoid clarity.

but she knows this stuff. she knows that she is being socially nice and avoiding direct criticism. this whole thing is a lie — she is writing about how it is possible to criticize someone in a way that will not alienate them. but she isn't able to do that herself. she avoids alienating people by *not criticizing them* and instead pretending to "sympathize" with the "spirit" of what they said, saying vague social stuff, being unclear, equivocating, etc.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

what does she mean by appeal to bureaucracy? i understand appeal to social status, but i'm not sure what appeal to bureaucracy would be.

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

she doesn't make any argument for why it's not true. just says that some other person might agree with her that it's not true.

but people often "win" arguments by making appeals to social status or authority (which is a type of social status) or things like that.

is she saying that the best arguments always win? how does she explain the left then?

how does she explain obamacare? how does she explain economic policy in general?

if she knows that the best arguments *don't* always win, how does she explain that? she seems to be saying that people *are* persuaded by argument, not social status. does she mean always? or just sometimes?

she's not being clear at all here. she doesn't even *make* an argument. i don't actually know why she brings up Ray Scott Percival, but that looks like maybe an appeal to social status? (it's kind of ironic if she fails to make an argument, and instead appeals to social status, as the "argument" for her statement that people *are* persuade by argument and you don't need to appeal to social status… though she doesn't even actually *state* that people are persuaded by argument. she doesn't really say what she means clearly.)

she knows that the best arguments don't always win. she knows that appeals to social status win over better arguments. she's lying here.

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.),

she's correct that it is easier to self-publish your ideas than it used to be. but she is using a true fact to imply something false, which is equivocation, which is lying.

> and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

she seems to be implying here that people *have* created intellectual communities & organizations that are keeping critical rationalism going. but what is she talking about? i don't think she is talking about FI. what intellectual communities exist that actually do a good job of carrying on the critical rationalism tradition? does she have examples? does she think she has examples?

i think she knows there aren't examples. she's lying.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

it's true that you can kind of engage with academia *yourself* without being an academic. but it's hard to get them to engage back with you in a serious way. so it's one-sided. you aren't really able to engage with academia if they won't engage back.

Elliot does not get taken seriously by most of academia.

you can get responses from academics if you say the right kind of social stuff. but they don't like to engage with actual criticisms from outside of academia. (they don't really *engage* with criticisms from inside academia either. like, they will write responses to things, but often those responses don't really engage with the ideas.)

Lulie knows this. she's not totally ignorant of it. she's just lying here.

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

the statements that she makes here are true. but they don't imply what she means them to imply, which is equivocation, which is lying.

i am not even completely sure what she means them to imply. she's not being clear. she's not fully stating her arguments. but she is writing as if there already *are* solutions to this problem, or at least very promising leads. there aren't. she's acting like the so-called "critical rationalist" communities are better than they are, and like they are already succeeding at keeping the critical rationalist tradition alive & managing to meaningfully engage with academia. she knows this isn't the case. she's lying.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

i agree that the original post was saying something about personality type. the original post was not saying that the problem was lack of "exuberant promoter/social type" people though.

i think she knows this. she uses "exuberant promotor/social" because it's easier to argue for that being a good thing that critical rationalists might be. she's lying.

the original post said:

>> the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions

that is not talking about exuberant promotors or being social. it's talking something more like people being inflexible or alienating other people. (i think. it's badly written and not entirely clear.)

being an "exuberant promoter" in itself can be taken badly. it is not always seen

positively by other people. so it's not even a trait that would work well on its own to gain "access" to other traditions or whatever.

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

i don't think that's what it was saying. it was saying something more like — critical rationalists need to be more flexible and stop being so set on their way of doing things. they need to compromise and use other ideas too.

she's ignoring what it really says, and not arguing against it, and instead pretending it says something else. which is lying.

> But truth is connected.

what is this "But" referring to? what does she mean to be contrasting or arguing against? does she mean this to by connected to the stuff in the parenthetical, or the stuff right before the parenthetical?

(also, this is again using a true statement to imply something false, which is equivocation, which is lying. but i'm not completely sure what she even means in this case.)

> Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

i still don't know what she means.

my guesses are:

1. the truth is connected, so people should be interested in expressing ideas in appealing ways, which would make them exuberant promoters/ social type people.

or 2. the truth is connected, so people should be interested in expressing ideas in appealing ways, which would make them take the clash of ideas seriously.

i can't really choose one, because they are both nonsense. the second one is bad grammar too. does she mean something else that i'm missing?

i don't get what she means to be is disagreeing with.

also, is she conflating "expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other

generations/traditions" with "social networking and politicking"? if that's what she's saying, she's totally lying. she knows there is a difference. but i'm seriously confused by what she even means by this part.

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch

who? where are these people? does she tell them about FI?

i don't think there are any people getting seriously interested in Popper. if there were, they could easily find Elliot through googling, and they would try to engage with him. she knows these people don't exist. she's lying.

> (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

is he? where? is she talking about he cryptic tweets? or does she mean that he's actually writing something substantive & clear about critical rationalism?

she knows he's not publicly writing anything about critical rationalism. she's not actually ignorant of his lack of writing. she's lying.

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately

no, there's not really. people do want some things that are different from the left. they want stuff like jordan peterson or red pill stuff. but they don't want actual critical rationalism. they don't want to learn philosophy.

Lulie knows this. she's lying.

> — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,

they aren't actually trying to understand how to think about truth & knowledge. they aren't actually interested in learning philosophy. they want someone to tell them something that they like better than the prominent SJW stuff that is out there. but they don't actually want to put in the effort to really learn & understand epistemology.

Lulie knows this. she's lying.

> a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

these people don't like lots of things about academia or the current SJW agenda. but they aren't actually interested in learning philosophy. they aren't interested in actually making sense of these things. they just want someone better than them to tell them what to think and give them a few quick responses for people they disagree with.

that is not fertile ground.

Lulie knows this. she's lying.

to be clear - i don't mean that i think that the situation is hopeless. but Lulie is pretending it is far better than it currently is. she is pretending that there is a large community of people who are currently interested in learning philosophy, who are learning about popper & critical rationalist, who really want to learn & understand this stuff. but there is not.

Lulie isn't even interested in learning this stuff. she left FI. she did not even give a clear statement about her leaving. she didn't tell us why she changed her mind, what she thinks we are wrong about, what she thinks we should do instead, or anything like that.

Jordan

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: November 3, 2018 at 2:35:56 PM

On Nov 3, 2018, at 1:41 AM, Jordan Talcot <jordan.talcot@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

This thread predates my essay on lying:

https://rationalessays.com/lying

Jordan, did you find the essay helpful? Did you use any ideas from it to aid your analysis?

>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,
>
> does she really think that's the problem? it's critical debate vs social endeavours? what about trying to be rational vs following irrational traditions?
>
> she does not really think that the issue is just "social endeavours", which can apply to lots of rational socialization. she knows that social networking & politicking are different than just "social endeavours". they could fall under the definition of social endeavours, but they are a particularly bad kind of social endeavour.
>
> she is purposely using vague terms like "social endeavours" instead of saying what is

> > really meant. she is aware of the broader meaning of "social endeavours". this wasn't sloppiness. she is lying.

The word "assumption" is nasty. She's accusing people who disagree with her of *assuming* stuff (the straw men words she puts in their mouths), rather than at least giving them credit for *thinking* this stuff.

> > > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.
>
> > what does she mean by appeal to bureaucracy? i understand appeal to social status, but i'm not sure what appeal to bureaucracy would be.

"assumption" again.

> > > Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.
>
> > she doesn't make any argument for why it's not true. just says that some other person might agree with her that it's not true.
>
> > but people often "win" arguments by making appeals to social status or authority (which is a type of social status) or things like that.
>
> > is she saying that the best arguments always win? how does she explain the left then? how does she explain obamacare? how does she explain economic policy in general?
>
> > if she knows that the best arguments *don't* always win, how does she explain that? she seems to be saying that people *are* persuaded by argument, not social status. does she mean always? or just sometimes?
>
> > she's not being clear at all here. she doesn't even *make* an argument. i don't actually know why she brings up Ray Scott Percival, but that looks like maybe an appeal to social status?

yeah, he's an author who falsely pretends to be a very smart, very knowledgeable Popper expert.

i think the main point of bringing him up was to suck up to him, not to appeal to authority. i think she wanted to draw him into the conversation and befriend him. i think she would

have been less interested in doing the same kind of thing with the name of a dead person, or with David Deutsch's name (b/c she's already friends with him, so doesn't need to try to network with him), even though a dead person or David Deutsch could function as an authority to appeal to.

> (it's kind of ironic if she fails to make an argument, and instead appeals to social status, as the "argument" for her statement that people *are* persuade by argument and you don't need to appeal to social status… though she doesn't even actually *state* that people are persuaded by argument. she doesn't really say what she means clearly.)
>
> she knows that the best arguments don't always win. she knows that appeals to social status win over better arguments. she's lying here.
>
>> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.),
>
> she's correct that it is easier to self-publish your ideas than it used to be. but she is using a true fact to imply something false, which is equivocation, which is lying.

"apparent premise" is similar to "assumption" and is a hostile way to characterize the opposition. it's basically calling the other side unclear so she has to do searching and analysis to find out what their premises are. she's taking snipes at people, that are totally unnecessary to debating the substantive topic, while lecturing on how friendly criticism can be.

>> and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.
>
> she seems to be implying here that people *have* created intellectual communities & organizations that are keeping critical rationalism going. but what is she talking about? i don't think she is talking about FI. what intellectual communities exist that actually do a good job of carrying on the critical rationalism tradition? does she have examples? does she think she has examples?
>
> i think she knows there aren't examples. she's lying.

Yeah, it's the same with the immediately previous text about it being easier today with blogs and basically the modern internet. OK, yes, that stuff helps. That's not wrong. But

LT has never managed to run a blog, and how many good CR blogs are there? It's basically just me and Alan. Rafe's blog posts aren't great and, more importantly, he won't engage in critical discussion about them.

She's talking about the ease of something that she can't do and which, big picture, is not working well enough to successfully solve the problem.

she's familiar with the *death* of many forums and communities and stuff. e.g. the FoR group was destroyed by Sarah.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

it's true that you can kind of engage with academia *yourself* without being an academic. but it's hard to get them to engage back with you in a serious way. so it's one-sided. you aren't really able to engage with academia if they won't engage back.

Elliot does not get taken seriously by most of academia.

nor Ayn Rand. millions of book sales – for some of the best books ever written – doesn't get academia to engage well. academics are bad at engaging with each other, too. their journal "discussion" system heavily limits criticism and just plain replying. they're a bunch of frauds.

you can get responses from academics if you say the right kind of social stuff. but they don't like to engage with actual criticisms from outside of academia. (they don't really *engage* with criticisms from inside academia either. like, they will write responses to things, but often those responses don't really engage with the ideas.)

they don't even criticize or respond to each other very much. publication of that kind of material is limited. and when they do do it, they generally don't use quotes enough, talk past each other, and don't resolve the issues.

Lulie knows this. she's not totally ignorant of it. she's just lying here.

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

the statements that she makes here are true. but they don't imply what she means them to imply, which is equivocation, which is lying.

> i am not even completely sure what she means them to imply. she's not being clear. she's not fully stating her arguments. but she is writing as if there already *are* solutions to this problem, or at least very promising leads. there aren't. she's acting like the so-called "critical rationalist" communities are better than they are, and like they are already succeeding at keeping the critical rationalist tradition alive & managing to meaningfully engage with academia. she knows this isn't the case. she's lying.

and she's posting this *to* the largest so-called CR community – a 5000 member facebook group. she's sucking up to and overrating the group she's talking with, even though it's shitty quality and basically banned me for liking Ayn Rand and having some related political ideas that the group rulers disagreed with and didn't wish to critically debate (nor did they wish to say politics is off topic and no one should post about it, they just wanted all political discussed to be one-sided with their viewpoint).

>> But truth is connected.

> what is this "But" referring to? what does she mean to be contrasting or arguing against? does she mean this to by connected to the stuff in the parenthetical, or the stuff right before the parenthetical?

> (also, this is again using a true statement to imply something false, which is equivocation, which is lying. but i'm not completely sure what she even means in this case.)

LT is dishonestly using a *vague* statement, without explaining. She's pretending ppl know what she means (not just that it's true in some sense, but the particular sense she means). She is flattering her audience that they are smart enough to follow stuff like this without explanation, like she and they are both playing (discussing) in the big leagues where everyone is an expert.

>> Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

> i still don't know what she means.

> my guesses are:

My first guess is she's implying the opposition has some truth to it, which must be connected to the CR truths (cuz truth is connected), therefore you can say true stuff that

appeals to the opposition by using truths which connect to their true knowledge and perhaps pointing out the connections.

This is wrong. Just because the opposition is right about some things, and that could be logically built on and connected to many other ideas, does not mean they will find that journey appealing. They have contradictory ideas. At the same time, they are wrong about some things, and those falsehoods get in the way of finding CR truths appealing.

It's like the chart in this article: http://fallibleideas.com/parenting-and-tradition

Parents already agree with lots of good ideas which are connected to important TCS truths. And it's possible to try to build on that. But it's not automatic, free or easy. They also, at the same time, have lots of resistance and disagreement. It's wrong to pay selective attention only to the positives. That's why my article makes the point that, when two traditions disagree, you can't resolve that by just following tradition – that's a way to make the persuasion a little less hard, by not framing it as attacking tradition, but as choosing between traditions and deciding which ones merit more focus and emphasis. That's some of the complexity that a more serious analysis can consider, but LT wasn't trying to do serious analysis (but she pretended she was – a lie).

> 1. the truth is connected, so people should be interested in expressing ideas in appealing ways, which would make them exuberant promoters/ social type people.
>
> or 2. the truth is connected, so people should be interested in expressing ideas in appealing ways, which would make them take the clash of ideas seriously.
>
> i can't really choose one, because they are both nonsense. the second one is bad grammar too. does she mean something else that i'm missing?

maybe: the truth is connected, so the truths we know and the truths they know are connected, so we can say things that appeal to them.

i don't really want to give her credit for thinking it through that much (even though that's a pretty shitty, careless claim – well it's shitty as a conclusion, the way i wrote it is fine as an initial idea to start thinking about more, it's ok as a lead for something to think about). if she meant that, why didn't she say it? but she may have half-meant something kinda along those lines.

> i don't get what she means to be is disagreeing with.
>
> also, is she conflating "expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other

> generations/traditions" with "social networking and politicking"? if that's what she's saying, she's totally lying. she knows there is a difference. but i'm seriously confused by what she even means by this part.

did she say "these are some rough, confusing thoughts."? no.

her tone and manner implied her post is well-written and thoughtful. the implication is: if you're confused, it's your fault. this is a nasty lie of hers.

>> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch

> who? where are these people? does she tell them about FI?

i think she's telling some of them to stay away from FI.

> i don't think there are any people getting seriously interested in Popper. if there were, they could easily find Elliot through googling, and they would try to engage with him. she knows these people don't exist. she's lying.

yeah and just look at the CR group she's posting at. 5000 people. of which, maybe 50 posted even once during the course of like a month when i participated. i'd say fewer than 20 posted very much (either a larger number of things, or some more substantive things). of them, most were veterans – people who'd known about popper for years. there were no real signs of the community growing with new people with serious interest trying to study popper. maybe Danny Frederick (the OP in the thread) was new and showing significant interest, but he was maybe the only one out of 5000 people. and i did talk to him a bit and try to offer him some criticism and some learning opportunities (i forget details) and i think he basically didn't want it, and he was trying to like write essays and call them papers and pretend he was not a beginner.

>> (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

> is he? where? is she talking about he cryptic tweets? or does she mean that he's actually writing something substantive & clear about critical rationalism?

> she knows he's not publicly writing anything about critical rationalism. she's not actually ignorant of his lack of writing. she's lying.

yeah TT

it would have been better if you'd named DD (who = DD, he = DD) once in this section. cuz you're responding to a quote which doesn't have his name but is about him.

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately

> no, there's not really. people do want some things that are different from the left. they want stuff like jordan peterson or red pill stuff. but they don't want actual critical rationalism. they don't want to learn philosophy.

> Lulie knows this. she's lying.

JP signed up for CAA and joined the establishment left. http://curi.us/2155-jordan-peterson-is-a-traitor

he was never comparable to red pill like Roosh (from http://www.returnofkings.com) or Heartiste (https://heartiste.wordpress.com).

i don't mean JP is strictly worse than them overall. JP had some interesting and good things to say which are different than the red pill people. but as far as red pill topics go, JP was always way less red pill. JP was always pretty moderate. his most extreme view was that SJW leftist stuff like diversity, inclusivity, "feminism" and equity is *pure fucking evil* – and the political red pill people know that too and say it even more strongly – and that is the specific thing JP has now betrayed!

> — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,

> they aren't actually trying to understand how to think about truth & knowledge. they aren't actually interested in learning philosophy. they want someone to tell them something that they like better than the prominent SJW stuff that is out there. but they don't actually want to put in the effort to really learn & understand epistemology.

> Lulie knows this. she's lying.

she's lying to herself this time. she's gotten involved somewhat with Less Wrong, a modern rationalist/skeptic community. i bet she's rationalized it as actually being good, rather than consciously knowing they are frauds.

Less Wrong isn't even anti-SJW. that's not their thing. they are big on cognitive biases, induction and AGI (including how AGI is dangerous and must be enslaved). not much politics.

> a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

these people don't like lots of things about academia or the current SJW agenda. but they aren't actually interested in learning philosophy. they aren't interested in actually making sense of these things. they just want someone better than them to tell them what to think and give them a few quick responses for people they disagree with.

that is not fertile ground.

Lulie knows this. she's lying.

if it was such fertile ground, why the hell isn't Lulie an FI/TCS/BoI/etc blogger who is gaining a big following?

> to be clear - i don't mean that i think that the situation is hopeless. but Lulie is pretending it is far better than it currently is. she is pretending that there is a large community of people who are currently interested in learning philosophy, who are learning about popper & critical rationalist, who really want to learn & understand this stuff. but there is not.

she's specifically saying this to people who are pretending in that way. she's sucking up to them. the point of her post is to gain social status with a community of frauds, so she can be one of the head frauds.

> Lulie isn't even interested in learning this stuff. she left FI. she did not even give a clear statement about her leaving. she didn't tell us why she changed her mind, what she thinks we are wrong about, what she thinks we should do instead, or anything like that.

yeah!!!!

I kept my comments fairly limited instead of trying to be thorough cuz i already wrote a lot of details about this stuff in the older posts. i shared lots of points in reply to other ppl and then more at the end. you should compare what you saw in the text to what i pointed out (this was one of the main points of the activity, but IIRC no one else did it much). i wasn't trying to point out much that you missed, i just went thru quickly cuz i already wrote down lots of the stuff in the past.

also do analysis of the Ray Scott Percival reply to Lulie.

also, any big picture comments? why did LT write this? what do you think of it, as a whole?

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: anonymous FI <anonymousfallibleideas@gmail.com>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: November 9, 2018 at 9:02:17 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:54 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:41 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 12:59 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>
>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:57 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>
>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 11:44 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:53 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>>
>>>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>>>
>>>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/101557110406
>>>>>>> 69904/?
>>>>>>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A
>>>>>>> %22R%22%7D
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence.
>>>>>>> Can you find any? Lots?
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to
>>>>>>> hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the
>>>>>>> lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material
>>>>>>> correctly.
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>> Danny Frederick:
>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM
>>>>>>>> SURVIVE?
>>>>>>>>
>>>>>>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in
>>>>>>>> the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the
>>>>>>>> type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone
>>>>>>>> than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking

and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

"Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of

explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)
But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism). And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/1015571104066 9904/? comment_id=10155722121544904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A% 22R%22%7D

Ray Scott Percival:

I think Lulie Tanett's reply to Jack Birner's piece here is dead on. The quotation from Jack Birner's piece is verbose and largely incorrect. I grant that some critical rationalists don't get out much (are introverted), but there are many who are quite extraverted. Just look at me! Or David McDonagh! I'm completely happy being surrounded by justificationists - just so I can have a go at them all at once. 😁 When at the University of Warwick, I used to love finding a bunch of Marxist-Lenninists and throwing the Economic Calculation Problem at them plus the impossibility of justifying one's position. Talk about a double punch to the jaw! It was easy though - they all had glass jaws. 😂As for critical rationalism getting "entrenched", what's needed is to get out there and apply it to various problems in different domains. I also think that yes, we lost the great Popperian Knights Peter Medawar and Sir John Eccles, but there are major living scientists who do respect philosophy and often refer to Popper's work - Frank Tipler the astrophysicist (who described Popper's Logic of Scientific Discovery as one of the most important books of the 20th Century), for example, and many others. Rational argument has a force of its own, as I argue in depth in my book. Having a strong argument is like being given a light sabre for a battle in the bronze age. You simply can't wait to get out there and use it. That's what it felt like at Warwick with the ECA. The same applies to CR. If one imprudently allows a sound counterargument into one's "safe space," beware the corruption to one's cherished beliefs - they may fall and wither like leaves from a cold autumn wind.

How much do you think this followup comment lies? Do you think you understand it, sentence by sentence? Or do you just read an overall, approximate gist?

If anyone is willing to try to understand these things in a serious, effortful way, I'll reply to your attempts with questions to prompt further analysis. (I think just telling people the answers, as I've often done on many topics, wouldn't accomplish much.) I think it'd be extremely productive. Learning to understand passages like these is crucial to having discussions. They're fairly typical philosophy discussion contributions.

I think *close reading* is a really important skill which people don't work on enough – and usually haphazardly. I don't think people will get very far with learning if they don't try to methodically build up some skills. Being able to read passages and understand individual sentences is a skill people should get good at prior to thinking they understand a bunch of whole books they read. Before you can read a book *and understand it*, you need to be able to read a sentence *and understand it*.

Why don't people do this?

Is it ignorance of the option to try to do precise readings and post about them and get feedback? Unwillingness to ask me for help in a persistent thread over time?

Is it lack of humility? Thinking they already understand long texts like BoI, let alone individual passages in it, let alone basically all the sentences?

Is it thinking they'll fail at reading the passages above well (knowing something about their own inability), and not wanting to face that failure?

