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The free trade rhetoric of the Cato Institute

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THE FREE TRADE RHETORIC OF THE CATO INSTITUTE

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Communication Studies

San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements of the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Kevin Marinelli

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ABSTRACT

THE FREE TRADE RHETORIC OF THE CATO INSTITUTE

by Kevin Marinelli

This thesis directs the conversation on the rhetoric of economics into the debate over globalization, centering on notions of free trade and fair trade. Specifically, it will address a powerful, resourceful, and well-financed interest group called the Cato Institute. Part One of this thesis focuses on globalization, public opinion, and the influence of right-wing think tanks. Part Two provides a framework and method for the analysis of Cato's rhetoric. Part Three examines the editorials published on globalization by the Cato Institute, explicating the rhetorical strategies Cato employs to promote free trade. Finally, the conclusion of this thesis will address the implications of Cato's free trade rhetoric, as well as the ability of think tanks to influence civil discourse.

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Chapter 1: Globalization and the Debate about Trade

In the final week of November 1999, the debate over economic globalization took unprecedented form. In that week, the World Trade Organization (hereafter, WTO) convened in Seattle, Washington, where representatives from one hundred twenty nations gathered to discuss the future of the global economy. Outside the convention, fifty thousand protesters flooded the streets to address the inequalities between core and peripheral countries, inequalities they believed corporate, economic globalization helped exacerbate. The protesters claimed victory as the WTO was forced to cancel its meetings, many delegates leaving the convention precipitously.

One of the largest public demonstrations in the United States in recent memory, the Seattle protests are significant for several reasons. First, they gave the fair trade movement media visibility and thus increased awareness of global economic inequality. Second, the ensuing public scrutiny of world trade practices compelled free trade advocates to address the needs of developing nations and begin discussing to what extent economic globalization is in the best interest of the poor. That is not to say free trade proponents had failed to acknowledge poverty before the protests. But it was especially after Seattle that free trade advocates such as the Cato Institute made a serious effort to persuade the public that free trade benefits all nations, particularly developing economies. Such asserted benefits include better standards of living, higher gross domestic product (hereafter, GDP), a healthier environment, and greater autonomy for developing nations (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2004; Gray, 2004; Dollar & Kraay, 2004). In short,

proponents claim free trade provides a better standard of living for everyone. Of course, not everyone agrees.

Fair trade advocates, on the other hand, wish to see developing nations allowed to enter the global economy on their own terms, primarily benefiting the people of those nations (Oxfam, 2004). Opponents of free trade criticize the stringent agreements (formerly called Structural Adjustment Programs or SAPS) with which developing nations are forced to comply in exchange for their admittance into the global economy¹. The details of these contracts require developing nations to ease their labor and environmental standards, deregulate their economies, privatize their industries, and, ultimately, dismantle all barriers to and tariffs on trade. Fair trade advocates claim these policies damage the economies of developing nations and create a perpetual state of poverty, conducive only to continuous economic exploitation by wealthier nations. For example, when a loan accumulates a larger interest than what a country is able to repay, it is largely impossible for that country to ever rise out of debt. In short, fair trade advocates aspire to create a global economy that breaks the cycle of debt and poverty (Oxfam, 2004).

The Seattle protests gave the fair trade movement its spotlight, thus inspiring governments, financial institutions, and other economic elites to respond publicly. Seattle prompted a new and exciting discourse between free and fair trade advocates. Inspired by the events in Seattle, fair trade protests are now customary at WTO meetings, G-8 summits, and any other meetings where political and economic leaders gather to

¹ Due to the increasing public criticism of SAPS, the IMF and World Bank changed the name of these policies to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) (Whirled Bank Group, 2003).

make global economic decisions. For example, thousands of activists recently gathered in December 2005 to protest the WTO summit in Hong Kong. In response to these mass demonstrations, free trade advocates have been just as vocal. Through public policy, newspaper editorials, and academic research, free trade advocates defend expanded global markets with vigor. For example, President Clinton successfully promoted expanding the WTO to include China, which ultimately happened under the Bush administration in December 2001(WTO, 2005). Pundits, lawmakers, and economists alike discuss the merits of trade regulation at the World Economic Forum. In addition, think tanks such as the Cato Institute continue to engage in the debate over free trade in books, newspaper editorials, and on the Internet.

