

Causes, Links, and Effects

Causes & Effects

- **Cause** -- a person, thing, event, state, or action that produces an effect (outcome).
- **Effect** – something produced by a cause; an outcome.
- **Cause & effect relationship** -- noting a relationship or connection between actions or events such that one or more are the result of the other or others.
 - **Links connect causes to effects.**
- **Relevance to thinking strategically:**
 - Important for anticipation & preemption
 - Essential aspect of holistic, relational thinking
 - There will always be a need *to set conditions* for motion and action in conflict
 - The cause is condition and the effect is the outcome therefore, links connect cause to effect and condition to outcome.
 - **Aggregates & aggregations are born with groups of conditions and groups of outcomes – these lead to mass and momentum and run away aggregations**
 - **Thus what you have just seen and heard constitute constructs as we engage in decomposition. & synthesis**
 - **Synthesis then is essential in thinking about building our combinations, coherence, synergy, and destroying or manipulating the adversary's**

Cases – Causes and Effects

- 1 cause and 1 effect.
- Multiple causes and 1 effect.
- **Multiple causes and multiple effects.**
- 1 effect and 1 cause.
- Multiple effects and 1 cause.
- **Multiple effects and multiple causes.**

Clausewitz -- causes
& effects – cases
Pages 101-102 of On War

Relational/Relative Action Outcomes

Relational/Relative -- Meaning

- People who think strategically must ‘abhor vacuums.’
- Actions lead to outcomes – outcomes cause change and influence – perception, thinking, lives, organizations – ours & our opponent’s.
- As we act, our actions are relative to our opponent’s actions and to the context (including its inhabitants) in which we compete.
 - Hence *act, react, and counteract* forms of wargaming.
 - Assessing actions via intelligence analysis & collections – adhering to the *principle of duality* becomes imperative.
 - Struggle belongs to those who can assess, gather relative data, evaluate, decide, and adapt faster than the adversary and relative to the context (for me and for my opponent).

Relational/Relative -- Meaning

- **Small actions can cause large (sometimes exponentially large) outcomes.**
- **Everything of interest is relational and connects in some way.**
- **Thus, we must think about:**
 - **Unintended consequences.**
 - **Imperfection of plans.**
 - **2d and 3d order effects.**
 - **Black Swans, chance, friction.**
 - **Total surprise at the imposition of action.**
- **Surprise is a two-edged sword – German/Russian War 1941-1945**

Cultural Drivers/Shapers

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Cultural Drivers/Shapers Relevance

- **Conflict involves humans – imposing one’s will on another who is resisting and attempting to impose his will on you, as you resist.**
 - We call this action – the *action/interaction of volition*.
- **How he 1) perceives, 2) thinks, 3)plans, 4) decides, 5) acts, 6) assesses, and 7) adapts, is at the center of how we choose to go at our antagonist and how we plan to parry his actions he designs to impose his will on us.**
 - Culture influences all action via rules, models, behavior, and co-evolution/CAS phenomena.
- **Such influence often comes forth as how people perceive, interpret, what they expect, and as a result, how they behave (and act).**

Cultural Drivers/Shapers -- Meaning

- **Some culturally related terms & ideas that help people engaging in *critical thinking*, as he/she ponders their adversary et al. include:**
 - **Society -- a highly structured system of human organization for large-scale community living that normally furnishes protection, continuity, security, and a national identity for its members.** Dictionary.com
 - **Culture -- the behaviors and beliefs characteristic of a particular social, ethnic, or age group.** Dictionary.com
 - **Apperception -- mental perception; especially: the process of understanding something perceived in terms of previous experience.** William James in *Psychology*
 - **Mythos – underlying system of beliefs especially those dealing with spirituality and the afterlife.** Dictionary.com

Cultural Drivers/Shapers -- Meaning

- **Some culturally related terms & ideas that help people engaging in *critical thinking*, as he/she ponders their adversary et al.:**
 - **Belief** -- confidence in the truth or existence of something not immediately susceptible to rigorous proof. Dictionary.com
 - **Honor** -- honesty, fairness, or integrity in one's beliefs and actions.
 - **Value** -- moral principle & belief or accepted standard of a person or social group.
 - **Retribution** -- revenge, retaliation, repayment, recompense.
 - **Justice** – fair administering of punishment for crime or breaking with social mores and laws; moral rightness. Dictionary.com
 - **Mores** -- accepted traditional customs & usages of a particular social group

Facts, Objectivity, Subjectivity

Facts, Objectivity, Subjectivity

- **Fact** -- a truth known by actual experience or observation; **something known (BY WHOM?) to be true.**
- **Objective** – not influenced by personal feelings, interpretations, or prejudice; based on facts; unbiased: an objective opinion.
- **Subjective** -- belonging to the thinking subject rather than to the object of thought; affective (emotional, feeling) part of cognition; pertaining to or characteristic of an individual.