Is it being busy and not considering it a priority to make some serious effort at being able to understand written passages? They don't see the point? If someone wants to close read a non-philosophical passage and try to discuss the social lies and other features of it, that'd work too. But I think the passages above are particularly good samples to use.

Is it thinking that rigorous, methodical study is for students in schools, not for competent, independent adults? Or just having negative associations with serious thinking or organized studying, due to school?

learning 5 things halfway is less productive than learning one fully. (fully to current, achievable standards of knowledge, not to the standard of omniscience)

people's lack of persistence with topics is one reason they get stuck. though i think it has underlying causes such as avoiding "hard" things and so people just go around doing the parts of learning activities which feel easy and then moving on.

another issue is people want to pretend to be super-rational self-motivated interest-followers. but they have flawed interests they don't know how to control, and flawed motivations they don't know how to control. in that context, don't just give up and wait for rapid, effective learning to be easy and appealing – that will never happen by itself.

Broadly everyone wants to argue at first and super overestimates how much they know and how smart/wise/etc they are. And they lose every single argument with me. But they never learn the lesson that they should actually start studying and take on more of a student role, and this is complicated by various flaws with the student role (and with commitments and with the various methods people use to get themselves to do things) being emphasized at FI. RIP. idk what to do with this.

Peikoff gave private courses (stuff like his grammar course wasn't at university, it was just for like interested Objectivist members of the public). He had *students* who *tried to learn from him* over a period of time. They did things like take notes and do grammar homework.

They did this because of Peikoff's prestige and authority.

People don't treat me the same way. They think prestige and authority are bad motivations. But they haven't replaced those motivations with any better ones, and they still use those motivations in other parts of their life.

This is a reason people get so stuck for years.

So for example when I've suggested people write shorter posts with simpler structures requiring less punctuation ... I get ignored. People won't do my suggestions. But nor will they come up with better ideas or discuss why they don't want to do my suggestions. They just refuse to try to learn, in basic ways, for years at a time, without being willing to discuss why.

The task at the start of this thread – and actually pursuing it at length to some kind of completion – is exactly the kind of thing no one else has been willing to do, which is why no one makes a ton of progress.

Usually I just write my answers and then everyone nods along and doesn't learn it and couldn't do it themselves. And people are OK with that instead of actually learning. And that's fucked up.

People also hate leading/educational questions and avoid them. So they just don't learn.

i don't know what to do about this. people need to think things through on their own, and take initiative in their learning. which they don't. or else they need to let someone superior guide them (since they are incompetent to guide their own learning), which they also don't – and say how rational they are not to defer to authority!

and then they say they are trying to learn without feeling bad, cuz TCS or something, but they don't know how so they just go through their life without learning and feel bad anyway. so that's stupid.

After this (and 5 other meta emails by ET following up on the original 2), a bunch of people responded to the original thread topic.

This is an example of an ongoing problem that ET explained:

http://curi.us/2128-question-ignoring-discussion-pattern

The clearest example was with Justin. On the same day, ET wrote to him in another thread:

https://groups.google.com/forum/#!msg/fallible-ideas/nQ64KtAJ_JQ/AQfQPjqFAAAJ

> I think you should try to go in depth on understanding some things, so you can see what that's like, and then you can try to keep going stuff to that high standard until you can do it faster and with more topics. This works better than learning things halfway so nothing is actually write.
>
> To do this you need to be able to read things and communicate things. You need to be able to understand simple ideas and think about them in a clear way.
>
> You need to be able to do things like choose words to write in a conscious way, and do it well, and then automate it after you're doing it right. Since you currently write some things poorly, you need to un-automate that and then fix it.
>
> Being able to read/write is one of the really core skills to being able to think/discuss.
>
> I suggest doing some careful analysis of other people's writing, such as the "Exercise: Analyzing Lies" thread i posted today. Using your own writing is harder b/c, in general, you wouldn't write stuff if you already knew what was wrong with it. And criticism of your own writing (from self and others) is more threatening/scary/personal/etc. It's easier to be objective about some writing sample you didn't write. Also it's important to be able to understand other people instead of just *knowing what you mean* (which is different than thinking about text objectively).

Then Justin responded to the analyzing lies stuff but did not discuss *this* at all. It's the question ignoring discussion pattern, but without a question. It's just an *ignoring a point* discussion pattern – doing something while refusing to discuss the matter, like the ideas about why it's relevant or would be good to do.

It's a form of evasion.

It happens all the time. There are tons of other examples.

--
You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Fallible Ideas" group.

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 19, 2019 at 12:34:49 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 13:34 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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Gonna try analyzing this again some. I'm gonna analyze the Birner quote in this post some — in a more gist-y kinda way, not parsing each word — cuz I found it necessary to do so in order to meaningfully talk about some of the stuff Lulie says. But most of my attention will be on Lulie stuff. I'm planning on trying replying repeatedly to different parts in chunks rather than replying to the whole thing at once.

> Danny Frederick:
>
> > INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
> >
> > "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

Birner thinks there's some tension or contradiction or something between believing in the force of critical argument and being a social networker and academic politicker. He frames this in terms of what he regards as a realistic assumption that critical argument fans are "less prone" to devote resources to networking and politicking. He also thinks that if you don't do these things, your intellectual offspring won't survive (or maybe are less likely to survive, or something like that).

One thing I found interesting is that he's avoiding calling politicking *bad*. He thinks

there's some tension or contradiction between liking critical argument and trying to win a social competition, but he doesn't say *why* that is the case. He doesn't say anything like "Debates on issues should be decided according to critical discussion. Academia has perverse incentives in that it rewards people according to social networking skills as opposed to the ability of those people to generate scholarship that can stand up to criticism and move the field forward. Thus, academia is immoral." He doesn't even come close to this, presumably because he doesn't agree. He's identified a problem but is fuzzy about the cause and the solution.

Another thing is that Birner seems to doubt that arguments can survive on their own merits. He thinks you *need* to play the social academia game in order to have your ideas survive. "Intellectual offspring" is kinda vague as a term but given that he's talking about needing to politick etc I read it as meaning your ideas *as embodied in particular people's minds*, in particular like graduate students/PhDs who you have some kind of relationship with. So a book with your ideas which anyone could read and which could persuade some people doesn't count as your intellectual offspring surviving.

(Side comment: I'd guess that Rand's books have convinced more people of at least some tiny part of Oism — some idea — way more than any CR books, including Popper's own books, have convinced people of some tiny part of CR. If most CR people largely focus on academic stuff and basically never try to do stuff that's more popular, that's bad and strange. There is a faulty assumption in focusing on producing stuff for academic audience — like you'd do that if you thought academic audiences were especially good or worthy of attention, even though the man on the street is actually typically better.)

so so far we've got that:

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring

> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of

> carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

So initially he's saying that there was a tradition of critical rationalism for a couple of generations, but stuff changed, science became more "professional" and scientists became less interested in philosophy.

where he says

> while the contents of rationalism continue to select against the type of characteristics that make it possible for individuals adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

I am not sure exactly what this means. I think it's related to this idea that there's something about CR having some tension with social and politicking stuff, cuz he's framing it as CR "continu[ing] to select", but bringing up "different traditions" seems like a new point.

some guesses as to what "different traditions" might refer to:

1. the academic/politicking stuff itself
2. the new culture of professionalized science
3. various new ideas that are popular in the academic environment today
4. some combination of the above

regardless of that ambiguity, overall the point of this part seems to be that CR people aren't fitting in to the new situation and CR might die out if it doesn't adapt.

and zooming out, we've got something like

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring
3. Birner thinks there's been changes in the scientific field which CR people haven't adapted to
4. Birner thinks CR might die out as a result

Ok so now to the beginning of L's stuff:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

I'm just gonna do this part for this post.

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

So, what's the "spirit" of the Birner post?

"Spirit" is worse than useless as a term here. It seems kind of like an anti-concept:

http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/anti-concepts.html

> An anti-concept is an unnecessary and rationally unusable term designed to replace and obliterate some legitimate concept. The use of anti-concepts gives the listeners a sense of approximate understanding. But in the realm of cognition, nothing is as bad as the approximate

here are variations on the sentence that I think would have involved LT sticking her neck out more than "spirit":

While I sympathise with the main point of this post

While I sympathise with the main thrust of this post

While I sympathise with the thought behind this post

While I sympathise with the main argument in this post

While I sympathise with the general idea of this post

There are many such wordings!

And even these aren't great btw — LT should have said more about what she actually supposedly agreed with. But they're less evasive than "spirit."

So I think "spirit" was chosen deliberately to obfuscate, confuse, muddle up the discussion, muddy the waters.

Using that word is a way to avoid getting pinned down on what you are agreeing to, cuz it's vague enough that if somebody offers a criticism you can say "oh I didn't mean I liked X, I meant Y" and just play that game ad hoc as criticisms are offered.

LT isn't offering a BOLD CONJECTURE here for criticism but is instead minimizing her exposure to criticism by minimizing how much she's explicitly claiming.

She is making claims, as we'll see — she does have a position on what Birner is saying — but she's doing it in such a way as to make it very hard to pin down what she's claiming.

I think if you're going to use it all, "spirit" should refer to the gist, or the author's main point, or something like that. So one of the things I gave as like a numbered point earlier. Or all of them.

But as we'll see, LT totally disagrees with the basic idea of Birner's post. Not only does LT disagree with the author's analysis of the potential implications of a tension between CR and social stuff, she disagrees with his very identification of there being some kinda tension between CR and doing social stuff.

> While I sympathise

What does LT sympathize with?

She immediately says

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

An alternative approach to the discussion:

"You seem to be saying that there's some contradiction between CR and doing effective social networking and politicking. Can you explain more? What do you think causes the

contradiction?

Is there something bad about social networking and politicking? Is there some conflict between 'a firm belief in the power of criticism' and social networking and politicking? If so, do you believe this conflict can be resolved by means that don't involve compromising CR?

And are there risks? Like, is there a way to resolve the conflict which does compromise CR, and one which doesn't? And if so what are the differences? Can you give an example? Might people easily get confused between the two?"

That's what taking the project of understanding someone else's position seriously looks like. That's not what LT is doing. She doesn't seem very sympathetic in a CR sense if she's not trying to get more details.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

That's not just a premise — that's more like a big part of the spirit.

It's tricky cuz I think Birner was maybe himself not super clear on what his position was, as I talked about earlier — like he had some ideas along the right lines but hadn't really carried his analysis all the way to a conclusion. Talking about CR people being "less prone" to do something naturally brings up the question "why would that be the case?" which Birner didn't answer in his analysis. He just takes it as a given and then analyzes the potential implications for the future of a living tradition of CR.

So calling that a "premise" isn't bad IMHO, cuz he is sort of taking it as a given and then analyzing conclusions from that. But what's bad is this…

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

…in light of this…

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

What does LT sympathize with, exactly?

The whole Birner post is basically about this incompatibility between CR and social networking stuff and the problems it might cause for the survival of CR.

If LT disagrees with *that*, what does she sympathize with?

This is where "spirit" comes in btw. Cuz if you call LT out on this, she can say ...

"Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of caring about CR not dying out" or

"Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of discussing high-level problems one sees in the CR community" or

"Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of thinking about potential problems that CR people could encounter due to the professionalization of science that Popper referred to as 'Big Science'"

…or a million other potential avenues for escape from criticism.

"Spirit" doesn't rule out any of these avenues for escape, but was in fact selected for its ability to leave open the maximum number of such avenues. This helps indicate its anti-conceptual use by LT. A term ruling stuff out is essential for the term to serve a communicating function. If a term is chosen not to clarify *but because it is unclear* — because it leaves one a lot of wiggle room, because it's open to many interpretations — that's perverse. It's making a mockery of language, discussion, truth-seeking.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

LT is treating social networking and politicking as a normal, perfectly fine, unobjectionable interest, like physics or economics. She just asserts this here.

She knows Birner apparently disagrees with her assertion, since she ascribed thinking there was an incompatibility to him as a premise. But she doesn't feel the need to figure out why he thinks that, to try to analyze the issue objectively, to get a variety of perspectives on the issue (including Oism, which she hates and viciously slanders on Twitter without discussion).

She is not approaching this discussion remotely in the spirit of "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth." That is not her perspective; those are not her values.

Instead, she seems confident speaking authoritatively regarding CR, based on her apparent CR expertise?!

Note she does frame something as a question:

> Why would social networking and politicking be special?

But this is not an actual question. It's a rhetorical question that is designed to let LT expound on her ideas about why her position is correct. LT doesn't have any doubts about the issue.

THE QUESTION MARK IS A LIE!

The pseudoq-question is also designed to intimidate.

Consider an alternate wording:

"I think a CR person can be interested in and pursue social networking and politicking stuff. I don't see anything about those fields that inherently contradicts CR. Can you explain why you think otherwise?"

This framing is inviting the person one is discussing with to offer some reasons, some arguments.

LT's wording is basically saying "No, you're wrong" and acting as if there's no criticisms of CR people caring about that kind of stuff.

But LT knows about Objectivism so she presumably knows about second-handedness. So this pretending that there's no reasonable arguments on the issue is BS. She doesn't discuss Objectivism at all in her reply. She wants to pretend it doesn't exist, its position doesn't exist, its arguments don't exist. So this is a lie.

> be special?

the "be special" wording is framing positions contrary to Lulie's as wanting to make unprincipled exceptions to obviously applicable general rules. she's taking her position as self-evidently true and flaming dissenters.

Imagine if one asked: "You can eat tons of substances fine. Why would arsenic be special?"

In that case you can see clearly that someone just *assuming* a toxic substance is fine to eat cuz it is a *substance* is ridiculous. Likewise, it is ridiculous to assume that because something is an *interest* that it is compatible with CR.

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

"far" isn't reflecting some measurement or judgment of relative optimism. So that's a lie.

LT doesn't think there's any contradiction between CR and social stuff. Birner does. LT thinks CR people can fit in and be social bros and do fine. Birner thinks CR people need to adapt in some way (kinda unclear to me how).

Birner seems to think there's some solution to the problem of CR people dealing with things like professionalized science etc. He's light on details but his attitude isn't "we're totally fucked." He *does* think there is a serious risk that needs to be addressed.

LT fundamentally disagrees that a problem of CR incompatibility with social stuff even exists. She frames this fundamental disagreement as being far more optimistic.

It's kinda like, if some guy thinks a giant asteroid is gonna hit NY *unless we take certain steps*, and you're like "nah don't worry it won't hit us", it's deceptive to call that greater optimism.

If two people evaluate the likelihood of success of some action differently, I think it makes more sense to call that an issue of optimism. Like if two doctors have different guesses as to whether a particular cancer treatment will work, calling that optimism makes sense to me. But if two doctors disagree about whether a patient *has* cancer or just a cold, saying the doctor who thinks it is a cold is "optimistic" would seem strange to me. Cuz there's just like a more fundamental disagreement there about what the basics of the situation are. I think optimism is about different valuations of the likelihood of success given some specified context. But the bigger the gap between people in terms of the context they'll both concede, the less the issue is one of optimism and the more it is one of fundamentally clashing worldviews.

So let's review:

> While I sympathise

lie. she doesn't sympathize, she fundamentally disagrees.

> with the spirit

"spirit" is a word chosen to muddle discussion.

> of this post, I am far

"far" is a lie. She didn't assess something like relative optimism levels.

> more optimistic.

"optimistic" is a lie. She disagrees fundamentally and frames that as optimism.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

Not sure what the lie is here.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

Implicit lie about LT's level of CR expertise.

> Why would social networking and politicking be special

Lying by omission about what sorts of criticism of the incompatibility of CR and social stuff exist.

> ?

The question mark is a lie. LT isn't actually asking a question or participating in a back-and-forth truth seeking discussion. She's clearing her throat before expounding on her views on CR.

So summing up: LT lies about sympathizing with the post. She doesn't sympathize but actually fundamentally disagrees. She wants to pretend otherwise so she can non-confrontational impose her own views on the discussion in ways that are difficult to challenge. She frames the discussion in a biased way, asks fake questions, and pretends criticism of her position doesn't exist.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: brucenielson1@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 21, 2019 at 1:02:21 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
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> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
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> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

btw, for the above part, here is a more honest rewrite, with the idea of communicating LT's actual position:

> I completely disagree.

>

> Birner thinks that CR is incompatible with social networking and politicking. But I think those things pose no problem for CR and are totally fine.

this time i'll analyze just this part 🤔🔍:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true:

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

So I'm gonna jump in the middle to the part I think is most interesting. LT says:

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

"there's" is a contraction for "there is".

I think the sentence is ambiguous.

Does LT mean

1) "there is always" in some theoretical sense, a way of coming up with such explanations (even if it takes a long time), OR
2) "there is always" in practical, day-to-day life, a way of coming up with such explanations (and, presumably, a way of doing so without compromising any other important value)?

There is a difference in saying "There is always a solution to some problem" (even though it may take many years to find it) versus "There is always something interesting for lunch at the cafeteria." (meaning you can reliably get interesting food at the cafeteria, will take minutes not years)

Or is LT relying on both meanings? Like, what she writes sounds kinda like an unobjectionable (to me) philosophical statement (#1), but to make sense of it in context, I think you have to read some controversial LT claims into it (#2). Is that intentional? Is there a switcheroo going on? Is that the lie??? Not sure!

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

Many people dislike criticism. Criticism is sort of a package deal in people's minds,

including some okay stuff and some bad stuff, but people hate criticism so much you have to put "constructive" before "criticism" to try to indicate "I mean the kind that's good, not the kind you hate." People think of criticism kind of like medicine that tastes shitty — sometimes you need to have some, but it's not something that's fun or pleasant. This contrasts notably with the idea of criticism being a gift. That's a *controversial* idea that many people reject.

If you look up "criticism" in the dictionary you see examples of the sort of mixed/negative attitude I'm talking about:

google:

> • 1.
> the expression of disapproval of someone or something based on perceived faults or mistakes.

people generally don't like expressions of disapproval.

m-w.com:

> 1   a: the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
>   [example]   seeking encouragement rather than criticism

note the contrast of "criticism" with a positive thing, "encouragement", in the example!

LT should be familiar with this popular attitude to criticism. I think she is. so i think ...

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

… is both substantively wrong and a lie, since LT should know about prevailing attitudes towards criticism but doesn't really address them.

I have some more written but I want to think about it more. I plan on continuing this post later.

-JM

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I'll continue my close reading of LT stuff later but I wrote this substantive criticism of what LT has said so far as I've been doing my close reading (like, literally wrote it in bits and pieces commenting on different parts, and then pasted them together and them edited a bit).

My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that it is focusing on stuff other than truth. That's bad for truth-seeking.

Communication is hard. Communicating worldviews is very hard. If you're trying to do it well, you can't make other stuff the priority. It doesn't work.

Part of doing effective networking and politicking is trying to not alienate people. So in cases of disagreement, you have to hold back, not be as clear and direct as possible, and thus risk miscommunication more, in order to not alienate people. You have to put social graces above truth, above a reality-focus, above clarity. You have to act as if criticism is *not* a gift in dealing with other people. And in doing so, you harm your *own* reality focus. You will start to internalize methods of thinking that evade dealing with aspects of reality that, if you notice them and think about them, will cause strife in your social circle.

People get triggered and off-put by all sorts of very unpredictable stuff. Criticism can cause someone to feel destabilized/overwhelmed unpredictably. And people are bad about communicating when this sort of thing is even happening. They might even just experience it as a sort of unease without being able to put a name to it or identify it very well. People's emotional reactions are a minefield and you don't know what's gonna set

them off.

Even people who are socially focused — and who color within the lines, who don't stick out, who are unoriginal thinkers, who don't have much to say — often run into minefields when dealing with other people. Just watch any reality TV show. And LT expects to just be able to be CR and do social stuff, and think of great explanations for stuff that address people's objections (which they might not even express) and not run into problems doing this? It's not realistic to expect to be able to figure out how to avoid every potential discussion landmine in a way that doesn't involve compromising your ideas, your clarity, and your integrity.

Perhaps LT thinks academics are way better than average, way more open to reason. I think that's very clearly not the case. Also, since LT's a Popper fan she should know about things like the Wittgenstein's Poker incident. Does LT think she can do way better at coming up with non-off-putting explanations than Popper?

I think many people have some respect for ideas but want to do social stuff too. And people run into trouble with their ideas — they have trouble communicating their ideas, or they encounter hostility to their ideas, or they find out that their ideas might hurt their chances of getting a job (especially in academia where it has been communist for decades). And people still want to do the social aspect, fit in, have pleasant dinner party conversations, politick for tenure. That stuff seems easy, but sticking with the ideas seems hard. So their loyalty to ideas goes flying out the window. They sell their soul cheap.

The Fountainhead:

> "Howard—anything you ask. Anything. I'd sell my soul ..."
> "That's the sort of thing I want you to understand. To sell your soul is the easiest thing in the world. That's what everybody does every hour of his life. If I asked you to keep your soul—would you understand why that's much harder?"
> "Yes ... Yes, I think so."

If someone thinks someone else is doing something bad, they shouldn't treat that differently than other criticism just for the sake of preserving social relations. So they should typically share it, at least with somewhat rational people. Maybe you are wrong and the person can explain why, or maybe they are wrong and will appreciate finding out your crit. And even with irrational people, stating your judgment can help clarify their irrationality.

https://mises.org/library/mises-and-liberty

> The autobiography of Milton and Rose Friedman tells a story about Ludwig von Mises

> that was retold in the Sunday New York Times book review. In 1947, some free-market economists, including Friedman and Mises, came together to form the Mont Pelerin Society. But Mises was clearly agitated at the ideological tenor of the discussion. Finally, he stood up and shouted, "you are all a bunch of socialists," and stamped out. In the story, the Mont Pelerin Society went on to glory as the fountainhead of the classical-liberal revolution.

> The point of the anecdote is to make Mises appear to be a fanatical ideologue, and Friedman a man of reason. It assumes that for Mises, sticking to principle was some sort of fetish that prevented him from thinking strategically or cooperating with like-minded scholars. It conveys the message that adherence to strict standards of truth is the enemy of practicality.

LT's post is on the side of the view "that adherence to strict standards of truth is the enemy of practicality." It denies that it is on that side by means of making unrealistic claims about how easy it is to effectively convey your ideas while not triggering people. People trying to follow LT's approach will fail and then wind up selling their soul cheap, cuz that's where the cultural pressure is.

