

# Kids for Kash, Dictator Fallacy, Combinatorics



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*"Finding the Challenges" is an original column appearing every other Wednesday at Everything-Voluntary.com, by Verbal Vol. Verbal is a software engineer, college professor, corporate information officer, life long student, farmer, libertarian, literarian, student of computer science and self-ordering phenomena. Archived columns can be found [here](#). FTC-only RSS feed available [here](#).*

I will be publishing my columns for awhile, until we see how it goes, in serial form, following in the footsteps of Charles Dickens. Let's hope that my prose is at least halfway Dickensian.

*To conceal anything from those to whom I am attached, is not in my nature. I can never close my lips where I have opened my heart. — Charles Dickens*

In Dickens' classic, *Oliver Twist*, he insisted that we become aware of the exploitation of youth, and in the same spirit I share with you my outrage that modern American statism does not draw a line at the corruption of the treatment of the young.

## **Kids for Kash**

A few years back, I saw a story about a judge who was being investigated for taking bribes from prison-for-profit corporations. Then it was just by chance that I caught a fleeting follow-up this past week on some media channel about judges finally going to jail for this scam.

My first thought is, what took so long?! But this new info was hard on the heels of the story about how the FBI was dropping the investigation on a certain candidate for POTUS. I must admit that I received both of these reports with a minimum of surprise. Our country is dying of political corruption, and this has been the case for over two centuries — so it is a chronic illness. The very thing that makes our country great is also the thing that is taking us down. It is our adventurous spirit for which we are coming to account.

America has always been in a hurry. When we declared our independence from the British Empire, we were so arrogant with our newfound hubris that we decided to run ourselves on the British model. We were a sort of Leviathan Lite. Let's rub their limey faces in it. We

started with towns, counties, provinces, and their attendant civic functionaries based on the model of the tyrant we hoped to escape. What could go wrong? Just because England was a bureaucratic nightmare of aristocratic monarchists, we thought we could dip in the same slop while keeping dry and clean.

It's as Willy Stark opined in *All the King's Men*, we do not rise far above our birth. We embraced a corrupt system cooked up in the witches cauldrons of the European world of the 17th Century. Any student of history knows that the train had long before jumped the rails of civilization. Europe, and by extension, England had clawed and cheated, stolen and murdered its way to dominating the world through colonies. You couldn't find honorable individualism with a torch.

The stench of the sewer that was monarchism spread everywhere. Many flocked to newer places like America to escape the rot. Nowadays, we console ourselves with the fictional idea that we all sprung from religious pilgrims seeking relief from the oppression of the old order. Bunk! Most of the rabble that scrambled ashore were in it for the fortune. Most of the Americas had been purloined by the southern Europeans, so there were pretty slim pickings in the cooler climes of North America. Many of the original English attempts at colonization failed. Whereas, explorers had found exploitable labor forces in the equatorial regions, the native North Americans did not easily bend to the whip. Our northern European forebears just found it more easy to kill them off — their numbers were too sparse for industry.

Even the convicts from the slums of London did not shape up when given a plow.

Therefore, we have had from day one an underclass ripe for exploitation. This country was founded on the idea that there are inferior people whose sole purpose is to produce wealth for the aristocrats.

And what would be the most aristocratic profession? Politicians and the upper orders of rule became the new aristocracy in what would become the USA. Our old judges and manipulators even wore powdered wigs and gowns, an affectation stemming from the affectations of the elite in the old world.

This arrangement began to come to grief early in the game. The paucity of natives forced the importation of the exploited classes, indentured servants, convicts, slaves, inferior nationalities, and worst of all, children.

How would it be even possible to expect a 21st Century scheme that rose above such venality.

Logic Fallacy #50 — The Dictator Fallacy I

The Dictator Fallacy is a favorite of control freaks. It is a specialized form of Begging the

Question. Both the leader (dictator) and the follower assume the premise that the leader has 100% control of 100% of the outcomes from any 1 action, as well as all impinging actions. We frequently see this fallacy wielded by an addictive personality type. They promise every day that they will make the coming day a grand triumphal emergence from the grips of their addiction. But reality always intervenes. For a substance abuse addict, this vicious circle where vast intentions meet half-vast implementations, this can be a hellish life. But the people who are addicted to the authoritarian ambrosia seem to have no recognition of the distinction between success and failure.

The Dictator Syndrome was described, probably first, by two-time, libertarian candidate for POTUS, Harry Browne. Jim Babka of DownsizeDC, a colleague of the late Mr. Browne, defines the fallacy as follows: “The Dictator Fallacy is the belief that any law or program will be implemented in just the way you intended — as if you were the king.”