Before studying the debate over free trade, we must first understand the context in which this debate occurs: globalization. Globalization may easily be defined as the growing interdependence of nations, governments, economies, and cultures. Thus globalization cannot be traced to a single source; it is a multi-dimensional process, at once political, economic, cultural and technological. People and their ideas now travel the world faster and easier than ever before. Regional cultures are linked by global media. Individuals communicate with each other from across the globe via new information and communication technologies such as the World Wide Web and email. From a political perspective, globalization may refer to the spread of ideologies such as democracy or socialism. Culturally, one may look to the spread of Western music, fashion, television shows, and film throughout Middle Eastern and Eastern societies.

In short, globalization means the world is growing closer. So what does this mean for the future of the global economy? Unfortunately, there is little consensus on that issue. Wallerstein (2000), for example, predicts the “demise of the capitalist world system” (pp. 100-102). Micklethwait & Woolridge (2004), on the other hand, argue that globalization is “helping to create a society . . . in which people are free within reasonable bounds to pursue the good life wherever they find it” (p. 15). While we may disagree over future directions of the global economy, we are able to trace the origins of globalization. By studying the history of globalization, we can gain a better understanding of how and why the global economy has taken its current form, further illuminating the debate over free trade.

This chapter will introduce globalization as the driving force behind free trade. First I will describe technological and then economic processes of globalization. Next I will discuss the role of public opinion in the rhetoric of global trade, and finally I will explain the role of think tanks in the free trade debate.

Technological Globalization

Though the term did not enter mainstream discourse until the early 1980s, globalization dates back considerably further (Robertson, 2004). One could even make the claim that globalization began as soon as ancient villages first interacted. Most scholars, however, look to more recent events. Several scholars trace globalization to the mid-nineteenth century (e.g., Hobsbawm, 2004; Gray, 2004). Fostered by James Watts’ improvements to the steam engine in 1769, two nineteenth-century innovations would

help bring the world closer together than it had ever been: Robert Fulton's steamboat, built in 1803, and Robert Stephenson's locomotive, built in 1839. Radically changing the methods of travel, shipping and commerce, these technological breakthroughs mark the beginning of modern globalization (Hobsbawm, 2004; Gray, 2004). With railroads stretching across countries, people and their goods could now travel faster, cheaper, and more efficiently. With steamboats, world travel and exploration were made much easier as well. Together, these inventions changed the way people lived, worked, traveled, and understood the world around them.

The steam-powered engine also inspired a surge of migration from Europe to the United States and from the Eastern United States to the West. This technological leap not only fostered migration and leisure traveling, it also increased trade among various regions of the globe. Perhaps more importantly, it fostered trade between the richest and poorest parts of the world. In all, world trade had increased sixfold by the mid-nineteenth century, compared to what it had been just thirty-five years earlier (Hobsbawm, 2004, p. 59).

This time period also witnessed the rise of electric telecommunication beginning with Samuel Morse's invention of the telegraph in 1851, which allowed people to share information faster and more efficiently. For the first time, ideas could travel the globe in a matter of seconds. Together, nineteenth-century technology—the steamboat, the locomotive, and the telegraph—united the world physically, economically, and through communication technology. Thus, the easier it became for nations to engage in economic trade.

Twentieth century technology would make trade even easier. With Malcom McLean's invention of shipping containers, which were first used in 1956, merchants were provided with even more efficient means of shipping goods (Levinson, 2006). Cargo ships could now carry more product in less time, as well as load and unload product faster and easier than ever before. This revolution in shipping technology helped to increase the volume of international trade, further integrating the global economy.

The twentieth century also revolutionized global communication systems. First via the radio, then television broadcasts, various regions of the globe were connected by sound and image. This shift in media from print to audio/visual not only changed the way people received news, but also reduced cultural boundaries. People could now see literally what life was like in other parts of the world. The cultural implications of this achievement still stirs heated debates among scholars concerned with its effects on societies that resist the Western values that increasingly dominate the global village (See Barber, 2004; Huntington, 2004). With television, in other words, MTV, McDonald's and everything else associated with Western culture is broadcast around the world.

Of course, the world grew even closer with the advent of public access to the Internet in the 1990s. In just a few keystrokes, one can now learn the background of her favorite artist, be it Mozart or Mos Def, or ascertain the latest developments in the latest round in Middle East peace talks. The Internet is at once a space for merchants and consumers, students and educators, people interested in current events, and those merely searching for immediate entertainment. Consequently, the lines between news and advocacy become blurred online, as anyone is welcome to share his or her opinions.

Accordingly, the Internet has become a podium for infinite debate, world trade being no exception.