Mises was in the right. Mises was about as clear and literal as he could have been, and Friedman still didn't get the message. LT thinks she could have done better?

BWT if LT thinks it's easy and practical to come up with clear, uncompromised explanations of stuff that people won't find off-putting, why doesn't she do that with like, TCS, and save the world? Not kidding about the stakes...

Also, if LT thinks it's practical to come up with explanations of stuff that people won't find off-putting, why doesn't she try that some with Objectivism? Her tweets on the subject have been, from my POV, a horror show of slander that I find very off-putting.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: brucenielson1@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 21, 2019 at 5:51:48 PM

On Mar 21, 2019, at 1:02:21 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?
>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>
> so far i have analyzed the following LT text:
>
>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>
>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>>
>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> btw, for the above part, here is a more honest rewrite, with the idea of communicating LT's actual position:
>
>> I completely disagree.
>>
>>
>> Birner thinks that CR is incompatible with social networking and politicking. But I think those things pose no problem for CR and are totally fine.

this time i'll analyze just this part 🤔🔍:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true:

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

So I'm gonna jump in the middle to the part I think is most interesting. LT says:

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

"there's" is a contraction for "there is".

I think the sentence is ambiguous.

Does LT mean

1) "there is always" in some theoretical sense, a way of coming up with such explanations (even if it takes a long time), OR
2) "there is always" in practical, day-to-day life, a way of coming up with such explanations (and, presumably, a way of doing so without compromising any other important value)?

There is a difference in saying "There is always a solution to some problem" (even though it may take many years to find it) versus "There is always something interesting for lunch at the cafeteria." (meaning you can reliably get interesting food at the cafeteria, will take minutes not years)

Or is LT relying on both meanings? Like, what she writes sounds kinda like an unobjectionable (to me) philosophical statement (#1), but to make sense of it in context, I think you have to read some controversial LT claims into it (#2). Is that intentional? Is there a switcheroo going on? Is that the lie??? Not sure!

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

Many people dislike criticism. Criticism is sort of a package deal in people's minds, including some okay stuff and some bad stuff, but people hate criticism so much you have to put "constructive" before "criticism" to try to indicate "I mean the kind that's good, not the kind you hate." People think of criticism kind of like medicine that tastes shitty — sometimes you need to have some, but it's not something that's fun or pleasant. This contrasts notably with the idea of criticism being a gift. That's a *controversial* idea that many people reject.

If you look up "criticism" in the dictionary you see examples of the sort of mixed/negative attitude I'm talking about:

google:

> • 1.
> the expression of disapproval of someone or something based on perceived faults or mistakes.

people generally don't like expressions of disapproval.

m-w.com:

> 1   a: the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
> [example]   seeking encouragement rather than criticism

note the contrast of "criticism" with a positive thing, "encouragement", in the example!

LT should be familiar with this popular attitude to criticism. I think she is. so i think ...

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

… is both substantively wrong and a lie, since LT should know about prevailing attitudes towards criticism but doesn't really address them.

I have some more written but I want to think about it more. I plan on continuing this post later.

continuing my analysis of this passage:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social

> endeavours, but I don't think that's true:
>
> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
>
> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Assuming there is some argument to go with the claim, then "being called bad" is a criticism. As an example, "you are bad cuz you are evading ideas and acting irrationally" (with some details and examples attached) is a type of criticism. But LT just said

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

Did she mean that people don't dislike ALL criticism, but only dislike some criticism?

So I found this bit confusing.

The meaning of…

> being trapped

…is unclear to me.

> It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

So lemme gather up thoughts on Lulie passage:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true:

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

as mentioned in earlier post, ambiguous meaning as to "there's always."

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

as mentioned in earlier post, false and a lie. LT should know better about people's

attitudes towards criticism.

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped;

unclear.

> being called bad;

confusing. being called bad is a type of crit. LT says people dislike being called bad but don't dislike crit.

> having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Summing up: this passage contains a lie about people's attitudes towards crit and some other statements I found confusing and ambiguous.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: brucenielson1@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 22, 2019 at 1:07:59 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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So far I've done this:

> Lulie Tanett:
>
>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>
>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>>
>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>
>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

My more honest/clear/improved rewrite of the LT stuff so far. In rewriting, I will resolve what I regard as ambiguities in the way that I think makes the most sense given full context, and add stuff where I think it's necessary to fill in stuff that's implied or necessary to make it coherent:

> I completely disagree.
>
> Birner thinks that CR is incompatible with social networking and politicking. But I think those things pose no problem for CR and are totally fine.
>
> There's nothing about social networking and politicking that makes them incompatible with CR.
>
> Birner may think you can't do critical debate and also do social networking and politicking. I disagree. You can always, as a practical, day-to-day matter, figure out a way to explain stuff in a way that people won't find off-putting, without compromising anything important.
>
> People don't dislike criticism. They things like being trapped, being called bad, being destabilized/overwhelmed. You can avoid all these things and still have critical discussion.

Now I'll do this part, focusing on words/sentences, whether they make sense, etc.

i think of substantive crit as i go along. i'm putting that at the end.

so, continuing my analysis:

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Big picture, the first sentence seems to be getting ready to dispute that people are not persuaded by argument but instead by appeals to authority. For most of her post, LT is going through various ideas that she thinks maybe Birner had in mind and criticizing them. Or at least, she is trying to give the appearance that she is doing that.

Breaking it down some:

> Or maybe

Since she said "Maybe" at the beginning of the last paragraph, the "Or maybe" here indicates that what follows will be another argument that LT tries to criticize.

> the assumption

Initially, I read "the assumption" as referring to "the assumption that Birner is making that causes him to think that CR & social networking/academic politicking have some incompatibility."

Why did I read it that way?

I think maybe I didn't analyze earlier LT stuff and figure out what "assumption" she's been referring to.

So below I'm gonna backtrack a bit, and try to figure this out, and see if I can come to a reading that makes sense.

Below is some of LT's post with just the first sentence of paragraph or first part of sentence of a paragraph, and rest omitted. i am trying to highlight the structure:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. […]
>
> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: […]
>
> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. […]

So when LT says

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours

does she mean

1. the assumption that *underlies/explains* Birner's idea that CR and certain social things are incompatible?

In other words, LT reads Birner as possibly saying something like:

1. Critical debate is incompatible with social networking and academic politicking

2. Critical debate is part of CR

3. Therefore, CR is incompatible with social networking and academic politicking.

This is how I read LT's meaning initially, and I started to read the sentence starting with "Or maybe the assumption" in the same way before thinking i should backtrack.

Alternatively, does LT mean:

2. the assumption that causes Birner to supposedly be more pessimistic about the future of CR, whereas LT is more optimistic?

So now I'm unsure what "the assumption" in "Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy." is pointing to.

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

After the line above, Lulie moves onto a new point — she starts talking about prospects of working on advancing CR stuff outside academia. So the two lines I'm focusing on in this post are her comments regarding social status stuff.

LT doesn't actually make an argument here regarding whether people are persuaded by argument or not!

She just basically says "Nah. RSP u agree rite?"

This is very ironic in a section that (falsely) indicated it would offer criticism about appealing to social status to persuade people!

That is what LT is doing — appealing to the status of a hypothetical agreement from book author RSP in place of having an actual argument on this point!

It's not even an appeal to authority, cuz LT isn't sure RSP agrees with her. So it's like a speculative appeal to authority. Even if you accepted appeals to authority as valid, what LT is doing here would not qualify!

Summing up:

> Or maybe

"Or maybe" in this context indicates that more criticism will be offered like in the last paragraph.

In the previous paragraph (discussed in earlier posts), LT actually argued some arguments. I thought they were bad and said why, but there were arguments there. Here, there are none. Falsely indicating a substantive content parallelism between paragraphs when there is none is a kind of lie.

> the assumption

what "the assumption" refers to precisely is unclear to me, for reasons stated above.

> is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

The last sentence here is a speculative appeal to authority.

Justin's substantive crit of this part:

I think it is *true* that social status is often involved in people's acceptance of ideas, though often indirectly.

Directly would be like "Oh, Professor X said something, he's the most elite professor in his field, must be some truth to it."

That happens some. There's another case though: people may not be persuaded directly by social status, but they'll still restrict the range of arguments/people they will listen to according to social status.

They'll have a bias against low status people or non-mainstream ideas.

Is Lulie disputing that people won't listen to arguments from low status people but then sometimes will listen to them from high status people?

curi talks about this use of status in his Paths Forward essay:

http://fallibleideas.com/paths-forward

> Another bad path forward is selectively considering ideas according to someone else's judgment. Don't use authority, social status, curation, moderation or gatekeepers instead of your own mind. That's irresponsible. It's seeking an excuse to reject ideas

> without answering them. You should put your energy into rational thinking instead of into finding excuses not to.

People often use status to suppress ideas, as well. Rand talks about this in The Virtue of Selfishness essay "The Argument From Intimidation":

> Many professors use the Argument from Intimidation to stifle independent thinking among the students, to evade questions they cannot answer, to discourage any critical analysis of their arbitrary assumptions or any departure from the intellectual status quo.
>   "Aristotle? My dear fellow—" (a weary sigh) "if you had read Professor Spiffkin's piece in—" (reverently) "the January 1912 issue of Intellect magazine, which—" (contemptuously) "you obviously haven't, you would know—" (airily) "that Aristotle has been refuted."
>   "Professor X?" (X standing for the name of a distinguished theorist of free-enterprise economics.) "Are you quoting Professor X? Oh no, not really!"—followed by a sarcastic chuckle intended to convey that Professor X had been thoroughly discredited. (By whom? Blank out.)
>   Such teachers are frequently assisted by the "liberal" goon squad of the classroom, who burst into laughter at appropriate moments.

kinda similar: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peMtoUVZC5w

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: brucenielson1@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 23, 2019 at 3:29:38 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
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So far I have analyzed this:

> Lulie Tanett:
>
>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>
>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
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>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
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>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
>>
>> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Now I will do this paragraph:

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

Let's start with this:

> Another apparent premise

So LT is indicating she's switching premises she is talking about here.

> is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

So LT is saying that Birner apparently thinks that academia is the only way to carry on CR.

I think this makes sense as a reading of Birner, because he basically says if that if CR doesn't adapt to changes in the academic environment, CR is going to go extinct. And that would not follow if there were non-academia ways of keeping CR alive.

I am curious what LT regards as the flaws of academia btw. Cuz I think the social games and politicking is a big part but she apparently thinks those are fine. There is other stuff too, but I wonder what specific other stuff she objects to and which she thinks is np.

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.),

I think this is a lie.

Many people currently try to work outside the academic system and use books, blogs, videos, forums etc. in order to spread their ideas. Then they have to deal with things like getting blocked/banned/shadowbanned/quarantined by Paypal, Patreon, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Apple, Spotify, Reddit, actual banks, credit card companies, domain name registrars, DDoS mitigators, etc. They also sometimes have to deal with things like boycotts, books being pulled from stores, and personal harassment by mobs.

There are many such stories:

https://www.rooshv.com/i-was-fooled-by-the-promise-of-the-internet
https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/mar/21/jordan-b-petersons-12-rules-for-life-pulled-from-n/
https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2019/02/25/paypal-ceo-admits-partnership-with-far-left-splc-to-blacklist-conservatives/
https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/charliewarzel/twitter-just-permanently-suspended-conservative-writer-milo
https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2018/08/15/mastercard-forces-patreon-to-kick-off-jihad-watchs-robert-spencer/
http://curi.us/2126-open-discussion#c11524
https://twitter.com/martinamarkota/status/1094051308078854144?lang=en
https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2018/10/30/facebook-blacklists-conservative-commentator-gavin-mcinnes-and-proud-boys-organization/
https://www.breitbart.com/tech/2017/08/16/cloudflare-ceo-woke-bad-mood-decided-ban-daily-stormer-no-one-power/
https://www.theverge.com/2018/8/6/17655168/alex-jones-infowars-apple-itunes-podcasts-removed
https://www.recode.net/2018/8/1/17640430/spotify-alex-jones-hate-speech-podcast-removed
https://twitter.com/seanmdav/status/1107741692504014849
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rtImwK5TI4g
https://www.foxnews.com/politics/mob-chants-threats-outside-tucker-carlsons-dc-home
https://www.amren.com/commentary/2017/08/big-brothers-first-victim-youtube-censorship-race-intelligence/
https://www.breitbart.com/politics/2019/01/08/red-lobster-caves-to-left-wing-blacklist-campaign-pulls-ads-from-tucker-carlsons-show/

If someone hasn't had to deal with this, I think it's cuz:

1) they're too small to notice, or
2) they're too big to take on directly (though note that increasingly big names are being targeted), or
3) their ideas don't pose a significant challenge to the status quo.

If LT is familiar with these cases, her advice doesn't address them. If she's totally unfamiliar with them, she shouldn't be giving out advice to people who will try to follow it and then wind up feeling fooled like Roosh.

There's also a separate issue of finding motivated people to participate in intellectual communities.

People seek out intellectual engagement in academia cuz that's the reputation it has and cuz smart people feel especially pressured by the culture to go to academia.

Then they are socialized in academic culture, where they learn things like how to write incomprehensibly and to sneer at stuff that isn't sufficiently prestigious.

Academia uses its cultural reputation and prestige to try to monopolize and then indoctrinate the thinkers in a society, so that no dissent can arise. academia doesn't just have flaws — it is an evil force.

There are people outside academia interested in ideas but they're often focused on politics and thus especially subject to the sorts of thwarting I mention above.

> and even build intellectual communities

There are some forums that exist online that you might call intellectual communities, but they have various problems including:

1) Bad cultures that don't try to have genuine problem solving, follow up on past discussions etc. They may even block discussion of old topics.
2) Arbitrary moderation policy according to unwritten rules.
3) A lack of people who understand the ideas the forum is supposedly about and are willing to systematically defend them
4) Bad software for formatting that's vastly inferior even to curi's blog comment stuff

Another issue is that intellectual communities are often driven by one or a few people and then also have some fans/lurkers. You can count all the fans/lurkers as part of the intellectual community but that's a bit deceptive. And if the prime mover of an intellectual community leaves it can totally go off the rails and collapse and cease to exist meaningfully.

sidenote: If not for Elliot I think TCS ideas wouldn't exist as part of a meaningful community *today*, and in 100 years evidence that it had *ever* existed would have been hard to find. But that's a lot less likely to happen now.

> and organisations to keep these ideas going.

Organizations can suck once the prime mover of a movement dies. ARI is an example.

LT may not agree with I've said about her statement on working outside the system, communities etc, but i think she should at least be aware of some of what I'm talking about. But she portrays working outside the system to spread ideas as getting ever

easier. So I'm going to count the sentence I've been analyzing for the last number of paragraphs as a lie.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

Note I'm assuming that by "engage with academia" she means primarily engaging with the people in academia. If she had some other meaning in mind that's not clear to me. I think my way is the most reasonable way to read it since if you are an intellectual wanting to engage with academia then the thinkers (the individual academics) would be the thing of primary interest/value there.

So I think this is more impractical advice from Lulie. I think it counts as a lie cuz LT should know the advice she is giving is impractical and misleading.

Academics will often say they are busy when dealing with interested people from the public, and mostly interact (in low bandwidth ways — replies to journal articles and that sort of thing) with others in their peer group.

This prevents them from meaningfully getting tons of potential crit. i think dealing with that kind of situation is what paths forward is about.

Also even the ways academics engage with *each other* sucks, and doesn't allow for the amount of back-and-forth you'd need to get clarity and resolve misunderstandings.

> Problems are soluble.

Yes but there are many steps from this high level idea to the detail issues LT is talking about and arguing.

I think maybe there is a lie here — something like pretending LT's positions flow straight from CR, or invoking CR in order to invoke expertise. I'm not sure though. I'm just flagging this one.

> There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

LT talks about academic tedium but we don't know what parts of academia she thinks are tedious.

I think it's interesting that LT mentions academia having flaws and tedium but hasn't

really talked about details and how those details might thwart someone trying to do CR in academic context. That seems weird to mere. There is a gap there.

Line by line summary:

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

No major objections here (though what she thinks the flaws are is vague)

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

Total lie. Lots of people who try to work outside the system are thwarted. Academia's reputation helps it recruit and indoctrinate people who might otherwise be independent thinkers. Organizations often betray the values they're supposed to promote. These are or should be known issues to LT.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

This is so misleading its essentially a lie. Very hard to get academics to engage much.

> Problems are soluble.

In context, possible lie about CR's content/LT's level of CR expertise. Not sure about this one though.

> There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

Vague as to what LT thinks is the tedious part.

Summing up:

LT definitely lies about the ease of working outside the system, building intellectual communities, and engaging with academia while not being an academic.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallibleideas@yahoogroups.com, fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 26, 2019 at 2:03:28 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

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Danny Frederick:

> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>
> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>
> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative

traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecol ogical_Niches

So far I have analyzed the following:

Lulie Tanett:

While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

Now I will talk about this:

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

Text/grammar analysis: There are some ambiguities here.

I don't even know what LT has in mind for "exuberant promoter". Does she mean someone like Don King? Or a very social self-promoter? I don't know. It's so vague. I also don't know what the forward slash means. Whatever LT means by "exuberant promoter", it sounds way more specific than "social type." Is exuberant promoter supposed to be one example of a social type, and LT is separating them by a slash for some reason? I have no idea what's going on here.

Substantive meaning analysis: This passage lies about what Birner said and also involves a lie about how much LT figured out on her own.

Birner talks about personal characteristics in the following sentence:

> In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

When LT says "so maybe it's saying", LT is pretending to have to figure out the meaning without much help from Birner. She uses this as an opportunity to inject her own stuff about "exuberant promoter/social type" into Birner's analysis. He didn't talk about exuberance. Bringing up exuberance is a lie. And exuberance is not a typical stereotype of people in academia. So exuberance is weird to bring up.

Birner could have been clearer, but he did give us some help as to what he has in mind in his first paragraph:

> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

Birner sees some contradiction between people who believe in the force of critical argument and devoting tons of resources to social networking and academic politicking. I discussed this more earlier in the thread.

When LT says...

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

…she's passing off her repetition of what Birner already said, with some of her own new stuff added, as an independent discovery she made on her own based on the clue "personal characteristics." She's not connecting it to the paragraph of relevant preceding material.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 27, 2019 at 7:51:54 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 13:34 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

I'm going to analyze just one sentence this time:

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

LT quotes her own paraphrase. I think that is bad writing form. Quotes shouldn't be used unnecessarily. If she wants to paraphrase the final sentence of the second paragraph, she can do that without using quotes. An alternate wording example:

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying that critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously!)

Now let's move onto the meaning of what LT said. LT's description of the content of the final sentence of Birner's second paragraph is mistaken. Birner's sentence says:

> If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

This doesn't say that critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously. Clash of ideas is nowhere mentioned in the Birner quote at any point. The word "clash" doesn't even appear in it.

LT has some interpretation in her head where this Birner sentence *implies* that critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously. She's mixed that up with what

the Birner sentence actually says. I think this kind of thing is common. I do it too.

LT lied about the Birner quote.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Long tangent about the usage of "say" vs "imply" in connection with "seem"
(was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: March 28, 2019 at 2:42:52 AM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 13:34 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

> Lulie Tanett:
>> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

I think Lulie wrote "seems to be saying" when she meant "is implying" or "seems to be implying." Why do I think this? The sentence she's talking about doesn't say what LT claims it says. She got her interpretation from somewhere, though. I think she got it from an implication she read into the sentence. I think this sort of usage of "seems to be saying" is pretty common.

I think using "seems to be saying" to talk about implications may be a mistake. I think this mistake may have been part of what got LT mixed up about the content of the sentence. I will try to explain why I think this. My explanation is pretty long. It's long because I couldn't exactly put my finger on what bothered me about LT's word choice, and the explanation below is the amount of explanation it took for me to get my objection clear in my own mind.

"Say" and "imply" are different things. "Say" involves a person's speech, or a text, expressly conveying information. "Imply" is about cases when the information is *not* being conveyed expressly.

You shouldn't mix these up. You should keep them separate in your mind and in your

writing so you don't get confused yourself or confuse others.

"Seem" can be used to indicate that you *think* something is the case but you're not sure. It's a word that indicates doubt, and lets you hedge some.

Let's put aside the details of the specific tense you want to use and just focus on the two verbs + seem. I think there are four basic ways to combine them.

1. "Say" — something was expressly said
2. "Say" modified by "seem" — something was expressly said, but you are expressing some doubt that it was said
3. "Imply" — something was implied
4. "Imply" modified by "seem" — something was implied, but you are expressing some doubt that it was implied

Note by "modified" i mean modified in terms of meaning. I'm not necessarily talking about the grammatical relationship in a specific case.

So let's consider some examples.

Suppose your are hanging out with your friend John, and he says "Domino's pizza sucks." You want to communicate that John said this to a friend you are talking to on the phone who asks you "What did John say?"

You would say "John says that Domino's pizza sucks."

Suppose John is talking to you and his mouth is full with food so his statements aren't clear. You think he's saying "Domino's pizza sucks." But you're not 100% sure. You want to convey your guess about what John is saying to your friend on the phone, along with some doubt about that guess.

You would say "John seems to be saying Domino's pizza sucks."

Suppose John says "I think Pizza Hut sucks and that Domino's pizza is even worse than Pizza Hut."

If you read this as implying that Domino's pizza sucks, you could say "John is implying that Domino's pizza sucks." He didn't literally say "Domino's pizza sucks", but it stands to reason pretty straightforwardly from his statement that he thinks that.

Suppose John says "I think that in order to have non-sucky pizza, a restaurant has got to use DOP certified ingredients", referring to a certification about the pizza's ingredients coming from Italy. You're not sure if this statement is meant to apply generally to all

pizza places, including fast food pizza places like Domino's, or only to higher-end pizza places. You think he meant it generally, but you're a bit doubtful. You could reasonably say "John seems to be implying that Domino's pizza sucks."

So "says, "seems to be saying", "is implying" and "seems to be implying" all have different meanings.

So it's a bad idea to mix them up. If you use "seems to be saying" to mean "is implying" or "seems to be implying", you are introducing unnecessary ambiguity into your communication.