Down at the Anderson County Courthouse, kibitzers, whittlers, and spitters might call this “Biting off more than you can chew.” But fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

Politicians such as George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Woodrow Wilson, and the Roosevelt Boys, being delusional, played this game, albeit honestly in all likelihood, to the last out. I suppose that they received some bad advice somewhere along the line — that they could ride this bucking Brahma bull. I will pretend for the sake of discussion that they were honest but naive.

This is where the addiction part comes in. An addict pretends, or justifies, that he or she can do something that is against the natural laws, but get away with it. Everything’s under control. One can pursue a 15 year career in the boxing ring with no cauliflower features and no gray matter penalty. One can pursue a lifelong political resume with no deterioration of moral fiber.

Actually, a political calling reminds me of the great assembly line skits of Lucille Ball — the behinder you are the behinder you get. The more behind, the more dependent on others for rescue.

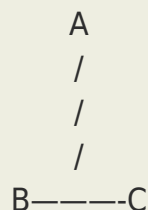
First of all, I don’t believe the job of POTUS can be done honestly, and in today’s cynical age, I don’t think anybody even tries anymore. As I have written before, the scorecard, it seems to me, stands at 44 presidents, 44 failures. But at least when they gave up good intentions sometime in the 20th Century, they still believed in campaign promises, and they still addressed real issues and believed they could handle them. But now it’s all a joke. The television comedians and late show hosts are having a field day. Yesterday, I read on Facebook something to the effect that Trump was going to stop Zika Virus by building a giant net, AND he was going to make the mosquitoes pay for it. Used to be that campaign promises were disingenuous, and thus insincere. Now they are impossible, and thus lies.

## Combinatorics

The word combinatorics is a fancy way of recognizing that we do not live in a single-cell universe. We live among an infinitely large number of things. And who is to say where between one thing and another the association stops? Can you say that you are unconnected with a fortuneteller in Mongolia, or a cloud on Venus, or a rock in the Alpha Centauri System.

I was reading exchanges among NVC (nonviolent communication) students this week, where I ran across some interesting ideas.

The first was that when there are 3 nodes in the communication sphere, all agreements take the form of 2-to-1 or 3-to-0. There is no opportunity for disagreement (absence of agreement), unless 1 of the 3 exits the structure. I have frequently written here that the only manageable associations are 1-to-1, between 2 members of an association. But I can reconcile that with the combination of 3. The proponent of the threesome idea drew a diagram similar to this:



There are 6 ways in which an agreement can reach a majority between two, A can sway B or B can sway A. A can sway C or C can sway A. C can sway B or B can sway C. But if any of these combinations occur, the third node can opt out or in, 1 agreement or 2. But the one agreement, or the two separate agreements, are all 1-to-1. In a voluntary arrangement, A cannot dictate what form the agreement between B and C takes — in other words A cannot control the interaction between B and C, cannot intervene in any practical sense. The 3-way arrangement can only survive, as voluntary, if each participant refrains from intervening between the 2nd party and the 3rd. In my opinion, it is very hard for humans to do this. Rather humans will almost always gang up 2-against-1.

This brings us to the second idea — nonviolent communication (NVC) is composed of

- Observation free from evaluation,
- Feelings free from judgment,
- Needs free from strategy, and
- Requests free from demand.

Viktor Frankl wrote, “Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.” A friend

insisted that we have our filters in place before we get to that space, but it seems unlikely that we do not also have the choice of which filters or no filter or the need to build a new filter in that space. To the extent that we can keep an open mind, delaying evaluation, that is the extent to which we can optimize non-violent communication and keep our filters in good health.

Feelings and judgment also have a space. Feelings don't just demand judgment, they demand analysis. What is causing our feelings? What, objectively, will resolve the emotional tension?

The same can be said of needs. We often confuse needs with wants, and thus with emotions. We often spend huge amounts of time with strategies which are attempts to escape the emotions surrounding true needs and false needs (wants). Our tendency is to be content, to know where our next meal is coming from — maybe our next meal does not need to come from our enemy's table, maybe there is no need to consider another as an enemy because they appear to have a full table.

## Conclusion

My little experiment with serialization didn't get me where I wanted to go. I am the same distance behind, maybe a bit more, as I was when I dreamed up this scheme. We all have the same amount of time as a resource, but if we look carefully at Dr. Frankl's observation above we can see that some time is more valuable than other time, the space between stimulus and response. That is the time we should use most wisely. If we do, we will better not only the time spent communicating with others, but also with ourselves.

Stay thirsty for knowledge, my friends.

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