Why important for critical thinking?

More On Facts, Objectivity, etc.

- Subjectivity based on:
 - Perception
 - ✓ Interpretation
 - Expectations
 - ✓ Empathy
 - Processing data
 - ✓ Comparing (analogies)
 - APPERCEPTION (sum life experiences)
 - Experiences
 - Matching
 - Evaluating
 - ✓ Synthesizing
 - ✓ Piercing illusions (ours, other's)

Chance

Chance

- **Definition -- CHANCE --** The unknown and unpredictable element in happenings that seems *to have no assignable cause.*
- **Clausewitz –**
 - “In short, absolute, so-called mathematical factors never find a firm basis in military calculations. From the very start there is an interplay of possibilities, probabilities, good luck and bad that weaves its way ... war most closely resembles a game of cards.
 - **Friction – unexpected chance events – p. 119-120 – *On War***
- **Questions that fuel our critical thinking efforts:**
 - What does this imply for us?
 - Can we know about outcomes and happenings with certainty in conflict
 - How do we deal with ‘chance’ intellectually?
 - How do we deal with ‘chance’ organizationally?

Chance

- **Importance of chance:**
 - **Relationships – 2d & 3d order effects; contradictions; dialectic; wargaming; black swan events (unexpected); friction; sense making; mysteries; hypotheses; hedging bets.**
 - **Chance & friction**
 - ✓ **Chance & sensitive variables**
 - ✓ **Chance & anticipation**
 - ✓ **‘Killer’ of assumptions**

Select Logic and Bias Errors

Select Logic Errors

1. Ad hominem
2. Non sequitur
3. Circular reasoning
4. ✓ Post hoc ergo propter hoc
5. Mirror imaging
6. ✓ Over simplification
7. Hasty generalization
8. ✓ Outdated data, info, knowledge
9. ✓ False assumptions
10. False cause and effect
11. ✓ False dichotomy
12. ✓ False analogy

Select Bias Errors

- 1 ✓ **Confirmatory – cherry picking to confirm our judgment**
2. **Anchoring – using initial data to form judgments**
- 3 ✓ **Self-interest**
4. **Empathy**
5. **Framing – inclusion & exclusion**
6. **Functional fixedness**
- 7 ✓ **Hind sight**
8. **Illusion of validity**
- 9 ✓ **Insensitivity to sample size**
- 10 ✓ **Over-confidence (arrogance)**
- 11 ✓ **Data preference/slant**
12. **Well-traveled road – been there before, will go there again, nothing is new under the sun**

Dialectic

Dialectic

- **What does dialectic mean?**
 - 3 parts.
 - Does the dialectic end?
- **Why important?**
- **Dialectic and alternatives.**
- **What is a contradiction?**
 - Why is contradiction important for understanding the dialectic?
 - Why does the dialectic take leadership if using with subordinates?

Introspection

4/20/15

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Definitions

- **Introspection** -- observation or examination of one's own mental and emotional state, mental processes, etc.; the act of looking within oneself.
 - **Personal** – thinking about our own thinking & actions before or after the fact.
 - **Organizational** – thinking about how our organization did in a job or mission, what needs to improve, what needs to sustain.
 - After action reviews (AARs).
- **Red team** – people, either trained/educated or otherwise who perform the function of providing alternatives, critiquing plans as objectively as possible, playing the adversary in wargames, & providing innovative or creative thinking to help overcome conventional wisdom, blinding biases, & personal logic errors.

Relevance

- **Strategists must constantly seek to engage in & win the war of wits – introspection can help in such endeavors.**
- **Strategists need their thinking critiqued – biases, logic errors, & propensity to fall victim to conventional wisdom.**
- **While no person can be objective, a Red Team person or people can work to help one move toward objectivity as a goal, and to point out where subjectivity is influencing outcomes.**
 - **Finding a Red Team to offer criticism, to offer alternative, to help with creative ideas, & to act as a foil in a competitive ‘joust’ is ‘a way’ to avoid falling victim to one’s own thinking or organizational biases/logic errors in the macro.**

Supporting Concepts

- **War of wits.**
- **Mental combat.**
- **Intellectual/cognition unity of effort.**
- **Constantly improving one's thinking.**
- **Critique – self & organizational – a constant task.**
- **Objectivity & subjectivity – harken back to earlier discussion.**
- **Biases & logic errors – harken back to earlier discussion.**
- **If we commit errors in thinking – so will our adversaries/competitors. We have to consider such rendering by way of *duality*.**