Also, if you use "seems to be saying" to talk about implications, i think it is unclear whether you mean "implies" or "seems to be implying." Because in using "seems to be saying" in this way, you are causing "seems" to change the meaning of "say" to "imply." But does "seems" still also mean "seems" in the sense of expressing doubt? Does it both change "say" to "imply" *and* indicate doubt about the supposed implication? Or does it just change "say" to "imply" and stop there? I think it is ambiguous.

I think LT's usage of "seems to be saying" is confusing to the reader. LT's statement "seems to be saying" is literally false, because the sentence she's talking about said nothing like what she describes. But even if you read LT as talking about implying, it's ambiguous. Does LT think the statement definitely implies critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously, or does she think it perhaps implies that, but she's not sure? It's unclear.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: brucenielson1@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 30, 2019 at 11:39:50 AM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

so far I've analyzed:

> Lulie Tanett:
>
>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>
>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>>
>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>
>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
>>
>> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy. Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.
>>
>> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through

> institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws). But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going. You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either. Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".
>
> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type. (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

Now I analyze this:

> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

This is similar to LT's question earlier, "Why would social networking and politicking be special?" She was just talking about exuberant promoter/social types, and this is in a broader context of discussing issues CR people might have with doing academic politicking/social networking.

Birner says

> In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

"continue to select" is big there, cuz it links that part to this earlier part:

> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

CR "attracts" people who believe in force of critical argument. That's a kind of selection.

LT's question makes it sound as if she's just asking some innocuous question about appealing to different traditions. She's actually dropping context in order to make a

strong claim about the unobjectionable nature of doing social stuff.

LT is pretending that there are no known criticisms that might apply to being an "exuberant promoter/social type" or doing various social things. She's not dealing with second-handedness. She's faking the state of the debate in the field, which is a lie. She's also presenting her actual position in the form of a question, which is another lie.

"But truth is connected" is interesting. I have a couple of possible interpretations here. One is that LT is trying to sound philosophical and impressive in order to help her credibility in the discussion. Another is that she believes she's made a good argument here. But the idea that the truth is connected is not remotely straightforward to apply to the things under discussion.

Since LT obfuscates her position with context-dropping and fake questions, I'll try to put forth a clear positive statement I think LT would agree with. In light of what she said earlier, I guess LT would agree with something like, "The truth is connected. If spreading CR requires being a social type who does academic politicking and social networking, CR people should be able to figure out how to get into that." I think LT acts consistently with this statement on Twitter. I think there are a ton of steps skipped in the reasoning. I have many objections and questions.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>, FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: March 31, 2019 at 3:21:25 PM

On Sep 27, 2017, at 13:34 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>
> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>
> Lulie Tanett:

J's final analysis!

>> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch

Let's suppose that, thanks to reading a DD book, someone reads 5 Popper books without follow-up or discussion. "Getting interested" doesn't do much in this case, cuz their method isn't good enough to learn the material. And even doing that much Popper follow-up is probably a 99.99% percentile outcome for someone who reads BoI.

>> (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

Lie. Where is DD writing about CR?

Definitely not on email lists like he used to :(

No books since BoI 8 years ago (exactly 8 years ago in the UK today, actually, according to Wikipedia!)

If you go to https://www.daviddeutsch.org.uk the most recent blog post is from over a year ago and is tiny. The last substantive blog post that seems CR related is from

August 2014. Under "Papers, Article, Audio" the most recent academic paper was published in 2016, and the most recent article is from 2014. There are more recent interviews and that sort of thing, but LT specified writing. (I vaguely recall DD having a more recent article or two in like a magazine somewhere but I don't see it here, which is a bit odd. Doesn't affect the point anyways that DD's writing output is pretty low).

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,

people have been trying to understand "how to think about truth and knowledge" since the Greeks. That doesn't mean they are particularly interested in CR stuff.

> a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy,

People might turn to lots of things instead of traditional academic philosophy. Like religion. Not necessarily CR.

> people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it,

people who want to justify morality are good CR recruits?

> how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

FI bros, I am confused here, help me out: what's the "It's" referring to in the last sentence here?

Big picture on last bit: LT is lying about the prospects for CR by giving some examples of people having philosophy related problems and acting as if that will help CR spread.

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: brucenielson1@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: Elliot's LT Analysis (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: April 1, 2019 at 3:55:43 PM

On Oct 15, 2017, at 1:35:42 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 10:34 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?
>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D

>> Danny Frederick:

>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?

>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

>>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."

> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.
>
> Source:
>
> https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Last time I tried doing analysis in this thread, I offered scattered remarks and debate. I still slipped into a debatey mode a fair amount in this attempt, but I also went through the actual text more systematically, and I think being more systematic helped me see way more of the lies on this passthrough. I also broke up my comments in the thread into lots of small chunks rather than trying to tackle the whole thing at once. I think that helped a lot.

I did not see all the stuff Elliot points out — like ET's refutation of LT's statement "There will be a solution to the problem 'how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?'" I still feel like I got way more out of the exercise this time though.

I made some short detail comments below on some of Elliot's first pass analysis. There is one disagreement I have with what Elliot says that seems fairly minor and that I guess will probably get resolved within 1-2 ET replies. I generally agree with his comments and overall analysis.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

> Characterizing an argument as a premise is nasty. LT does this repeatedly when she calls it a "premise" or an "assumption" and doesn't acknowledge there being an argument. She's being condescending.

I tentatively disagree. I may have missed the exact nature of Birner's argument.

In an earlier post in my more recent analysis in this thread, I wrote:

> Talking about CR people being "less prone" to do something naturally brings up the question "why would that be the case?" which Birner didn't answer in his analysis. He just takes it as a given and then analyzes the potential implications for the future of a living tradition of CR.

> So calling that a "premise" isn't bad IMHO, cuz he is sort of taking it as a given and then analyzing conclusions from that...

You can get the full context of my comments on Birner here:

https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/fallible-ideas/F3ED4EFB-1E98-439E-AABE-E3B330BE0BBC%40gmail.com

BTW my guess here is I that will wind up conceding, but I just don't see the problem with using premise here for myself yet!

> Also she's misrepresenting DF/JB who didn't say "incompatible". A phrase DF/JB used was "less prone" which indicates it's a matter of degree, not strict incompatibility.

Gp.

> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.
>
> Why? No argument.
>
> This is in the *form* of an argument. LT presents it *as if* it were an argument. It's meant to appear to be an argument. She set the stage to make an argument. She used "but" to indicate she was arguing with the position she'd just stated. But this is an unargued assertion.
>
> LT repeatedly uses the tactic of writing assertions while trying to give an overall impression that she's making arguments. That's dishonest.

Yes.

> > Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> This isn't an argument, it's just implying the other side has no arguments.

Yes.

> And it's another dishonest reframing. DF/JB did not say social networking is "special". LT is changing their position to make it sound worse.

My analysis here was:

> the "be special" wording is framing positions contrary to Lulie's as wanting to make

> unprincipled exceptions to obviously applicable general rules. she's taking her position as self-evidently true and flaming dissenters.
>
> Imagine if one asked: "You can eat tons of substances fine. Why would arsenic be special?"
>
> In that case you can see clearly that someone just *assuming* a toxic substance is fine to eat cuz it is a *substance* is ridiculous. Likewise, it is ridiculous to assume that because something is an *interest* that it is compatible with CR.

continuing:

> > (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
>
> "They" is some poorly-specified people.
>
> "What" and "something" are singular. LT presents a list of things but they're all indications of what one thing is like. It's confusing writing, and it's a bizarre claim: aren't there multiple things people dislike, which are related to their problems with criticism?

Gp. I had some inkling there was something wrong about the writing here but didn't pause to consider it enough.

> The "etc." has no productive purpose in the text and should be omitted.

Gp.

> > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.
>
> It's unfair of LT not to present it as her arguments against DF/JB's arguments.
>
> And it's unfair how much LT pretends DF/JB were unclear and then just makes up a wide variety of false meanings to criticize.

I think I partially disagree here. I found parts of what JB was saying unclear, so I can sympathize with finding them unclear. But I thought many of LT's statements were assertions, lies, fake questions, etc. I noted in an earlier post that:

> She is not approaching this discussion remotely in the spirit of "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth." That is not her perspective; those are not her values.

Backt to ET:

> LT avoids quoting them or doing textual analysis of what they meant. But she's trying to give a (false) impression that she read their text carefully, thought it through, and is being a generous Popperian doing her best to give them the benefit of the doubt, interpret positively, and make the most sense possible out of their flawed text. That's all a lie.

Yes I agree.

> > Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

> Sucking up to a published author (with no actual regard for whether his ideas are any good, so that's dishonest), and yet another decoy to help pad out the post with things other than arguments.

Yeah this was sucking up with no substance. Blatant enough for me to see!

> > You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

> Most academics are constantly looking for excuses not to engage with criticism. Lack of academic credentials (which have to be in the right field, too) is a common excuse.

> LT hasn't solved the problem of engaging with academics. It's a difficult problem she doesn't know how to deal with, but LT implies it's more of an easy non-problem.

Right. She doesn't try to engage much with academics intellectually, doesn't really understand the issues involved. She doesn't have the right to her conclusion here.

> > Problems are soluble.

In my analysis I commented:

> I think maybe there is a lie here — something like pretending LT's positions flow straight from CR, or invoking CR in order to invoke expertise. I'm not sure though. I'm just flagging this one.

I missed a fundamental issue here which ET points out next:

> There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

> This is complete nonsense. It's like saying, "how do we ensure INDUCTIVISM survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?" Or the same with Bayesianism, positivism, postmodernism, skepticism, instrumentalism, infallibilism, etc. Or, "Because of BoI's argument that problems are soluble, there is a way to ensure socialism survives without unpleasant gulags."

> No. You don't just get to assume the problem of making X survive is soluble. Maybe X is bad. Maybe X shouldn't survive.

> Problems are soluble doesn't mean your favored things can and should survive. It just means there's a way forward for people, with or without CR, socialism, or anything else.

> CR's survival is not necessarily required for a bright future (a bright future is possible. there are some sorts of solutions to humanity's problems. just no promises that LT's current favorite things are part of those solutions). Perhaps it will be replaced by something else which is better.

> LT is being dishonest here. She's taking an unobjectionable "problems are soluble" statement (without crediting her source, BoI) and then following up with misleading terminology instead of an argument. Her trick is just to call something a problem and therefore to imply it must be soluble, even though BoI's argument doesn't say it is. BoI says there's some way forward, so we aren't screwed, but makes no guarantees the particular way forward LT brings up will be possible and work.

Yes. Great analysis, thanks. LT's way wrong on the substantive philosophy point here.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

> Again LT uses inadequate quoting and doesn't attempt serious textual analysis.

Yeah. I went back and did more analysis of Birner than LT did when reaching this point in my own analysis of LT.

> > She just wants to make up interpretations to trash. She then immediately transitions into an aside, rather than discuss this in a serious way or give an argument.

gp @ transitioning to aside.

> > > (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

> No, why would that be the meaning? LT doesn't quote it. It says:

> > > If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct.

> If you look at Birner's article, the meaning of "entrenched" is clarified:

> Popper defines a tradition as a set of behavioural patterns that remain stable even if and when alternative (and presumably viable) patterns of rules are available. A tradition may degener- ate into a genetically entrenched pattern of behaviour when viable alternative rules are no longer available or accessible. If a tradition in a particular ecological niche "becomes the spearhead of genetic entrenchment", the organisms in that niche risk extinction as a consequence of a change in the environment. Popper predicts that every genetic entrenchment becomes lethal in time (Popper 1994, p. 61). [italics omitted]

> So Birner is saying (that he learned from Popper) that things which stop changing ("entrenched") eventually go extinct as their environment changes and they don't. An unchanging thing can't deal with a changing world indefinitely. This point has similarities to BoI. LT didn't understand it correctly.

> Birner's sentence contains mistakes, but I'm not going to go into them now. Try it yourself if you're interested.

rambling thoughts: I think adopting alternative traditions is not the only way you could avoid entrenchment and extinction. You could also improve super fast — just be like the best tradition. Strictly dominant. So then you don't have to adopt alternative traditions cuz you're in the tradition that's way ahead and doing the innovation.

I'm not saying it's the IRL world situation that CR can't benefit from adopting parts of alternative traditions, just thinking about the logic of Birner's position a bit.

> > But truth is connected.

> > Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

This is one of the nastiest statements LT made. It's like "Why not be interested in not punching your wife again?" It assumes people aren't interested in something that's pretty clearly good. But they are, and they never said otherwise.

LT is misrepresenting her rivals as simply uninterested in "expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions". This is completely unfair, it's done by implication, and it's done instead of any actual argument. (LT doesn't even argue that "expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions" is good. She just takes it for granted that it's good and that her opponents are uninterested in it. She's also baiting them to reply saying they are interested, at which point she will frame it as them conceding to her and trying to follow LT's lead in her proposed project.)

Yes. I objected to this part strongly but I think you say what's wrong with it more clearly. In particular I liked the part about "It's like 'Why not be interested in not punching your wife again?'"

> > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

Who's getting interested? What evidence does LT have to know this? How regularly? How many people?

LT is trying to communicate a false impression of the current situation (which is actually not going so well). She's lying.

LT is also lying about DD's current activities. DD has withdrawn from critical discussion and, due to the lack of error correction (plus some other problems that LT has knowledge of), is falling apart and unable to do good work writing about CR.

LT is suggesting she's an expert on the CR community, on the status of outreach efforts, and on DD personally. She vaguely hints she is DD's representative with insider knowledge. (She does have some insider knowledge, but she's lying about how positive it is. LT is not DD's representative – neither substantively nor in DD's opinion – and she wouldn't explicitly claim to be if directly asked, but she's happy to hint at it to

> people who won't ask.)

Right. She's lying and name-dropping.

>> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge, a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy, people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it, how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on.

> Long sentence! Lots of vague claims with no examples.

> There's "a lot of craving" for LT's ideas, but she has no audience, produces no essays or other content, and can't point to actual example people with this craving..?

> What's one good rationalist/skeptic community? Where do I find these things LT says exist? Nowhere. She's lying.

>> It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

> Who is the "next generation"? Is LT part of it? Am I? What birth years does it refer to?

> Why the "very" intensifier? That's bad writing. But good social vibes to help distract people from the lack of argument.

For my own part, I wasn't clear on what the "It's" was referring to.

> LT's method here is to make vague assertions, and avoid sticking her neck out. But, at the same time, to give strong impressions of what she's saying.

> The "very" is non-specific. If criticized, LT can defend herself by retroactively adjusting how much fertility "very fertile" means. This is just like her use of "a lot" 3 times in the previous sentence.

Gp @ very. I noticed other instances of LT adding wiggle room for herself but not this one.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 4, 2019 at 5:35:22 PM

On Mar 19, 2019, at 9:34 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>
> Gonna try analyzing this again some. I'm gonna analyze the Birner quote in this post some — in a more gist-y kinda way, not parsing each word — cuz I found it necessary to do so in order to meaningfully talk about some of the stuff Lulie says. But most of my attention will be on Lulie stuff. I'm planning on trying replying repeatedly to different parts in chunks rather than replying to the whole thing at once.
>
>> Danny Frederick:
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>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
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>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>
> Birner thinks there's some tension or contradiction or something between believing in the force of critical argument and being a social networker and academic politicker. He frames this in terms of what he regards as a realistic assumption that critical argument fans are "less prone" to devote resources to networking and politicking. He also thinks

that if you don't do these things, your intellectual offspring won't survive (or maybe are less likely to survive, or something like that).

One thing I found interesting is that he's avoiding calling politicking *bad*. He thinks there's some tension or contradiction between liking critical argument and trying to win a social competition, but he doesn't say *why* that is the case. He doesn't say anything like "Debates on issues should be decided according to critical discussion. Academia has perverse incentives in that it rewards people according to social networking skills as opposed to the ability of those people to generate scholarship that can stand up to criticism and move the field forward. Thus, academia is immoral." He doesn't even come close to this, presumably because he doesn't agree. He's identified a problem but is fuzzy about the cause and the solution.

Another thing is that Birner seems to doubt that arguments can survive on their own merits. He thinks you *need* to play the social academia game in order to have your ideas survive. "Intellectual offspring" is kinda vague as a term but given that he's talking about needing to politick etc I read it as meaning your ideas *as embodied in particular people's minds*, in particular like graduate students/PhDs who you have some kind of relationship with. So a book with your ideas which anyone could read and which could persuade some people doesn't count as your intellectual offspring surviving.

(Side comment: I'd guess that Rand's books have convinced more people of at least some tiny part of Oism — some idea — way more than any CR books, including Popper's own books, have convinced people of some tiny part of CR. If most CR people largely focus on academic stuff and basically never try to do stuff that's more popular, that's bad and strange. There is a faulty assumption in focusing on producing stuff for academic audience — like you'd do that if you thought academic audiences were especially good or worthy of attention, even though the man on the street is actually typically better.)

so so far we've got that:

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring

> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop

> in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
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> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

So initially he's saying that there was a tradition of critical rationalism for a couple of generations, but stuff changed, science became more "professional" and scientists became less interested in philosophy.

where he says

> while the contents of rationalism continue to select against the type of characteristics that make it possible for individuals adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

I am not sure exactly what this means. I think it's related to this idea that there's something about CR having some tension with social and politicking stuff, cuz he's framing it as CR "continu[ing] to select", but bringing up "different traditions" seems like a new point.

some guesses as to what "different traditions" might refer to:

1. the academic/politicking stuff itself
2. the new culture of professionalized science
3. various new ideas that are popular in the academic environment today
4. some combination of the above

regardless of that ambiguity, overall the point of this part seems to be that CR people aren't fitting in to the new situation and CR might die out if it doesn't adapt.

and zooming out, we've got something like

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring

3. Birner thinks there's been changes in the scientific field which CR people haven't adapted to
4. Birner thinks CR might die out as a result

Ok so now to the beginning of L's stuff:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

I'm just gonna do this part for this post.

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

So, what's the "spirit" of the Birner post?

"Spirit" is worse than useless as a term here. It seems kind of like an anti-concept:

http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/anti-concepts.html

> An anti-concept is an unnecessary and rationally unusable term designed to replace and obliterate some legitimate concept. The use of anti-concepts gives the listeners a sense of approximate understanding. But in the realm of cognition, nothing is as bad as the approximate

here are variations on the sentence that I think would have involved LT sticking her neck out more than "spirit":

While I sympathise with the main point of this post

While I sympathise with the main thrust of this post

While I sympathise with the thought behind this post

> While I sympathise with the main argument in this post
>
> While I sympathise with the general idea of this post
>
> There are many such wordings!
>
> And even these aren't great btw — LT should have said more about what she actually supposedly agreed with. But they're less evasive than "spirit."
>
> So I think "spirit" was chosen deliberately to obfuscate, confuse, muddle up the discussion, muddy the waters.

Did you look up "spirit"? It doesn't mean the alternatives you said. And it does mean something!

I agree it's vague. She doesn't say what she thinks the spirit is. But that isn't the fault of the word "spirit".

Also, she talks about the spirit of the "post". You're being picky but don't seem to have questioned that. Which post? Does she mean Birner's quote, or Frederick's post containing the Birner quote and none of his own thoughts? She seems (in terms of wording) to mean Frederick's post, but it's weird to sympathize with that because he didn't say anything. I guess she forgot about the difference between the post and the quote within the post.

> Using that word is a way to avoid getting pinned down on what you are agreeing to, cuz it's vague enough that if somebody offers a criticism you can say "oh I didn't mean I liked X, I meant Y" and just play that game ad hoc as criticisms are offered.
>
> LT isn't offering a BOLD CONJECTURE here for criticism but is instead minimizing her exposure to criticism by minimizing how much she's explicitly claiming.
>
> She is making claims, as we'll see — she does have a position on what Birner is saying — but she's doing it in such a way as to make it very hard to pin down what she's claiming.
>
> I think if you're going to use it all, "spirit" should refer to the gist, or the author's main point, or something like that. So one of the things I gave as like a numbered point earlier. Or all of them.
>
> But as we'll see, LT totally disagrees with the basic idea of Birner's post. Not only does LT disagree with the author's analysis of the potential implications of a tension

between CR and social stuff, she disagrees with his very identification of there being some kinda tension between CR and doing social stuff.

> While I sympathise

What does LT sympathize with?

She immediately says

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

An alternative approach to the discussion:

"You seem to be saying that there's some contradiction between CR and doing effective social networking and politicking. Can you explain more? What do you think causes the contradiction?

Is there something bad about social networking and politicking? Is there some conflict between 'a firm belief in the power of criticism' and social networking and politicking? If so, do you believe this conflict can be resolved by means that don't involve compromising CR?

And are there risks? Like, is there a way to resolve the conflict which does compromise CR, and one which doesn't? And if so what are the differences? Can you give an example? Might people easily get confused between the two?"

That's what taking the project of understanding someone else's position seriously looks like. That's not what LT is doing. She doesn't seem very sympathetic in a CR sense if she's not trying to get more details.

She already knows that stuff, though. She understands his position well enough (at least the issue that criticism can offend and alienate people you're trying to social network with). She's just pretending not to, dishonestly, to attack it. She's playing innocent as a strategy.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

That's not just a premise — that's more like a big part of the spirit.

It's tricky cuz I think Birner was maybe himself not super clear on what his position was, as I talked about earlier — like he had some ideas along the right lines but hadn't really carried his analysis all the way to a conclusion. Talking about CR people being "less prone" to do something naturally brings up the question "why would that be the case?" which Birner didn't answer in his analysis. He just takes it as a given and then analyzes the potential implications for the future of a living tradition of CR.

So calling that a "premise" isn't bad IMHO, cuz he is sort of taking it as a given and then analyzing conclusions from that. But what's bad is this…

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

…in light of this…

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

What does LT sympathize with, exactly?

The whole Birner post

It's a Birner quote, not a Birner post. Birner didn't post to FB.

is basically about this incompatibility between CR and social networking stuff and the problems it might cause for the survival of CR.

If LT disagrees with *that*, what does she sympathize with?

This is where "spirit" comes in btw. Cuz if you call LT out on this, she can say ...

"Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of caring about CR not dying out" or

"Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of discussing high-level problems one sees in the CR community" or

"Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of thinking about potential problems that CR people could encounter due to the professionalization of science that Popper referred to as 'Big Science'"

> …or a million other potential avenues for escape from criticism.

Yes. If you know "spirit" can mean those things, why did you write earlier like spirit = main point?

> "Spirit" doesn't rule out any of these avenues for escape, but was in fact selected for its ability to leave open the maximum number of such avenues.

Not "maximum". A lot. Be more careful with words like "never", "every", "all", etc.

> This helps indicate its anti-conceptual use by LT. A term ruling stuff out is essential for the term to serve a communicating function. If a term is chosen not to clarify *but because it is unclear* — because it leaves one a lot of wiggle room, because it's open to many interpretations — that's perverse. It's making a mockery of language, discussion, truth-seeking.

I don't think the problem is the word "spirit". She could have used that word and also said what the spirit was and it'd be OK. The problem is not saying what she meant.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

> LT is treating social networking and politicking as a normal, perfectly fine, unobjectionable interest, like physics or economics. She just asserts this here.

> She knows Birner apparently disagrees with her assertion, since she ascribed thinking there was an incompatibility to him as a premise. But she doesn't feel the need to figure out why he thinks that, to try to analyze the issue objectively, to get a variety of perspectives on the issue (including Oism, which she hates and viciously slanders on Twitter without discussion).

> She is not approaching this discussion remotely in the spirit of "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth." That is not her perspective; those are not her values.

She's not talking to Birner. It's worth considering who she is talking to and what her message to them is.

> Instead, she seems confident speaking authoritatively regarding CR, based on her

> apparent CR expertise?!
>
> Note she does frame something as a question:
>
> > Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> But this is not an actual question. It's a rhetorical question that is designed to let LT expound on her ideas about why her position is correct. LT doesn't have any doubts about the issue.
>
> THE QUESTION MARK IS A LIE!
>
> The pseudoq-question is also designed to intimidate.
>
> Consider an alternate wording:
>
> "I think a CR person can be interested in and pursue social networking and politicking stuff. I don't see anything about those fields that inherently contradicts CR. Can you explain why you think otherwise?"
>
> This framing is inviting the person one is discussing with to offer some reasons, some arguments.

What person she's discussing with? Birner isn't there and she doesn't respect Frederick or treat him as a proxy for Birner. I don't think she's trying to discuss with any advocate of the quote, she's trying to speak to other people. (Who and what for? I leave that to you.)

> LT's wording is basically saying "No, you're wrong" and acting as if there's no criticisms of CR people caring about that kind of stuff.
>
> But LT knows about Objectivism so she presumably knows about second-handedness. So this pretending that there's no reasonable arguments on the issue is BS. She doesn't discuss Objectivism at all in her reply. She wants to pretend it doesn't exist, its position doesn't exist, its arguments don't exist. So this is a lie.

J I think you should have said basic stuff at some point. Like:

A reasonable reader can understand this some. E.g. they know brown-nosing is a common part of social networking and it's anti-critical.

And LT totally could think of that, if she cared too. This basic thing is more relevant than the Oist arguments b/c Birner wasn't counting on readers knowing anything about Gail Wynand (though you're right that LT does, so that makes her fake confusion about Birner's point extra fake).

Also btw being *interested* in social networking is totally compatible with CR and is totally different than *taking particular actions like brown-nosing*. You could critically study social networking. LT was being dishonest by changing the issue from doing social networking to being interested in it. That was partly sloppy incompetence, but partly her social conditioning and static memes and whatever doing stuff that non-randomly is biased for her dishonest goals.

> be special?

the "be special" wording is framing positions contrary to Lulie's as wanting to make unprincipled exceptions to obviously applicable general rules. she's taking her position as self-evidently true and flaming dissenters.

Imagine if one asked: "You can eat tons of substances fine. Why would arsenic be special?"

In that case you can see clearly that someone just *assuming* a toxic substance is fine to eat cuz it is a *substance* is ridiculous. Likewise, it is ridiculous to assume that because something is an *interest* that it is compatible with CR.

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

"far" isn't reflecting some measurement or judgment of relative optimism. So that's a lie.

LT doesn't think there's any contradiction between CR and social stuff. Birner does. LT thinks CR people can fit in and be social bros and do fine. Birner thinks CR people need to adapt in some way (kinda unclear to me how).

Birner seems to think there's some solution to the problem of CR people dealing with things like professionalized science etc. He's light on details but his attitude isn't "we're totally fucked." He *does* think there is a serious risk that needs to be addressed.

LT fundamentally disagrees that a problem of CR incompatibility with social stuff even exists. She frames this fundamental disagreement as being far more optimistic.

It's kinda like, if some guy thinks a giant asteroid is gonna hit NY *unless we take

> certain steps*, and you're like "nah don't worry it won't hit us", it's deceptive to call that greater optimism.

Yeah, but... Her sentence is primarily directed at third parties and it conveys to them the message that she understands the other side's knowledge (understanding is a prerequisite of sympathizing) and that she knows more than them (which is what allowed her to reach a different conclusion) and that her conclusions are positive. In other words: LT is wiser than Birner, and if you learn her wisdom you'll like the conclusions and be happy. She's offering the greatest wisdom *and* she's offering a positive, easy situation instead of a difficult situation.

She's trying to sell/market/appeal to people who don't like problems and don't want to deal with problems, contrary to the fact that CR views life and learning as a progression from problems to better problems, so *all life is problem solving*.

https://www.amazon.com/Life-Problem-Solving-Karl-Popper/dp/0415249929?tag=curi04-20

> If two people evaluate the likelihood of success of some action differently, I think it makes more sense to call that an issue of optimism. Like if two doctors have different guesses as to whether a particular cancer treatment will work, calling that optimism makes sense to me. But if two doctors disagree about whether a patient *has* cancer or just a cold, saying the doctor who thinks it is a cold is "optimistic" would seem strange to me. Cuz there's just like a more fundamental disagreement there about what the basics of the situation are. I think optimism is about different valuations of the likelihood of success given some specified context. But the bigger the gap between people in terms of the context they'll both concede, the less the issue is one of optimism and the more it is one of fundamentally clashing worldviews.
>
> So let's review:
>
> > While I sympathise
>
> lie. she doesn't sympathize, she fundamentally disagrees.
>
> > with the spirit
>
> "spirit" is a word chosen to muddle discussion.
>
> > of this post, I am far

> > "far" is a lie. She didn't assess something like relative optimism levels.

The comparison of relative optimism levels comes from the word "more". "More" compares. "Far" just modifies the degree of moreness. "Far" tells you that the results of the comparison were not close.

> > more optimistic.

> > "optimistic" is a lie. She disagrees fundamentally and frames that as optimism.

> > > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

> > Not sure what the lie is here.

One lie is: you might reasonably expect from reading LT's sentence, without reading Birner, that she's revealing a hidden premise. She did analysis to find a faulty, unstated premise. LT wrote to give that kind of false impression. It helps with her theme of being condescending and superior, and her theme of attacking stuff in ways other than direct argument about the content.

> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

> > Implicit lie about LT's level of CR expertise.

The bigger issue is it's the wrong topic. It's a topic change. It's a big jump away from what the debate was actually about.

> > Why would social networking and politicking be special

> > Lying by omission about what sorts of criticism of the incompatibility of CR and social stuff exist.

And playing innocent, pretending no reasoning exists where she could easily guess some that does exist if she cared to.

And reframing the debate, wrongly, into being about why Birner is advocating special

exceptions.

> ?

The question mark is a lie. LT isn't actually asking a question or participating in a back-and-forth truth seeking discussion. She's clearing her throat before expounding on her views on CR.

So summing up: LT lies about sympathizing with the post. She doesn't sympathize but actually fundamentally disagrees. She wants to pretend otherwise so she can non-confrontational impose her own views on the discussion in ways that are difficult to challenge. She frames the discussion in a biased way, asks fake questions, and pretends criticism of her position doesn't exist.

FYI my comments are incomplete.

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 4, 2019 at 6:27:06 PM

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3. various new ideas that are popular in the academic environment today
4. some combination of the above

regardless of that ambiguity, overall the point of this part seems to be that CR people aren't fitting in to the new situation and CR might die out if it doesn't adapt.

and zooming out, we've got something like

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring
3. Birner thinks there's been changes in the scientific field which CR people haven't adapted to
4. Birner thinks CR might die out as a result

Ok so now to the beginning of L's stuff:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

I'm just gonna do this part for this post.

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

So, what's the "spirit" of the Birner post?

"Spirit" is worse than useless as a term here. It seems kind of like an anti-concept:

http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/anti-concepts.html

> An anti-concept is an unnecessary and rationally unusable term designed to replace and obliterate some legitimate concept. The use of anti-concepts gives the listeners a sense of approximate understanding. But in the realm of cognition, nothing is as bad as the approximate

here are variations on the sentence that I think would have involved LT sticking her neck out more than "spirit":

While I sympathise with the main point of this post

> While I sympathise with the main thrust of this post
>
> While I sympathise with the thought behind this post
>
> While I sympathise with the main argument in this post
>
> While I sympathise with the general idea of this post
>
> There are many such wordings!
>
> And even these aren't great btw — LT should have said more about what she actually supposedly agreed with. But they're less evasive than "spirit."
>
> So I think "spirit" was chosen deliberately to obfuscate, confuse, muddle up the discussion, muddy the waters.

> Did you look up "spirit"? It doesn't mean the alternatives you said. And it does mean something!

I forget if I looked up "spirit" at the time I wrote the post. I think maybe I didn't.

Just did now. The definition that fits is "the real meaning or the intention behind something as opposed to its strict verbal interpretation."

> I agree it's vague. She doesn't say what she thinks the spirit is. But that isn't the fault of the word "spirit".

I think I had in mind that LT picked "spirit" cuz "spirit" is a word that lends itself more to sounding like you've said something when you haven't. Whereas if she said something like "main thrust", it'd be more obvious to most people that she hadn't named the main thrust. So I put a lot of blame on the word "spirit" here, rather than LT's vagueness about her conception of "spirit". But I managed to talk about LT's vagueness and what "spirit" could mean later in the post, which is interesting. I didn't realize the contradiction between blaming the word and blaming the lack of LT specifying what she meant by the word. Hmmph.

> Also, she talks about the spirit of the "post". You're being picky but don't seem to have questioned that. Which post? Does she mean Birner's quote, or Frederick's post containing the Birner quote and none of his own thoughts? She seems (in terms of wording) to mean Frederick's post, but it's weird to sympathize with that because he didn't say anything. I guess she forgot about the difference between the post and the quote within the post.

Yeah I didn't distinguish carefully between Frederick post and Birner quote either.

> Using that word is a way to avoid getting pinned down on what you are agreeing to, cuz it's vague enough that if somebody offers a criticism you can say "oh I didn't mean I liked X, I meant Y" and just play that game ad hoc as criticisms are offered.
>
> LT isn't offering a BOLD CONJECTURE here for criticism but is instead minimizing her exposure to criticism by minimizing how much she's explicitly claiming.
>
> She is making claims, as we'll see — she does have a position on what Birner is saying — but she's doing it in such a way as to make it very hard to pin down what she's claiming.
>
> I think if you're going to use it all, "spirit" should refer to the gist, or the author's main point, or something like that. So one of the things I gave as like a numbered point earlier. Or all of them.
>
> But as we'll see, LT totally disagrees with the basic idea of Birner's post. Not only does LT disagree with the author's analysis of the potential implications of a tension between CR and social stuff, she disagrees with his very identification of there being some kinda tension between CR and doing social stuff.
>
> > While I sympathise
>
> What does LT sympathize with?
>
> She immediately says
>
> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
> >
> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> An alternative approach to the discussion:
>
> "You seem to be saying that there's some contradiction between CR and doing effective social networking and politicking. Can you explain more? What do you think causes the contradiction?
>
> Is there something bad about social networking and politicking? Is there some conflict between 'a firm belief in the power of criticism' and social networking and

politicking? If so, do you believe this conflict can be resolved by means that don't involve compromising CR?

And are there risks? Like, is there a way to resolve the conflict which does compromise CR, and one which doesn't? And if so what are the differences? Can you give an example? Might people easily get confused between the two?"

That's what taking the project of understanding someone else's position seriously looks like. That's not what LT is doing. She doesn't seem very sympathetic in a CR sense if she's not trying to get more details.

She already knows that stuff, though. She understands his position well enough (at least the issue that criticism can offend and alienate people you're trying to social network with). She's just pretending not to, dishonestly, to attack it. She's playing innocent as a strategy.

Right.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

That's not just a premise — that's more like a big part of the spirit.

It's tricky cuz I think Birner was maybe himself not super clear on what his position was, as I talked about earlier — like he had some ideas along the right lines but hadn't really carried his analysis all the way to a conclusion. Talking about CR people being "less prone" to do something naturally brings up the question "why would that be the case?" which Birner didn't answer in his analysis. He just takes it as a given and then analyzes the potential implications for the future of a living tradition of CR.

So calling that a "premise" isn't bad IMHO, cuz he is sort of taking it as a given and then analyzing conclusions from that. But what's bad is this…

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

…in light of this…

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

What does LT sympathize with, exactly?

> The whole Birner post

It's a Birner quote, not a Birner post. Birner didn't post to FB.

Right.

> is basically about this incompatibility between CR and social networking stuff and the problems it might cause for the survival of CR.
>
> If LT disagrees with *that*, what does she sympathize with?
>
>
> This is where "spirit" comes in btw. Cuz if you call LT out on this, she can say ...
>
> "Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of caring about CR not dying out" or
>
> "Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of discussing high-level problems one sees in the CR community" or
>
> "Oh I actually sympathized with the spirit of thinking about potential problems that CR people could encounter due to the professionalization of science that Popper referred to as 'Big Science'"
>
> …or a million other potential avenues for escape from criticism.

Yes. If you know "spirit" can mean those things, why did you write earlier like spirit = main point?

Right, discussed above.

> "Spirit" doesn't rule out any of these avenues for escape, but was in fact selected for its ability to leave open the maximum number of such avenues.

Not "maximum". A lot. Be more careful with words like "never", "every", "all", etc.

Fair.

> This helps indicate its anti-conceptual use by LT. A term ruling stuff out is essential for the term to serve a communicating function. If a term is chosen not to clarify *but because it is unclear* — because it leaves one a lot of wiggle room, because it's open to many interpretations — that's perverse. It's making a mockery of language, discussion, truth-seeking.

> I don't think the problem is the word "spirit". She could have used that word and also said what the spirit was and it'd be OK. The problem is not saying what she meant.

Yes I think I agree now.

>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.
>
> LT is treating social networking and politicking as a normal, perfectly fine, unobjectionable interest, like physics or economics. She just asserts this here.
>
> She knows Birner apparently disagrees with her assertion, since she ascribed thinking there was an incompatibility to him as a premise. But she doesn't feel the need to figure out why he thinks that, to try to analyze the issue objectively, to get a variety of perspectives on the issue (including Oism, which she hates and viciously slanders on Twitter without discussion).
>
> She is not approaching this discussion remotely in the spirit of "I may be wrong and you may be right, and by an effort, we may get nearer to the truth." That is not her perspective; those are not her values.
>
> She's not talking to Birner. It's worth considering who she is talking to and what her message to them is.

I guess she's talking to Facebook CR fans who want to do social stuff and want someone who comes off like a CR authority to tell them that's okay?

> Instead, she seems confident speaking authoritatively regarding CR, based on her apparent CR expertise?!
>
> Note she does frame something as a question:
>
>> Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>
> But this is not an actual question. It's a rhetorical question that is designed to let LT expound on her ideas about why her position is correct. LT doesn't have any doubts about the issue.
>
> THE QUESTION MARK IS A LIE!
>
> The pseudoq-question is also designed to intimidate.

> Consider an alternate wording:
>
> "I think a CR person can be interested in and pursue social networking and politicking stuff. I don't see anything about those fields that inherently contradicts CR. Can you explain why you think otherwise?"
>
> This framing is inviting the person one is discussing with to offer some reasons, some arguments.

What person she's discussing with? Birner isn't there and she doesn't respect Frederick or treat him as a proxy for Birner. I don't think she's trying to discuss with any advocate of the quote, she's trying to speak to other people. (Who and what for? I leave that to you.)

> > LT's wording is basically saying "No, you're wrong" and acting as if there's no criticisms of CR people caring about that kind of stuff.
> >
> > But LT knows about Objectivism so she presumably knows about second-handedness. So this pretending that there's no reasonable arguments on the issue is BS. She doesn't discuss Objectivism at all in her reply. She wants to pretend it doesn't exist, its position doesn't exist, its arguments don't exist. So this is a lie.

J I think you should have said basic stuff at some point. Like:

A reasonable reader can understand this some. E.g. they know brown-nosing is a common part of social networking and it's anti-critical.

And LT totally could think of that, if she cared too. This basic thing is more relevant than the Oist arguments b/c Birner wasn't counting on readers knowing anything about Gail Wynand

Right. I agree stuff like brown-nosing would have been a good, more basic thing to bring up.

(though you're right that LT does, so that makes her fake confusion about Birner's point extra fake).

Yes.

Also btw being *interested* in social networking is totally compatible with CR and is totally different than *taking particular actions like brown-nosing*.

Right it's like how being interested in PUA doesn't mean you're going out trying to get laid.

> You could critically study social networking. LT was being dishonest by changing the issue from doing social networking to being interested in it. That was partly sloppy incompetence, but partly her social conditioning and static memes and whatever doing stuff that non-randomly is biased for her dishonest goals.

gp.

>> be special?
>
> the "be special" wording is framing positions contrary to Lulie's as wanting to make unprincipled exceptions to obviously applicable general rules. she's taking her position as self-evidently true and flaming dissenters.
>
> Imagine if one asked: "You can eat tons of substances fine. Why would arsenic be special?"
>
> In that case you can see clearly that someone just *assuming* a toxic substance is fine to eat cuz it is a *substance* is ridiculous. Likewise, it is ridiculous to assume that because something is an *interest* that it is compatible with CR.
>
>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> "far" isn't reflecting some measurement or judgment of relative optimism. So that's a lie.
>
> LT doesn't think there's any contradiction between CR and social stuff. Birner does. LT thinks CR people can fit in and be social bros and do fine. Birner thinks CR people need to adapt in some way (kinda unclear to me how).
>
> Birner seems to think there's some solution to the problem of CR people dealing with things like professionalized science etc. He's light on details but his attitude isn't "we're totally fucked." He *does* think there is a serious risk that needs to be addressed.
>
> LT fundamentally disagrees that a problem of CR incompatibility with social stuff even exists. She frames this fundamental disagreement as being far more optimistic.

> It's kinda like, if some guy thinks a giant asteroid is gonna hit NY *unless we take certain steps*, and you're like "nah don't worry it won't hit us", it's deceptive to call that greater optimism.

> Yeah, but... Her sentence is primarily directed at third parties and it conveys to them the message that she understands the other side's knowledge (understanding is a prerequisite of sympathizing) and that she knows more than them (which is what allowed her to reach a different conclusion) and that her conclusions are positive. In other words: LT is wiser than Birner, and if you learn her wisdom you'll like the conclusions and be happy. She's offering the greatest wisdom *and* she's offering a positive, easy situation instead of a difficult situation.

> She's trying to sell/market/appeal to people who don't like problems and don't want to deal with problems, contrary to the fact that CR views life and learning as a progression from problems to better problems, so *all life is problem solving*.

Since you've mentioned the point of who LT is directing her stuff at a few times, I will try to address it some here.

I think I was somewhat reading LT's post as being an attempt to engage with the content of the Birner quote intellectually.

Maybe cuz if I was discussing a quote like that, that's how I would approach it, and so a social/marketing focus for discussing intellectual content is kind of unnatural to me. It's not what comes to mind.

Maybe cuz intellectual analysis was what LT was presenting herself as doing and I partially accepted her framing while still noticing a lot of errors/lies. I at least partially accept people's framings a lot while still pushing back on them a bit.

I will have to try to keep the issue of the author's intended audience and intended social communication in mind when doing future such analyses.

https://www.amazon.com/Life-Problem-Solving-Karl-Popper/dp/0415249929?tag=curi04-20

> If two people evaluate the likelihood of success of some action differently, I think it makes more sense to call that an issue of optimism. Like if two doctors have different guesses as to whether a particular cancer treatment will work, calling that optimism makes sense to me. But if two doctors disagree about whether a patient *has* cancer or just a cold, saying the doctor who thinks it is a cold is "optimistic" would seem strange to me. Cuz there's just like a more fundamental disagreement there about

what the basics of the situation are. I think optimism is about different valuations of the likelihood of success given some specified context. But the bigger the gap between people in terms of the context they'll both concede, the less the issue is one of optimism and the more it is one of fundamentally clashing worldviews.

So let's review:

> While I sympathise

lie. she doesn't sympathize, she fundamentally disagrees.

> with the spirit

"spirit" is a word chosen to muddle discussion.

> of this post, I am far

"far" is a lie. She didn't assess something like relative optimism levels.

The comparison of relative optimism levels comes from the word "more". "More" compares. "Far" just modifies the degree of moreness. "Far" tells you that the results of the comparison were not close.

gp.

> more optimistic.

"optimistic" is a lie. She disagrees fundamentally and frames that as optimism.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

Not sure what the lie is here.

One lie is: you might reasonably expect from reading LT's sentence, without reading Birner, that she's revealing a hidden premise. She did analysis to find a faulty, unstated premise. LT wrote to give that kind of false impression. It helps with her theme of being condescending and superior, and her theme of attacking stuff in ways other than direct argument about the content.

gp.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist.

Implicit lie about LT's level of CR expertise.

The bigger issue is it's the wrong topic. It's a topic change. It's a big jump away from what the debate was actually about.

yes.

> Why would social networking and politicking be special

Lying by omission about what sorts of criticism of the incompatibility of CR and social stuff exist.

And playing innocent, pretending no reasoning exists where she could easily guess some that does exist if she cared to.

And reframing the debate, wrongly, into being about why Birner is advocating special exceptions.

> ?

The question mark is a lie. LT isn't actually asking a question or participating in a back-and-forth truth seeking discussion. She's clearing her throat before expounding on her views on CR.

So summing up: LT lies about sympathizing with the post. She doesn't sympathize but actually fundamentally disagrees. She wants to pretend otherwise so she can non-confrontational impose her own views on the discussion in ways that are difficult to challenge. She frames the discussion in a biased way, asks fake questions, and pretends criticism of her position doesn't exist.

FYI my comments are incomplete.

i thought they were very useful. I especially liked the correction on a problem being LT's vagueness and not the use of the word "spirit" per se. I also especially liked the point about how LT reframed an issue from *doing* social networking to being interested in it.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 7, 2019 at 5:10:53 PM

On Mar 21, 2019, at 10:02 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?
>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>
>
>
>> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
>
>
> Many people dislike criticism. Criticism is sort of a package deal in people's minds, including some okay stuff and some bad stuff, but people hate criticism so much you have to put "constructive" before "criticism" to try to indicate "I mean the kind that's good, not the kind you hate." People think of criticism kind of like medicine that tastes shitty — sometimes you need to have some, but it's not something that's fun or pleasant. This contrasts notably with the idea of criticism being a gift. That's a *controversial* idea that many people reject.
>
> If you look up "criticism" in the dictionary you see examples of the sort of mixed/negative attitude I'm talking about:
>
> google:
>
>> • 1.
>> the expression of disapproval of someone or something based on perceived faults or mistakes.
>
> people generally don't like expressions of disapproval.
>
> m-w.com:
>
>> 1   a: the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
>>   [example]   seeking encouragement rather than criticism

> note the contrast of "criticism" with a positive thing, "encouragement", in the example!
>
> LT should be familiar with this popular attitude to criticism. I think she is. so i think ...
>
> > it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
>
> … is both substantively wrong and a lie, since LT should know about prevailing attitudes towards criticism but doesn't really address them.
>
> I have some more written but I want to think about it more. I plan on continuing this post later.

I think the word "fundamentally" is meant to contrast with the (superficial) prevailing attitudes. I think it's trying to say people don't inherently, unchangeably hate criticism. She knows there are problems people have with it, but there are solutions, the problems aren't so fundamental as to be unfixable. Something kinda along those lines. Justin seems to have missed that entirely.

Elliot Temple
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From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 7, 2019 at 6:55:32 PM

On Mar 21, 2019, at 10:33 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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>>>
>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>>
>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
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>>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
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>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>
>> btw, for the above part, here is a more honest rewrite, with the idea of communicating LT's actual position:
>>
>>> I completely disagree.
>>>
>>>
>>> Birner thinks that CR is incompatible with social networking and politicking. But I

> think those things pose no problem for CR and are totally fine.

this time i'll analyze just this part 🤔🔍:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true:

> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

I'll continue my close reading of LT stuff later but I wrote this substantive criticism of what LT has said so far as I've been doing my close reading (like, literally wrote it in bits and pieces commenting on different parts, and then pasted them together and them edited a bit).

My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that it is focusing on stuff other than truth. That's bad for truth-seeking.

The first sentence of this paragraph means the following:

> My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that [social networking and academic politicking] are focusing on stuff other than truth.

All I did is substitute in what "it" refers to and change "is" to "are" (the word "it" should have been "they" because it refers to two things). Notice how wordy it is!

How can this sentence be improved? Delete "My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that". That whole introduction is unnecessary.

On a related note, the antecedent of the "that" in the second sentence isn't clear enough.

I think the sentence means: [focusing on stuff other than truth] is bad for truth-seeking.

That's a bit silly and overly obvious. And if something needs clarifying/explaining, this won't really help.

> Communication is hard. Communicating worldviews is very hard. If you're trying to do it well, you can't make other stuff the priority. It doesn't work.

"very hard" should be "harder".

Both uses of "it" are bad. The first one comes after you introduce two things. It could mean "communication" or "communicating worldviews" (I'm guessing it means the second one).

The second "it" should be "that". Or, clearer, "That other-prioritizing".

> Part of doing effective networking and politicking is trying to not alienate people. So in cases of disagreement, you have to hold back, not be as clear and direct as possible, and thus risk miscommunication more, in order to not alienate people. You have to put social graces above truth, above a reality-focus, above clarity. You have to act as if criticism is *not* a gift in dealing with other people. And in doing so, you harm your *own* reality focus. You will start to internalize methods of thinking that evade dealing with aspects of reality that, if you notice them and think about them, will cause strife in your social circle.

That last sentence is bad. Here's some analysis of how much it chains together modifiers, mostly with prepositional phrases (rather than single word adjectives).

You will start TO internalize

TO internalize what? methods

what type of methods? 1) OF thinking. 2) THAT evade

what type of evading? dealing

what type of dealing? WITH aspects

what type of aspects? 1) OF reality 2) THAT will cause strife

cause strife where? IN your social circle

And this analysis doesn't even include the comma phrase.

> People get triggered and off-put by all sorts of very unpredictable stuff. Criticism can cause someone to feel destabilized/overwhelmed unpredictably. And people are bad about communicating when this sort of thing is even happening. They might even just experience it as a sort of unease without being able to put a name to it or identify it very well. People's emotional reactions are a minefield and you don't know what's gonna set them off.
>
> Even people who are socially focused — and who color within the lines, who don't stick out, who are unoriginal thinkers, who don't have much to say — often run into minefields when dealing with other people.

The "and" after the dash shouldn't be there.

I disagree with the "even". Being socially focused is an advantage in some ways but a disadvantage in other ways. I'll leave the elaboration of this to you.

Also the term "socially focused" is kinda unclear. Do red pill people, who question social stuff, count as socially focused? They are a rather different category than true believers or people who just take social for granted as how the world works, practically as if social laws are like laws of physics.

Also you run into mines not minefields. Actually you can run into either, but the thing that's easy to observe on reality TV is people running into mines. When you see a fight, a mine was hit. Watching them run into minefields – get into hard areas where they have to try to do tricky, careful navigation – is harder to see (partly because they are basically always dealing with multiple minefields, it's too ever-present).

(These comments are incomplete. I recorded a video with more comments while I wrote this.

Elliot Temple
www.elliottemple.com

--

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 7, 2019 at 9:52:38 PM

On Apr 7, 2019, at 18:55 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Mar 21, 2019, at 10:33 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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I agree.

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> I think the sentence means: [focusing on stuff other than truth] is bad for truth-seeking.

Yes.

> That's a bit silly and overly obvious. And if something needs clarifying/explaining, this won't really help.

OK.

>> Communication is hard. Communicating worldviews is very hard. If you're trying to do it well, you can't make other stuff the priority. It doesn't work.
>
> "very hard" should be "harder".
>
> Both uses of "it" are bad.

Yes I agree.

> The first one comes after you introduce two things. It could mean "communication" or "communicating worldviews" (I'm guessing it means the second one).

Yes.

> The second "it" should be "that". Or, clearer, "That other-prioritizing".
>
>> Part of doing effective networking and politicking is trying to not alienate people. So in cases of disagreement, you have to hold back, not be as clear and direct as possible, and thus risk miscommunication more, in order to not alienate people. You have to put social graces above truth, above a reality-focus, above clarity. You have to act as if criticism is *not* a gift in dealing with other people. And in doing so, you harm your *own* reality focus. You will start to internalize methods of thinking that evade dealing with aspects of reality that, if you notice them and think about them, will cause strife in your social circle.
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> That last sentence is bad. Here's some analysis of how much it chains together modifiers, mostly with prepositional phrases (rather than single word adjectives).

Rewrite attempt:

You will start to internalize bad methods of thinking. These methods evade aspects of reality that would cause you social strife if you noticed them.

> People get triggered and off-put by all sorts of very unpredictable stuff. Criticism can cause someone to feel destabilized/overwhelmed unpredictably. And people are bad about communicating when this sort of thing is even happening. They might even just experience it as a sort of unease without being able to put a name to it or identify it very well. People's emotional reactions are a minefield and you don't know what's gonna set them off.
>
> Even people who are socially focused — and who color within the lines, who don't stick out, who are unoriginal thinkers, who don't have much to say — often run into minefields when dealing with other people.
>
> The "and" after the dash shouldn't be there.

indeed.

> I disagree with the "even". Being socially focused is an advantage in some ways but a

> disadvantage in other ways. I'll leave the elaboration of this to you.

If you care about social stuff and have some skill, you will pick up on certain social vibes that a socially unskilled or socially disinterested person would not. That will give you an advantage in some situations.

> Also the term "socially focused" is kinda unclear. Do red pill people, who question social stuff, count as socially focused? They are a rather different category than true believers or people who just take social for granted as how the world works, practically as if social laws are like laws of physics.

I agree that red pill ppl are in a different category and did not have them in mind when I discussed "socially focused." I tried to indicate some who I had in mind with the stuff in the dash.

> Also you run into mines not minefields. Actually you can run into either, but the thing that's easy to observe on reality TV is people running into mines. When you see a fight, a mine was hit. Watching them run into minefields – get into hard areas where they have to try to do tricky, careful navigation – is harder to see (partly because they are basically always dealing with multiple minefields, it's too ever-present).

I agree with the substance of your analysis regarding "the thing that's easy to observe on reality TV is people running into mines". "Minefield" is the word I am familiar with using in a figurative way to talk about a situation with lots of unseen problems/dangers, not "mines". I checked a couple of dictionaries to see if my usage was standard and it seems to check out. I'm unclear if you're aware of which word gets used figuratively and are criticizing the current use and proposing an alternative, or if you were not aware of which word gets used figuratively and were simply analyzing the best word to use from first principles. Please clarify ty.

see e.g. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/minefield

> fig.A minefield can also be a situation that contains a lot of hidden problems and dangers:

-JM

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 7, 2019 at 9:52:54 PM

On Apr 7, 2019, at 17:10 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Mar 21, 2019, at 10:02 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
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>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
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>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>>
>>> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
>>
>>
>> Many people dislike criticism. Criticism is sort of a package deal in people's minds, including some okay stuff and some bad stuff, but people hate criticism so much you have to put "constructive" before "criticism" to try to indicate "I mean the kind that's good, not the kind you hate." People think of criticism kind of like medicine that tastes shitty — sometimes you need to have some, but it's not something that's fun or pleasant. This contrasts notably with the idea of criticism being a gift. That's a *controversial* idea that many people reject.
>>
>> If you look up "criticism" in the dictionary you see examples of the sort of mixed/negative attitude I'm talking about:
>>
>> google:
>>
>>> • 1.
>>> the expression of disapproval of someone or something based on perceived faults or mistakes.
>>
>> people generally don't like expressions of disapproval.
>>
>> m-w.com:

> 1   a: the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
> [example]   seeking encouragement rather than criticism

note the contrast of "criticism" with a positive thing, "encouragement", in the example!

LT should be familiar with this popular attitude to criticism. I think she is. so i think ...

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

… is both substantively wrong and a lie, since LT should know about prevailing attitudes towards criticism but doesn't really address them.

I have some more written but I want to think about it more. I plan on continuing this post later.

I think the word "fundamentally" is meant to contrast with the (superficial) prevailing attitudes. I think it's trying to say people don't inherently, unchangeably hate criticism. She knows there are problems people have with it, but there are solutions, the problems aren't so fundamental as to be unfixable. Something kinda along those lines. Justin seems to have missed that entirely.

I concede that I missed this point about "fundamentally". I'm annoyed this happened.

I understand people's negative attitudes towards criticism to be more than superficial. I thought people's deeply negative attitudes towards criticism were a big part of why various things are broken in the world. I think I read LT's sentence here as trying to downplay how bad things are as far as people's attitude towards criticism.

I think I read it this way because the context was about engaging with people in certain social ways while being a CR person who likes critical debate. So in that context, what matters is not whether there is some theoretical way you can get around somebody's hatred of criticism, but whether it is very practical to expect you'll be able to.

I'm still a bit fuzzy on how I am reading the LT sentence. I think for now that I will concede that the sentence is literally true due to "fundamentally" (so i am changing my evaluation). I maintain that it is misleading for the reasons stated in the previous paragraph. I am of course open to revising that.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 8, 2019 at 12:18:35 AM

On Apr 7, 2019, at 6:52 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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I'm still a bit fuzzy on how I am reading the LT sentence. I think for now that I will concede that the sentence is literally true due to "fundamentally" (so i am changing my evaluation). I maintain that it is misleading for the reasons stated in the previous paragraph. I am of course open to revising that.

I wasn't agreeing with LT that the sentence is (literally) true. I think it's vague/ambiguous. I just thought your analysis didn't address the key issues.

A question I was thinking about, related to this issue, is does she mean you can handle people's anti-criticism aspects *at unlimited cost* or *cheaply enough to be worth it*?

Cuz maybe someone has 500 points of criticism dislike, and you can deal with this by putting in 5000 points of effort. Or by putting in 400 points of effort and also the person puts in 400 points of effort themselves. Or you both put in 3000 points of effort. There are lots of numerical scenarios where it's just not worth it and they are better off dealing with the discomfort of disliking the criticism. So a start to clarifying what she actually means would be for LT to say that she thinks you can always deal with someone's 500-point-cost anti-criticism for less than 500 points of cost on your end, and zero cost for the person you're telling the criticism to. Or for less than 500 total point cost between your end and the point costs they end up with even though they don't actually sign up to spend resources. Or you can always get them to sign up to spend points in cases where it's worth telling them, and and the total point cost between both of you can be kept under 500 (or under whatever the downside points attached to the criticism discomfort are).

I wonder how much criticism people could deal with if they were offered a billion dollar paycheck for dealing with it well. That's a way to get people to react more positively to criticism at a high cost that isn't generally worth it.

Or, in the alternative, she could deny the point model even applies. I think the point model is overly simplified and missing some aspects of reality. So in that case, she could either say what things are missing from the model and give an approximate answer with the model, or could provide a better model to clarify her meaning.

A problem with all this clarifying is I don't believe she actually had a clear meaning in her mind when she wrote it. You can't actually clarify an idea you never had.

Elliot Temple
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From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 8, 2019 at 12:46:54 AM

On Apr 7, 2019, at 6:52 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

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>>>>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
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>>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>>>
>>>> so far i have analyzed the following LT text:
>>>>
>>>>> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>>>>>
>>>>> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>>>>>
>>>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>>>
>>>> btw, for the above part, here is a more honest rewrite, with the idea of communicating LT's actual position:
>>>>
>>>>> I completely disagree.

> Birner thinks that CR is incompatible with social networking and politicking. But I think those things pose no problem for CR and are totally fine.

this time i'll analyze just this part 🤔🔍:

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours, but I don't think that's true:
>
> there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting; it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
>
> (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc. It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

I'll continue my close reading of LT stuff later but I wrote this substantive criticism of what LT has said so far as I've been doing my close reading (like, literally wrote it in bits and pieces commenting on different parts, and then pasted them together and them edited a bit).

My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that it is focusing on stuff other than truth. That's bad for truth-seeking.

The first sentence of this paragraph means the following:

> My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that [social networking and academic politicking] are focusing on stuff other than truth.

All I did is substitute in what "it" refers to and change "is" to "are" (the word "it" should have been "they" because it refers to two things). Notice how wordy it is!

How can this sentence be improved? Delete "My main criticism of social networking and academic politicking is that". That whole introduction is unnecessary.

I agree.

On a related note, the antecedent of the "that" in the second sentence isn't clear enough.

I think the sentence means: [focusing on stuff other than truth] is bad for truth-seeking.

Yes.

That's a bit silly and overly obvious. And if something needs clarifying/explaining, this won't really help.

OK.

Communication is hard. Communicating worldviews is very hard. If you're trying to do it well, you can't make other stuff the priority. It doesn't work.

"very hard" should be "harder".

Both uses of "it" are bad.

Yes I agree.

The first one comes after you introduce two things. It could mean "communication" or "communicating worldviews" (I'm guessing it means the second one).

Yes.

The second "it" should be "that". Or, clearer, "That other-prioritizing".

Part of doing effective networking and politicking is trying to not alienate people. So in cases of disagreement, you have to hold back, not be as clear and direct as possible, and thus risk miscommunication more, in order to not alienate people. You have to put social graces above truth, above a reality-focus, above clarity. You have to act as if criticism is *not* a gift in dealing with other people. And in doing so, you harm your *own* reality focus. You will start to internalize methods of thinking that evade dealing with aspects of reality that, if you notice them and think about them, will cause strife in your social circle.

That last sentence is bad. Here's some analysis of how much it chains together

modifiers, mostly with prepositional phrases (rather than single word adjectives).

You will start TO internalize

TO internalize what? methods

what type of methods? 1) OF thinking. 2) THAT evade

what type of evading? dealing

what type of dealing? WITH aspects

what type of aspects? 1) OF reality 2) THAT will cause strife

cause strife where? IN your social circle

And this analysis doesn't even include the comma phrase.

Rewrite attempt:

You will start to internalize bad methods of thinking. These methods evade aspects of reality that would cause you social strife if you noticed them.

> People get triggered and off-put by all sorts of very unpredictable stuff. Criticism can cause someone to feel destabilized/overwhelmed unpredictably. And people are bad about communicating when this sort of thing is even happening. They might even just experience it as a sort of unease without being able to put a name to it or identify it very well. People's emotional reactions are a minefield and you don't know what's gonna set them off.
>
> Even people who are socially focused — and who color within the lines, who don't stick out, who are unoriginal thinkers, who don't have much to say — often run into minefields when dealing with other people.

The "and" after the dash shouldn't be there.

indeed.

> I disagree with the "even". Being socially focused is an advantage in some ways but a disadvantage in other ways. I'll leave the elaboration of this to you.

If you care about social stuff and have some skill, you will pick up on certain social vibes that a socially unskilled or socially disinterested person would not. That will give you an advantage in some situations.

> Also the term "socially focused" is kinda unclear. Do red pill people, who question social stuff, count as socially focused? They are a rather different category than true believers or people who just take social for granted as how the world works, practically as if social laws are like laws of physics.

I agree that red pill ppl are in a different category and did not have them in mind when I discussed "socially focused." I tried to indicate some who I had in mind with the stuff in the dash.

Being socially focused is a disadvantage in some ways because accepting nonsense at face value can get in the way of understanding how it actually works. A more "cynical" person has some advantages and some disadvantages vs. someone who accepts social stuff more.

> Also you run into mines not minefields. Actually you can run into either, but the thing that's easy to observe on reality TV is people running into mines. When you see a fight, a mine was hit. Watching them run into minefields – get into hard areas where they have to try to do tricky, careful navigation – is harder to see (partly because they are basically always dealing with multiple minefields, it's too ever-present).

I agree with the substance of your analysis regarding "the thing that's easy to observe on reality TV is people running into mines". "Minefield" is the word I am familiar with using in a figurative way to talk about a situation with lots of unseen problems/dangers, not "mines". I checked a couple of dictionaries to see if my usage was standard and it seems to check out. I'm unclear if you're aware of which word gets used figuratively and are criticizing the current use and proposing an alternative, or if you were not aware of which word gets used figuratively and were simply analyzing the best word to use from first principles. Please clarify ty.

see e.g. https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/minefield

> fig.A minefield can also be a situation that contains a lot of hidden problems and dangers:

If you are *within* the minefield analogy, it doesn't make sense to say you hit a minefield within a minefield. You should instead say you hit a mine. You said people's emotional reactions are minefields then said "often run into minefields" which I took to refer to running into emotional reactions (specific mines), not into other minefields (e.g. superstitions or Islamic reactions).

Also it makes more sense to say you see people hitting mines on TV, as I explained, but that is not a comment on typical usage.

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From: anonymous FI <anonymousfallibleideas@gmail.com>
To: Justin Mallone justinceo@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Cc: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 8, 2019 at 1:50:30 AM

On Apr 4, 2019, at 3:27 PM, Justin Mallone justinceo@gmail.com [fallible-ideas] <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com> wrote:

> On Apr 4, 2019, at 5:35:22 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
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>>>>
>>>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>>
>>> Gonna try analyzing this again some. I'm gonna analyze the Birner quote in this post some — in a more gist-y kinda way, not parsing each word — cuz I found it necessary to do so in order to meaningfully talk about some of the stuff Lulie says. But most of my attention will be on Lulie stuff. I'm planning on trying replying repeatedly to different parts in chunks rather than replying to the whole thing at once.
>>>
>>>> Danny Frederick:
>>>>
>>>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>>>>
>>>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic

> politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…

Birner thinks there's some tension or contradiction or something between believing in the force of critical argument and being a social networker and academic politicker. He frames this in terms of what he regards as a realistic assumption that critical argument fans are "less prone" to devote resources to networking and politicking. He also thinks that if you don't do these things, your intellectual offspring won't survive (or maybe are less likely to survive, or something like that).

One thing I found interesting is that he's avoiding calling politicking *bad*. He thinks there's some tension or contradiction between liking critical argument and trying to win a social competition, but he doesn't say *why* that is the case. He doesn't say anything like "Debates on issues should be decided according to critical discussion. Academia has perverse incentives in that it rewards people according to social networking skills as opposed to the ability of those people to generate scholarship that can stand up to criticism and move the field forward. Thus, academia is immoral." He doesn't even come close to this, presumably because he doesn't agree. He's identified a problem but is fuzzy about the cause and the solution.

Another thing is that Birner seems to doubt that arguments can survive on their own merits. He thinks you *need* to play the social academia game in order to have your ideas survive. "Intellectual offspring" is kinda vague as a term but given that he's talking about needing to politick etc I read it as meaning your ideas *as embodied in particular people's minds*, in particular like graduate students/PhDs who you have some kind of relationship with. So a book with your ideas which anyone could read and which could persuade some people doesn't count as your intellectual offspring surviving.

(Side comment: I'd guess that Rand's books have convinced more people of at least some tiny part of Oism — some idea — way more than any CR books, including Popper's own books, have convinced people of some tiny part of CR. If most CR people largely focus on academic stuff and basically never try to do stuff that's more popular, that's bad and strange. There is a faulty assumption in focusing on producing stuff for academic audience — like you'd do that if you thought academic audiences were especially good or worthy of attention, even though the man on the street is actually typically better.)

so so far we've got that:

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring

> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

So initially he's saying that there was a tradition of critical rationalism for a couple of generations, but stuff changed, science became more "professional" and scientists became less interested in philosophy.

where he says

> while the contents of rationalism continue to select against the type of characteristics that make it possible for individuals adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions.

I am not sure exactly what this means. I think it's related to this idea that there's something about CR having some tension with social and politicking stuff, cuz he's framing it as CR "continu[ing] to select", but bringing up "different traditions" seems like a new point.

some guesses as to what "different traditions" might refer to:

1. the academic/politicking stuff itself
2. the new culture of professionalized science
3. various new ideas that are popular in the academic environment today

4. some combination of the above

regardless of that ambiguity, overall the point of this part seems to be that CR people aren't fitting in to the new situation and CR might die out if it doesn't adapt.

and zooming out, we've got something like

1. Birner thinks CR people are less prone to want to do networking and politicking stuff
2. Birner thinks this harms the survival of CR people's intellectual offspring
3. Birner thinks there's been changes in the scientific field which CR people haven't adapted to
4. Birner thinks CR might die out as a result

Ok so now to the beginning of L's stuff:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.
>
> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.
>
> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

I'm just gonna do this part for this post.

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post

So, what's the "spirit" of the Birner post?

"Spirit" is worse than useless as a term here. It seems kind of like an anti-concept:

http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/anti-concepts.html

> An anti-concept is an unnecessary and rationally unusable term designed to replace and obliterate some legitimate concept. The use of anti-concepts gives the listeners a sense of approximate understanding. But in the realm of cognition, nothing is as bad as the approximate

here are variations on the sentence that I think would have involved LT sticking her neck out more than "spirit":

While I sympathise with the main point of this post

While I sympathise with the main thrust of this post

While I sympathise with the thought behind this post

While I sympathise with the main argument in this post

While I sympathise with the general idea of this post

There are many such wordings!

And even these aren't great btw — LT should have said more about what she actually supposedly agreed with. But they're less evasive than "spirit."

So I think "spirit" was chosen deliberately to obfuscate, confuse, muddle up the discussion, muddy the waters.

Did you look up "spirit"? It doesn't mean the alternatives you said. And it does mean something!

I forget if I looked up "spirit" at the time I wrote the post. I think maybe I didn't.

Just did now. The definition that fits is "the real meaning or the intention behind something as opposed to its strict verbal interpretation."

I agree it's vague. She doesn't say what she thinks the spirit is. But that isn't the fault of the word "spirit".

I think I had in mind that LT picked "spirit" cuz "spirit" is a word that lends itself more to sounding like you've said something when you haven't. Whereas if she said something like "main thrust", it'd be more obvious to most people that she hadn't named the main thrust. So I put a lot of blame on the word "spirit" here, rather than LT's vagueness about her conception of "spirit". But I managed to talk about LT's vagueness and what "spirit" could mean later in the post, which is interesting. I didn't realize the contradiction between blaming the word and blaming the lack of LT specifying what she meant by the word. Hmmph.

Saying you agree with the spirit of something is kinda cliche. It's common because it could be legitimate, correct, reasonable. LT is intentionally saying something people are used to hearing and it making sense, but in a way that's bad. It gets people off guard, they gloss it over more. If she said something wrong+unusual, they'd be giving it more conscious attention (cuz unusual) which would help them catch it being wrong.

From: Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 8, 2019 at 6:51:59 AM

On Apr 8, 2019, at 12:18:35 AM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Apr 7, 2019, at 6:52 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Apr 7, 2019, at 17:10 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>
>>> On Mar 21, 2019, at 10:02 AM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:
>>>
>>>> On Sep 27, 2017, at 1:34:33 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>>>>
>>>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>>>
>>>>
>>>>
>>>>> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.
>>>>
>>>>
>>>> Many people dislike criticism. Criticism is sort of a package deal in people's minds, including some okay stuff and some bad stuff, but people hate criticism so much you have to put "constructive" before "criticism" to try to indicate "I mean the kind that's good, not the kind you hate." People think of criticism kind of like medicine that tastes shitty — sometimes you need to have some, but it's not something that's fun or pleasant. This contrasts notably with the idea of criticism being a gift. That's a *controversial* idea that many people reject.
>>>>
>>>> If you look up "criticism" in the dictionary you see examples of the sort of mixed/negative attitude I'm talking about:
>>>>
>>>> google:
>>>>
>>>>> • 1.
>>>>> the expression of disapproval of someone or something based on perceived faults or mistakes.

people generally don't like expressions of disapproval.

m-w.com:

> 1   a: the act of criticizing usually unfavorably
> [example]   seeking encouragement rather than criticism

note the contrast of "criticism" with a positive thing, "encouragement", in the example!

LT should be familiar with this popular attitude to criticism. I think she is. so i think ...

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism.

… is both substantively wrong and a lie, since LT should know about prevailing attitudes towards criticism but doesn't really address them.

I have some more written but I want to think about it more. I plan on continuing this post later.

I think the word "fundamentally" is meant to contrast with the (superficial) prevailing attitudes. I think it's trying to say people don't inherently, unchangeably hate criticism. She knows there are problems people have with it, but there are solutions, the problems aren't so fundamental as to be unfixable. Something kinda along those lines. Justin seems to have missed that entirely.

I concede that I missed this point about "fundamentally". I'm annoyed this happened.

I understand people's negative attitudes towards criticism to be more than superficial. I thought people's deeply negative attitudes towards criticism were a big part of why various things are broken in the world. I think I read LT's sentence here as trying to downplay how bad things are as far as people's attitude towards criticism.

I think I read it this way because the context was about engaging with people in certain social ways while being a CR person who likes critical debate. So in that context, what matters is not whether there is some theoretical way you can get around somebody's hatred of criticism, but whether it is very practical to expect you'll be able to.

I'm still a bit fuzzy on how I am reading the LT sentence. I think for now that I will

> concede that the sentence is literally true due to "fundamentally" (so i am changing my evaluation). I maintain that it is misleading for the reasons stated in the previous paragraph. I am of course open to revising that.

> I wasn't agreeing with LT that the sentence is (literally) true. I think it's vague/ambiguous. I just thought your analysis didn't address the key issues.

Ah ok. I'm not sure I actually grasp what you think the key issues are in what LT said.

Based on what you say below, I'm wondering if something like this is true: effective critical debate requires criticism to be low-cost. A culture where you're trying to stay in the good graces of people through social means is incompatible with criticism being low cost.

For example, if you want support for your graduate students' research, maybe you don't want to piss off the people on the committee that approves some grant you want by offering crit of their research. This situation increases the cost of your offering crit. Maybe you could figure out how to offer your crit in a way that wouldn't piss them off but has some greater risk of being misunderstood than being blunt. Or maybe you could find a way around all their anti-critical ideas at a great cost to yourself in writing and thinking time. But this whole situation makes critical debate much more costly.

> A question I was thinking about, related to this issue, is does she mean you can handle people's anti-criticism aspects *at unlimited cost* or *cheaply enough to be worth it*?

> Cuz maybe someone has 500 points of criticism dislike, and you can deal with this by putting in 5000 points of effort. Or by putting in 400 points of effort and also the person puts in 400 points of effort themselves. Or you both put in 3000 points of effort. There are lots of numerical scenarios where it's just not worth it and they are better off dealing with the discomfort of disliking the criticism.

I'm not sure I understand what you mean by "dealing with the discomfort of disliking the criticism". Do you mean addressing the dislike more directly, rather than try to find some way around the dislike while still getting some point across?

> So a start to clarifying what she actually means would be for LT to say that she thinks you can always deal with someone's 500-point-cost anti-criticism for less than 500 points of cost on your end, and zero cost for the person you're telling the criticism to. Or for less than 500 total point cost between your end and the point costs they end up with even though they don't actually sign up to spend resources. Or you can always get them to sign up to spend points in cases where it's worth telling them, and and the total point cost between both of you can be kept under 500 (or under whatever the

> downside points attached to the criticism discomfort are).
>
> I wonder how much criticism people could deal with if they were offered a billion dollar paycheck for dealing with it well. That's a way to get people to react more positively to criticism at a high cost that isn't generally worth it.

Right. It would be impractical to pay everyone a ton.

> Or, in the alternative, she could deny the point model even applies. I think the point model is overly simplified and missing some aspects of reality. So in that case, she could either say what things are missing from the model and give an approximate answer with the model, or could provide a better model to clarify her meaning.
>
> A problem with all this clarifying is I don't believe she actually had a clear meaning in her mind when she wrote it. You can't actually clarify an idea you never had.

Right.

-JM

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 17, 2019 at 5:11:18 PM

On Mar 31, 2019, at 12:21 PM, Justin Mallone <justinceo@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Sep 27, 2017, at 13:34 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>
>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can you find any? Lots?
>>
>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.
>>
>> Lulie Tanett:

>> > how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism, and so on. It's very fertile ground for the next generation.
>
> FI bros, I am confused here, help me out: what's the "It's" referring to in the last sentence here?

From the dictionary, "it" means:

> 6 the situation or circumstances; things in general: no one can stay here—it's too dangerous now | he would like to see you right away if it's convenient.

Elliot Temple
www.curi.us

From: Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum <petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FI <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 24, 2019 at 3:14:34 PM

On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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>
>
> Danny Frederick:

>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
>>
>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
>>
>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having

> access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

If Lulie disagrees, in what sense does she "sympathise" with its "spirit"? This is a socially-savvy/politicking way (i.e., an indirect and dishonest way) for Lulie to imply that the Birner excerpt is pessimistic and to indicate that she disagrees with it.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

No, there isn't such a "premise". There's an *explicit assumption* that people who believe in the force of critical argument are less prone than average to devote resources to social networking and politicking. That's different than saying that critical rationalism is incompatible with certain actions.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Being interested in certain activities is not the same as *devoting resources to engaging* in those activities, which is what the Birner excerpt was about. For example, one could learn about how picking up girls works without actually picking up any girls. Or one could study what Hitler did without trying to exterminate Jews.

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,

No, the Birner excerpt doesn't assume this.

> but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

Being "off-putting" is not an objective attribute of communication. Some people, in some circumstances, depending in part on their choices, react in certain ways to certain things.

Suppose we want to explain something to a person in a way that they like. That isn't a soluble problem in every situation. We can get better and better at it, but there are no guarantees: you can't force a mind.

> it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.

A typical person hosts multiple static memes. Static memes cannot replicate in an environment of critical thought. A common part of the replication strategy of static memes is getting the person to dislike criticism.

> It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

It's possible for people to have a critical discussion *to the extent that they are enacting dynamic, rather than static, memes*. The process and outcome depends on the choices made by all participants in the discussion.

> Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

No, the Birner excerpt doesn't assume that.

> Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

Who cares if Ray Scott Percival agrees?

> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

No. The Birner excerpt just says that the survival of critical rationalism is "endangered" by trends in in academia.

> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos,

> forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

Sure. This starts with the word "But", but it doesn't contradict the Birner excerpt. It contradicts one of Lulie's lies about the Birner excerpt.

> You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

I think a lot of academics won't engage with non-academic critic (though maybe they will if the critic is famous enough).

> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

Social networking and politicking are not merely "unpleasant ... tedium". They involve lying (e.g., "white lies", see http:/rationalessays.com/lying). Having a lifestyle that involves lying is bad for you and for others.

> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

No. The Birner excerpt doesn't refer to or rely on the idea of personality types. Also, the characterization of people who routinely lie as being "the exuberant promoter/social type" is a lie.

> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

The final sentence is:

> If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct.

That is making a specific point about how an "entrenched" tradition (i.e. a tradition for which people have no viable alternatives) is subject to extinction if the environment changes. What does that have to do with not taking the "clash of ideas" seriously?

Back to Lulie:

> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

"Why not lie to spread the truth?" - Lulie, probably.

> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

It's unclear what Lulie means by "diverse" intellectual backgrounds. It looks like a word that was inserted in order to appeal to some readers.

Also, I'm skeptical of how "regularly" the people with "diverse intellectual backgrounds" are getting interested in critical rationalism. What evidence is there for this?

And what high-quality material on critical rationalism has Deutsch written lately?

> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,

I'm skeptical that there is a lot of craving (i.e. feeling a strong desire) for critical rationalism in the "rationalist/skeptic community".

> a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy,

I take it Lulie is referring to a group of people who are dissatisfied with traditional academic philosophy. I'm skeptical that there are "a lot" of people like this who are craving critical rationalism.

> people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it,

If those people seek justification, they won't find it in critical rationalism.

> how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism,

People who don't know how to make sense of "tyranny" and "liberalism" crave critical rationalism? I don't see why that should be the case.

> and so on.

It's unclear how the series should continue, so saying "and so on" is dishonest.

> It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

Judging by how few people take critical rationalism seriously, today's society is hardly "very fertile ground" for it.

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 24, 2019 at 4:36:37 PM

On Apr 24, 2019, at 12:14 PM, Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum
<petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
>
>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
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>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?
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>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her intellectual offspring can survive…
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>>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment,

> the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

If Lulie disagrees, in what sense does she "sympathise" with its "spirit"? This is a socially-savvy/politicking way (i.e., an indirect and dishonest way) for Lulie to imply that the Birner excerpt is pessimistic and to indicate that she disagrees with it.

Is it savvy? I thought it was pretty blatant, transparent, obvious. But I have a hard time judging how transparent social stuff is to others.

> There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

No, there isn't such a "premise". There's an *explicit assumption* that people who believe in the force of critical argument are less prone than average to devote resources to social networking and politicking. That's different than saying that critical rationalism is incompatible with certain actions.

Yeah! He suggested there was an underlying cause, A, which contributes to both B and C. LT ignored or missed this. That was her choice – she decided not to put much effort into analyzing what Birner said.

A = pro-criticism personality

which contributes to both:

B = critical rationalist
C = not social networker

this is different than saying B causes C.

I think this is something Alisa was getting at, though it's not totally clear.

> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

Being interested in certain activities is not the same as *devoting resources to engaging* in those activities, which is what the Birner excerpt was about. For example, one could learn about how picking up girls works without actually picking up any girls. Or one could study what Hitler did without trying to exterminate Jews.

yes

as with the previous point, LT is not so stupid, incompetent, illogical, unskilled, etc, that she couldn't know this or figure this out. there is an element of *not trying* to get stuff like this right.

it's easier to do social manipulations if you focus on them and don't constrain what you say by requiring it to be very connected to the facts. this is similar

> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,

No, the Birner excerpt doesn't assume this.

If you think she means *any critical debate at all*, then he doesn't assume it.

But I think part of what Birner thinks is that the social stuff is incompatible with as much critical debate as pro-criticism CR ppl want and think is valuable. So they aren't satisfied with the rather limited amount of critical debate that typical social-networking-oriented non-CR academics do.

> > but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

> Being "off-putting" is not an objective attribute of communication. Some people, in some circumstances, depending in part on their choices, react in certain ways to certain things.

I think LT means: not off-putting to the person(s) you're speaking to, right now, in the current circumstances.

It's true they have free will about how to react, but I still think one can meaningfully talk about e.g. what statements would and wouldn't be offensive to Joe (right now). Some reactions are pretty predictable (and some aren't).

> Suppose we want to explain something to a person in a way that they like. That isn't a soluble problem in every situation. We can get better and better at it, but there are no guarantees: you can't force a mind.

If you're speaking to only one person at a time, and you're omniscient, I think it can be done.

It can be done more practically if people have some tolerance, a bit of a "thick skin". That gives you enough leeway to not perfectly optimize everything for every listener. It means people will say if they don't like something, without jumping to negative emotions before you get a chance to clarify a misunderstanding or address a problem.

What LT means is not clear.

> > it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.

> A typical person hosts multiple static memes. Static memes cannot replicate in an environment of critical thought. A common part of the replication strategy of static memes is getting the person to dislike criticism.

i agree, but did you know that you didn't directly connect this comment to the text you're commenting on?

> > It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)

> It's possible for people to have a critical discussion *to the extent that they are enacting dynamic, rather than static, memes*. The process and outcome depends on the choices made by all participants in the discussion.

Even if they are enacting dynamic memes, their capacity for correcting their errors is a finite resource, and one can only have critical discussion with them to the extent that there is available resource (which relates both to the current max capacity as well as how much is already being used for other tasks).

> > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.

> No, the Birner excerpt doesn't assume that.

> > Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.

> Who cares if Ray Scott Percival agrees?

Status oriented people who hate criticism.

He did write a book with a highly relevant theme, FYI. It's called the myth of the closed mind and claims it's a myth that ppl have closed minds. It's pretty ridiculous and doesn't do a reasonable job of addressing the common sense, well known dissent and counter examples to his claim. And i had a discussion with RSP and found he had a closed mind, thus counter-exampling his book.

I wrote 6 blog posts about the book: http://curi.us/archives/list_category/69

I've also forwarded some of that discussion to FI just now.

> > Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

> No. The Birner excerpt just says that the survival of critical rationalism is "endangered" by trends in in academia.

This reply isn't very clear. Do you mean that LT's "only way" text is exaggerated?

> > But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

> Sure. This starts with the word "But", but it doesn't contradict the Birner excerpt. It contradicts one of Lulie's lies about the Birner excerpt.

The reference "one of Lulie's lies" is bad. You should reference stuff more clearly. Which one? Why/how does it contradict?

This is part of my general theme that unclear references are a major source of unclear communication.

> > You don't need to be an academic to engage with academia, either.

> I think a lot of academics won't engage with non-academic critic (though maybe they will if the critic is famous enough).

They largely won't engage with academic critics, either.

> > Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

> Social networking and politicking are not merely "unpleasant ... tedium". They involve lying (e.g., "white lies", see http:/rationalessays.com/lying). Having a lifestyle that involves lying is bad for you and for others.

ya wtf is LT talking about by lying that the issue is *tedium*? (the word "tedium" was not used previously btw. was a synonym used or a phrase that means it? i just skimmed the Birner quote and don't see that.)

> > The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

> No. The Birner excerpt doesn't refer to or rely on the idea of personality types. Also, the characterization of people who routinely lie as being "the exuberant promoter/social type" is a lie.

LT was not trying to characterize people who routinely lie. That they lie is *your* interpretation of them being social in some ways.

> > (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

> The final sentence is:

> > If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct.

> That is making a specific point about how an "entrenched" tradition (i.e. a tradition for which people have no viable alternatives)

That is not what "entrenched" means. idk where you're getting that. Entrenched means hard to change. That is both the DD/TCS/FI community meaning dating back many years and also the dictionary meaning:

> 1 [with object] establish (an attitude, habit, or belief) so firmly that change is very difficult or unlikely: ageism is entrenched in our society.

btw, static memes are especially hard to change b/c they can actively resist change and use intelligence to do that. in trench warfare, a trench itself doesn't actively resist change, only passively, but a trench with soldiers, as a whole, actively resists change.

> is subject to extinction if the environment changes. What does that have to do with not taking the "clash of ideas" seriously?

how dumb does she think her readers are that she can just bullshit like this? are they that dumb?

> Back to Lulie:

> > But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

> "Why not lie to spread the truth?" - Lulie, probably.

"It's not lying if it helps people feel good about ideas, because people should feel good about ideas, that is true." – LT, probably

"It's not lying if it helps people accept true ideas, because those ideas are true, not lies." – LT, probably

> > New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).
>
> It's unclear what Lulie means by "diverse" intellectual backgrounds. It looks like a word that was inserted in order to appeal to some readers.

it's not just impolite ppl or anti-social ppl!!!

> Also, I'm skeptical of how "regularly" the people with "diverse intellectual backgrounds" are getting interested in critical rationalism. What evidence is there for this?

example criterion: if they follow LT or DD on twitter and never say a word, that proves they are interested.

> And what high-quality material on critical rationalism has Deutsch written lately?

he blocked me on Twitter rather than discuss CR:

https://curi.us/2102-accepting-vs-preferring-theories--reply-to-david-deutsch

> > And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,
>
> I'm skeptical that there is a lot of craving (i.e. feeling a strong desire) for critical rationalism in the "rationalist/skeptic community".

that has been tested with e.g. my 2 major visits to Less Wrong. also e.g. by contacting Yudkowsky years ago, by contacting MIRI (and getting a few replies from an awful guy), and by having a very brief discussion with Robin Hanson recently.

> > a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy,

> I take it Lulie is referring to a group of people who are dissatisfied with traditional academic philosophy. I'm skeptical that there are "a lot" of people like this who are craving critical rationalism.

> > people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it,

> If those people seek justification, they won't find it in critical rationalism.

> > how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism,

> People who don't know how to make sense of "tyranny" and "liberalism" crave critical rationalism? I don't see why that should be the case.

> > and so on.

> It's unclear how the series should continue, so saying "and so on" is dishonest.

just think of any examples you can that show she's right. whatever examples you would agree with, those are the ones she means.

then proceed to view her as super clever for meaning the clever ideas that you thought only you knew.

getting ppl to fill in blanks with their own ideas, then pretending their ideas are what you meant, is a sneaky, dishonest way of pandering to people.

> > It's very fertile ground for the next generation.

> Judging by how few people take critical rationalism seriously, today's society is hardly "very fertile ground" for it.

you haven't given evidence regarding your claim that they are few CR-interested ppl, either.

Elliot Temple
www.fallibleideas.com

--

From: Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum <petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 24, 2019 at 7:04:43 PM

On Wed, Apr 24, 2019 at 01:36:37PM -0700, Elliot Temple wrote:

> On Apr 24, 2019, at 12:14 PM, Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum
> <petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/1015571104066990
>> 4/?
>> comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R
>> %22%7D

>> Lulie's comment (linked and copied below) has around one lie per sentence. Can
>> you find any? Lots?

>> It's designed to be socially calibrated and fool people. It's a good chance to hone
>> critical thinking skills and try to analyze text. If you can learn to see the lies here
>> instead of be duped, it would help you with reading other material correctly.

>> Danny Frederick:

>>> INDIVIDUALISTS AND THE MOB: CAN CRITICAL RATIONALISM SURVIVE?

>>> "By its very nature, critical rationalism attracts philosophers who believe in the
>>> force of critical argument. Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of
>>> personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the
>>> average academic to devote resources to the social networking and academic
>>> politicking that are needed to create an environment in which his or her
>>> intellectual offspring can survive…

>>> "Until recently not only philosophers but some (outstanding) practising scientists
>>> (who are more likely to cultivate the social conditions that are necessary to carry
>>> on with their work), too, supported critical rationalism. This allowed critical
>>> rationalism to become a tradition for at least a couple of generations. In the
>>> mean time, however, the number of scientific disciplines, journals and scientists
>>> has increased. The professionalization of science has gone hand in hand with a

> drop in interest in philosophy on the part of scientists. The academic environment has changed and selection pressures have increased greatly. In this new environment, the support of scientists is lacking while the contents of critical rationalism continue to select against the type of personal characteristics that make it possible for individuals to adopt or have access to at least elements of different traditions. The situation of carriers of the tradition of critical rationalism being incapable of adopting or having access to alternative traditions is tantamount to the non-existence of alternative traditions. If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct."
>
> Jack Birner, 'From Group Selection to Ecological Niches,' in 'Rethinking Popper,' ed. Zuzana Parusnikova.

Source:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/226027989_From_Group_Selection_to_Ecological_Niches

Lulie Tanett:

> While I sympathise with the spirit of this post, I am far more optimistic.

If Lulie disagrees, in what sense does she "sympathise" with its "spirit"? This is a socially-savvy/politicking way (i.e., an indirect and dishonest way) for Lulie to imply that the Birner excerpt is pessimistic and to indicate that she disagrees with it.

Is it savvy? I thought it was pretty blatant, transparent, obvious. But I have a hard time judging how transparent social stuff is to others.

Good point. Google's dictionary says:

> savvy: "shrewd and knowledgeable; having common sense and good judgment."

What Lulie said there may not be socially savvy. A more accurate term for it would be socially oriented.

> > There's a premise here that critical rationalism is incompatible with social networking and politicking.

No, there isn't such a "premise". There's an *explicit assumption* that people who

> believe in the force of critical argument are less prone than average to devote resources to social networking and politicking. That's different than saying that critical rationalism is incompatible with certain actions.

> Yeah! He suggested there was an underlying cause, A, which contributes to both B and C. LT ignored or missed this. That was her choice – she decided not to put much effort into analyzing what Birner said.

> A = pro-criticism personality

> which contributes to both:

> B = critical rationalist
> C = not social networker

> this is different than saying B causes C.

> I think this is something Alisa was getting at, though it's not totally clear.

No, I missed that flaw.

Here's what I was getting at. Birner wrote:

> > > > Let us assume (realistically, I think) that the type of personality with a firm belief in the power of criticism is less prone than the average academic to devote resources to [...] social networking and academic politicking...

In the abstract, this says that certain people are less prone than others to do certain things. This doesn't mean that whatever those people have in common is incompatible with doing those things (which is what I read Lulie as saying). For example, the idea that women are less likely than men to be programmers doesn't mean that being a woman is *incompatible* with being a programmer.

> > But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?

> *Being interested* in certain activities is not the same as *devoting resources to engaging* in those activities, which is what the Birner excerpt was about. For example, one could learn about how picking up girls works without actually picking up any girls. Or one could study what Hitler did without trying to exterminate Jews.

> yes

> as with the previous point, LT is not so stupid, incompetent, illogical, unskilled, etc, that she couldn't know this or figure this out. there is an element of *not trying* to get stuff like this right.

Yes.

> it's easier to do social manipulations if you focus on them and don't constrain what you say by requiring it to be very connected to the facts. this is similar

>> Maybe the assumption is that critical debate isn't compatible with these social endeavours,

> No, the Birner excerpt doesn't assume this.

> If you think she means *any critical debate at all*, then he doesn't assume it.

Yeah. Being *incompatible* is a strong statement, and Birner doesn't go that far.

> But I think part of what Birner thinks is that the social stuff is incompatible with as much critical debate as pro-criticism CR ppl want and think is valuable. So they aren't satisfied with the rather limited amount of critical debate that typical social-networking-oriented non-CR academics do.

I agree.

>> but I don't think that's true: there's always a way of explaining an idea that isn't off-putting;

> Being "off-putting" is not an objective attribute of communication. Some people, in some circumstances, depending in part on their choices, react in certain ways to certain things.

> I think LT means: not off-putting to the person(s) you're speaking to, right now, in the current circumstances.

Ok.

> It's true they have free will about how to react, but I still think one can meaningfully talk about e.g. what statements would and wouldn't be offensive to Joe (right now). Some

> reactions are pretty predictable (and some aren't).

Yes.

> > Suppose we want to explain something to a person in a way that they like. That isn't a soluble problem in every situation. We can get better and better at it, but there are no guarantees: you can't force a mind.
>
> > If you're speaking to only one person at a time, and you're omniscient, I think it can be done.

The consequences of being omniscient aren't clear to me.

Here's what I was thinking: whether someone likes something depends in part on the choices they make once they become aware of it. These choices include how to react and whether to think carefully about what they're reacting to. Making these choices can involve creating knowledge. In general, we can't predict the growth of knowledge. So we can't predict for sure how someone will react to something.

To the extent that someone is a puppet of static memes AND we know how those particular memes work, we can try find a way of saying something that gets past those memes' defense mechanisms. But if I understand correctly, in order to for us to communicate successfully with a person, that person has to make choices that allow the communication to happen. And you can't know for sure that they will make those choices.

> It can be done more practically if people have some tolerance, a bit of a "thick skin". That gives you enough leeway to not perfectly optimize everything for every listener. It means people will say if they don't like something, without jumping to negative emotions before you get a chance to clarify a misunderstanding or address a problem.

Definitely.

> What LT means is not clear.

> > > it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism. (What they dislike is something more like: being trapped; being called bad; having problems that destabilise/overwhelm; etc.

> > A typical person hosts multiple static memes. Static memes cannot replicate in an environment of critical thought. A common part of the replication strategy of static

> > memes is getting the person to dislike criticism.
>
> i agree, but did you know that you didn't directly connect this comment to the text you're commenting on?

Oh, right. Lulie wrote this:

"it's not fundamentally the case that people dislike criticism."

I meant to say something about the word "fundamentally". Basically, I don't know what she meant by that.What I ended up doing was replying to the sentence without that word. I was trying to show that, contrary to Lulie, people typically dislike criticism.

> > > It's possible to avoid all these problems and still have a critical discussion.)
> >
> > It's possible for people to have a critical discussion *to the extent that they are enacting dynamic, rather than static, memes*. The process and outcome depends on the choices made by all participants in the discussion.
>
> Even if they are enacting dynamic memes, their capacity for correcting their errors is a finite resource, and one can only have critical discussion with them to the extent that there is available resource (which relates both to the current max capacity as well as how much is already being used for other tasks).

Good point. One example is that someone could be doing something like playing a video game that takes lots of concentration. In that case, they wouldn't have the mental resources left over for a conversation.

> > > Or maybe the assumption is that people are not persuaded by argument, and instead you have to appeal to social status or bureaucracy.
> >
> > No, the Birner excerpt doesn't assume that.
> >
> > > Ray Scott Percival may agree with me here that this isn't true either.
> >
> > Who cares if Ray Scott Percival agrees?
>
> Status oriented people who hate criticism.
>
> He did write a book with a highly relevant theme, FYI. It's called the myth of the closed mind and claims it's a myth that ppl have closed minds. It's pretty ridiculous and

> doesn't do a reasonable job of addressing the common sense, well known dissent and counter examples to his claim. And i had a discussion with RSP and found he had a closed mind, thus counter-exampling his book.

lol

> I wrote 6 blog posts about the book: http://curi.us/archives/list_category/69

> I've also forwarded some of that discussion to FI just now.

Thanks. I will add both to my PF "to read" section.

>> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

> No. The Birner excerpt just says that the survival of critical rationalism is "endangered" by trends in in academia.

> This reply isn't very clear. Do you mean that LT's "only way" text is exaggerated?

Yes. Birner says CR's survival is *endangered* by the failure of its academic tradition. That doesn't mean that academia is "the only way" to carry on CR. There could be other ways. If Birner is right, maybe more people should work on developing those other ways.

>> But it's becoming ever easier to work outside the system (books, blogs, videos, forums, etc.), and even build intellectual communities and organisations to keep these ideas going.

> Sure. This starts with the word "But", but it doesn't contradict the Birner excerpt. It contradicts one of Lulie's lies about the Birner excerpt.

> The reference "one of Lulie's lies" is bad. You should reference stuff more clearly. Which one? Why/how does it contradict?

I meant the sentence right before the "But ...":

>> Another apparent premise is that the only way to carry on these ideas is through institutional academia (which does indeed have its flaws).

The lie in that sentence is that it claims that Birner said that "the only way" to carry on

CR is via academia. The "But" sentence contradicts that, because the "But" sentence gives examples of other ways to carry on CR.

> This is part of my general theme that unclear references are a major source of unclear communication.

You're right.

>> Problems are soluble. There will be a solution to the problem "how do we ensure CR survives without doing unpleasant academic tedium?".

> Social networking and politicking are not merely "unpleasant ... tedium". They involve lying (e.g., "white lies", see http:/rationalessays.com/lying). Having a lifestyle that involves lying is bad for you and for others.

> ya wtf is LT talking about by lying that the issue is *tedium*? (the word "tedium" was not used previously btw. was a synonym used or a phrase that means it? i just skimmed the Birner quote and don't see that.)

Oh yeah. The quote above from Lulie uses quotation marks in a way that is bad for careful discussion. It uses quotation marks to enclose her own idea, not something someone said.

>> The quote talks about "personal characteristics" — so maybe it's saying the personality type that gets into critical rationalism tends not to be the exuberant promoter/social type.

> No. The Birner excerpt doesn't refer to or rely on the idea of personality types. Also, the characterization of people who routinely lie as being "the exuberant promoter/social type" is a lie.

> LT was not trying to characterize people who routinely lie. That they lie is *your* interpretation of them being social in some ways.

You're right. My mistake.

>> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying "critical rationalists don't actually take the clash of ideas seriously"!)

> The final sentence is:

> > > If critical rationalists continue to fail to adopt alternative traditions, or at least elements of them, critical rationalism risks becoming entrenched – and extinct.
> >
> > That is making a specific point about how an "entrenched" tradition (i.e. a tradition for which people have no viable alternatives)
>
> That is not what "entrenched" means. idk where you're getting that.

I got it from the Birner paper containing the excerpt to which Lulie was replying.

https://www.academia.edu/1573813/From_group_selection_to_ecological_niches._Poppers_rethinking_of_evolutionary_theory_in_the_light_of_Hayeks_theory_of_culture :

> Tradition and Entrenchment
>
> Popper argues that if new forms of behaviour are successful, i.e., if they contribute to the survival of the organism, they may give rise to a tradition. Popper defines a tradition as a set of behavioural patterns that remain stable even if and when alternative (and presumably viable) patterns of rules are available. A tradition may degenerate into a genetically entrenched pattern of behaviour when viable alternative rules are no longer available or accessible. If a tradition in a particular ecological niche "becomes the spearhead of genetic entrenchment", the organisms in that niche risk extinction as a consequence of a change in the environment. Popper predicts that every genetic entrenchment becomes lethal in time (Popper 1994, p. 61).
>
> In the context of his lecture Popper is thinking of the extinction of living organisms. But his idea can be generalized using Popper's own multi-level idea of evolution: preferences may be the spearheads of behavioural patterns, behavioural patterns the spearheads of individual organisms, organisms the spearheads of the species, etc. If, due to a change in preferences or aims, all behavioural patterns but one are selected against, the set of rules of behaviour (to use a Hayekian term) that was a tradition becomes behaviourally entrenched. If the environment of the ecological niche changes, the behavioural pattern may become extinct. I will give a possible example of this in my last Afterthought.

> Entrenched means hard to change. That is both the DD/TCS/FI community meaning dating back many years and also the dictionary meaning:
>
> > 1 [with object] establish (an attitude, habit, or belief) so firmly that change is very difficult or unlikely: ageism is entrenched in our society.

I know that. I assumed Lulie was using "entrenched" as I understood Birner to be using

it in the excerpt to which she was replying.

> btw, static memes are especially hard to change b/c they can actively resist change and use intelligence to do that. in trench warfare, a trench itself doesn't actively resist change, only passively, but a trench with soldiers, as a whole, actively resists change.

Interesting. What's an example of a static meme using intelligence to actively resist change?

>> But truth is connected. Why not be interested in expressing ideas so that they're appealing to other generations/traditions?

> "Why not lie to spread the truth?" - Lulie, probably.

> "It's not lying if it helps people feel good about ideas, because people should feel good about ideas, that is true." – LT, probably

> "It's not lying if it helps people accept true ideas, because those ideas are true, not lies." – LT, probably

lol, sigh

>> New people from diverse intellectual backgrounds are getting interested in Popper regularly via Deutsch (who is himself still writing about critical rationalism).

> It's unclear what Lulie means by "diverse" intellectual backgrounds. It looks like a word that was inserted in order to appeal to some readers.

> it's not just impolite ppl or anti-social ppl!!!

> Also, I'm skeptical of how "regularly" the people with "diverse intellectual backgrounds" are getting interested in critical rationalism. What evidence is there for this?

> example criterion: if they follow LT or DD on twitter and never say a word, that proves they are interested.

lol

> And what high-quality material on critical rationalism has Deutsch written lately?

> he blocked me on Twitter rather than discuss CR:
>
> https://curi.us/2102-accepting-vs-preferring-theories--reply-to-david-deutsch

Right.

>>> And there's a lot of craving for these ideas lately — a lot of modern rationalist/skeptic communities trying to understand how to think about truth and knowledge,
>>
>> I'm skeptical that there is a lot of craving (i.e. feeling a strong desire) for critical rationalism in the "rationalist/skeptic community".
>
> that has been tested with e.g. my 2 major visits to Less Wrong. also e.g. by contacting Yudkowsky years ago, by contacting MIRI (and getting a few replies from an awful guy), and by having a very brief discussion with Robin Hanson recently.

Yes.

>> a lot of dissatisfaction for traditional academic philosophy,
>
> I take it Lulie is referring to a group of people who are dissatisfied with traditional academic philosophy. I'm skeptical that there are "a lot" of people like this who are craving critical rationalism.
>
>> people who intuitively think objective morality makes sense but don't know how to justify it,
>
> If those people seek justification, they won't find it in critical rationalism.
>
>> how to make sense of tyranny and liberalism,
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> People who don't know how to make sense of "tyranny" and "liberalism" crave critical rationalism? I don't see why that should be the case.
>
>> and so on.
>
> It's unclear how the series should continue, so saying "and so on" is dishonest.

just think of any examples you can that show she's right. whatever examples you

> would agree with, those are the ones she means.
>
> then proceed to view her as super clever for meaning the clever ideas that you thought only you knew.

haha

> getting ppl to fill in blanks with their own ideas, then pretending their ideas are what you meant, is a sneaky, dishonest way of pandering to people.
>
> > > It's very fertile ground for the next generation.
> >
> > Judging by how few people take critical rationalism seriously, today's society is hardly "very fertile ground" for it.
>
> you haven't given evidence regarding your claim that they are few CR-interested ppl, either.

I don't think I claimed that there were few CR-interested people. I said that I was *skeptical* of Lulie's claim that there were "a lot" of people "craving" CR.

I *did* claim, without evidence, that few people "take critical rationalism seriously". Some evidence for that claim is the tiny number of regular contributors to FI list combined with the lack of criticism of the ideas that

- FI list is a good place to learn CR and to discuss CR and

- Elliot (the most prolific FI list participant) is the best living philosopher.

--

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: [CORRECTION] Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 24, 2019 at 7:09:08 PM

On Apr 24, 2019, at 1:36 PM, Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:

> On Apr 24, 2019, at 12:14 PM, Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum <petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com> wrote:
>
>> On Wed, Sep 27, 2017 at 1:34 PM Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us> wrote:
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>>> https://www.facebook.com/groups/criticalrationalism/permalink/10155711040669904/?comment_id=10155721261594904&comment_tracking=%7B%22tn%22%3A%22R%22%7D
>>>
>>>
>>>> But you can have all sorts of interests as a critical rationalist. Why would social networking and politicking be special?
>>
>> *Being interested* in certain activities is not the same as *devoting resources to engaging* in those activities, which is what the Birner excerpt was about. For example, one could learn about how picking up girls works without actually picking up any girls. Or one could study what Hitler did without trying to exterminate Jews.
>
> yes
>
> as with the previous point, LT is not so stupid, incompetent, illogical, unskilled, etc, that she couldn't know this or figure this out. there is an element of *not trying* to get stuff like this right.
>
> it's easier to do social manipulations if you focus on them and don't constrain what you say by requiring it to be very connected to the facts. this is similar

i meant to say it's similar to a point made in BoI. here's a quote:

> [the static meme's] overt content – the idea of the hobgoblin's existence – need contain no truth. On the contrary, the non-existence of the hobgoblin helps to make the meme a better replicator, because the story is then unconstrained by the mundane attributes of any genuine menace, which are always finite and to some degree

> combatable.

Elliot Temple
www.elliottemple.com

From: Elliot Temple <curi@curi.us>
To: FIGG <fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com>
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] Exercise: Analyzing Lies
Date: April 24, 2019 at 7:21:19 PM

On Apr 24, 2019, at 4:04 PM, Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum
<petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com> wrote:

> On Wed, Apr 24, 2019 at 01:36:37PM -0700, Elliot Temple wrote:
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>> On Apr 24, 2019, at 12:14 PM, Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum
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>>> (As an aside, the final sentence of the second paragraph seems to be saying
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>> The final sentence is:
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I got it from the Birner paper containing the excerpt to which Lulie was replying.

https://www.academia.edu/1573813/From_group_selection_to_ecological_niches._Po
ppers_rethinking_of_evolutionary_theory_in_the_light_of_Hayeks_theory_of_culture :

> Tradition and Entrenchment

> Popper argues that if new forms of behaviour are successful, i.e., if they contribute to the survival of the organism, they may give rise to a tradition. Popper defines a tradition as a set of behavioural patterns that remain stable even if and when alternative (and presumably viable) patterns of rules are available. A tradition may degenerate into a genetically entrenched pattern of behaviour when viable alternative rules are no longer available or accessible. If a tradition in a particular ecological niche "becomes the spearhead of genetic entrenchment", the organisms in that niche risk extinction as a consequence of a change in the environment. Popper predicts that every genetic entrenchment becomes lethal in time (Popper 1994, p. 61).
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> In the context of his lecture Popper is thinking of the extinction of living organisms. But his idea can be generalized using Popper's own multi-level idea of evolution: preferences may be the spearheads of behavioural patterns, behavioural patterns the spearheads of individual organisms, organisms the spearheads of the species, etc. If, due to a change in preferences or aims, all behavioural patterns but one are selected against, the set of rules of behaviour (to use a Hayekian term) that was a tradition becomes behaviourally entrenched. If the environment of the ecological niche changes, the behavioural pattern may become extinct. I will give a possible example of this in my last Afterthought.

> Entrenched means hard to change. That is both the DD/TCS/FI community meaning dating back many years and also the dictionary meaning:

>> 1 [with object] establish (an attitude, habit, or belief) so firmly that change is very difficult or unlikely: ageism is entrenched in our society.

> I know that. I assumed Lulie was using "entrenched" as I understood Birner to be using it in the excerpt to which she was replying.

why would you assume that? i rather doubt she looked at the original source.

also i think you misread birner.

he said: in situation X, entrenchment may happen:

> A tradition may degenerate into a genetically entrenched pattern of behaviour when viable alternative rules are no longer available or accessible.

i think you misunderstood this as meaning: X (or situation X) *is what entrenchment is*.

> btw, static memes are especially hard to change b/c they can actively resist change and use intelligence to do that. in trench warfare, a trench itself doesn't actively resist change, only passively, but a trench with soldiers, as a whole, actively resists change.

> Interesting. What's an example of a static meme using intelligence to actively resist change?

rationalization processes. ppl put creativity into that. e.g. coming up with reasons not to read or debate an idea.

parents often use creativity to figure out how to best shut their kid up and suppress his dissent.

people put creativity (intelligence) into social putdowns to suppress non-conformists.

defensive ad hoc arguing to defend one's ideas.

the reason ppl are hard to talk with is they put the **majority** of their creativity into preventing progress. the static memes have majority control.

Elliot Temple
www.elliottemple.com

From: Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum <petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com>
To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: [FI] entrenchment (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: April 25, 2019 at 12:09:53 AM

On Wed, Apr 24, 2019 at 04:21:19PM -0700, Elliot Temple wrote:

> On Apr 24, 2019, at 4:04 PM, Alisa Zinov'yevna Rosenbaum
> <petrogradphilosopher@gmail.com> wrote:
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e :

> ### Tradition and Entrenchment
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To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] entrenchment (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: April 25, 2019 at 12:13:54 AM

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To: fallible-ideas@googlegroups.com
Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: [FI] memes using intelligence (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: April 25, 2019 at 12:16:48 AM

On Wed, Apr 24, 2019 at 04:21:19PM -0700, Elliot Temple wrote:

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> > > btw, static memes are especially hard to change b/c they can actively resist change
> > > and use intelligence to do that. in trench warfare, a trench itself doesn't actively
> > > resist change, only passively, but a trench with soldiers, as a whole, actively resists
> > > change.
> >
> > Interesting. What's an example of a static meme using intelligence to actively resist
> > change?
>
> rationalization processes. ppl put creativity into that. e.g. coming up with reasons not to
> read or debate an idea.
>
> parents often use creativity to figure out how to best shut their kid up and suppress his
> dissent.
>
> people put creativity (intelligence) into social putdowns to suppress non-conformists.
>
> defensive ad hoc arguing to defend one's ideas.
>
> the reason ppl are hard to talk with is they put the **majority** of their creativity into
> preventing progress. the static memes have majority control.

Ok. When you wrote that "static memes ... use intelligence", I think the only
interpretation that occurred to me is that the memes were using *their own* intelligence.
I couldn't make sense of this.

In light of your examples, I would state my understanding like this: In order to replicate,
all memes rely on the intelligence/creativity *of their hosts*. In particular, static memes
try get their hosts to use their (the hosts') intelligence/creativity to resist certain types of
change.

Does that sound right?

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Subject: Re: [FI] entrenchment (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: April 25, 2019 at 12:50:40 AM

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Date: April 25, 2019 at 1:07:37 AM

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This is a diversion. You claimed that Birner gave a non-standard definition of "entrenched". Where is it?

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Cc: FIYG <fallible-ideas@yahoogroups.com>
Subject: Re: [FI] entrenchment (was: Exercise: Analyzing Lies)
Date: April 25, 2019 at 1:46:21 AM

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OK but you're still avoiding specifying which particular sentence you misread and how you misread it (or if something else happened, what?). You should post-mortem your error.

https://curi.us/2190-errors-merit-post-mortems