Very rarely do fair trade and free trade advocates meet directly to discuss the global economy. Instead, much of the debate occurs via Internet discourse. Some of the most significant artifacts of free trade rhetoric occur not in the traditional public sphere (e.g., town hall forums and political debates) but appear instead on privately owned websites, open to the public. For example, Oxfam, a well-known advocate of fair trade, organizes all of its campaigns online. Free trade advocates, such as the Cato Institute, communicate online as well, archiving all of their studies and editorials in their online archives for public access. Thus we should not underestimate the power of new media in the current debate over trade. By analyzing the rhetoric made available on such websites, we can gain understanding of those arguments most widely available to the public.

Despite the important role technology has played, however, it is naive to think it alone is the central force behind globalization. In fact, every technological advancement bringing the world closer for the past two centuries has been used for economic purposes. The steam-powered engine was used to facilitate trade. And if it were not for trade, shipping containers would serve no purpose. Television broadcasting was and is possible only with commercial support. The Internet, developed for government purposes, was only made public when people realized the profits that could be made from it. Therefore, it is important to understand the economic forces behind contemporary globalization.

Economic Globalization

Precisely when national economies began to integrate across borders forming today's global economy, is up for debate. Wallerstein (2000) argues that the shift from world empires to a world economy in the "long sixteenth century" is primarily responsible for today's global economy, from which there is no turning back (p. 93). It was at this point, he argues, that the marketplace replaced empires as the official determinant of trade practices. Even after the subsequent emergence of nation-states and mercantilism, the marketplace, not governments, was still the number one factor in determining the worth of goods and services.

Still, most scholars trace contemporary economic globalization back only as far as the twentieth century. Perhaps the single most important event to shape today's global economy was the Bretton Woods Accord in 1944, a meeting that would drastically—and perhaps irreversibly—alter the global economy (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002, pp. 60-61). The meeting was organized for several purposes, mainly to map out the reconstruction of Europe. Fearing another rise of communist and fascist governments and believing that poverty was an inroad to both, economists decided it was in the world's best interest to loan money to the poorest nations, thereby creating the necessary infrastructure for thriving economies (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002, pp. 60-61). They hoped that this would in turn fuel the desire for capitalism, guarding against economic systems they deemed less desirable.

Scholars still disagree over the true purpose of the Bretton Woods accord. While some believe it was the reconstruction of Europe and the desire to aid poor countries in

need, others are more skeptical, viewing the event as a way for developing nations to exploit cheap labor and natural resources in the periphery (See Chomsky, 1999; Cohen, 1998). Yet a third perspective suggests that John Maynard Keynes, the leading economist of the time, and the other economists present at the meeting did strive to eliminate poverty (Stiglitz, 2002; Lawrence, Bressand & Ito, 1996). It was not until the early 1970s that the global-economic structure created at Bretton Woods began working against the poor. Peripheral governments were then forced to restructure their economic policies in adherence to requirements of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (hereafter, IMF) (Stiglitz, 2002; Lawrence, Bressand & Ito, 1996). Regardless of the original purpose of the Bretton Woods accord, the political implications of the event are unmistakable.

The decision to push democracy and free-market capitalism simultaneously marks the advent of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism is quite simply the application of classical, liberal economic values to contemporary, representative democracy. Neoliberals believe the economy should run itself and governments should be limited only to ensuring the individual rights of their citizens (Gilpen, 2001, pp. 379-383). This belief suggests that democracy can only be achieved through capitalism: socialist governments are authoritarian by nature and must be stopped in the name of freedom and democracy (Stiglitz, 2002; Lawrence, Bressand & Ito, 1996). Thus, neoliberals typically detest government regulation and advocate free trade.

The Bretton Woods accord spawned two of the most influential financial institutions of the twentieth century: the International Bank for Reconstruction and

Development (now known as the World Bank) and the IMF (Gilpen, 2001). The World Bank would go on to serve as one of the leading voices in development economics. Over the past six decades, it has loaned billions of dollars to some of the poorest ends of the globe (World Bank, 2006). Not only is the World Bank the single largest loan provider to developing nations, it is also responsible for how those loans are structured.

The political implications of this arrangement are enormous, giving the World Bank tremendous influence over the global economy. For example, the Bank has the power to deny funding to any nation that does not adhere to the rules of the global economy. If it believes a nation's public sector is too big, its taxes too high, or its labor and environmental standards too strict, the World Bank will not invest in that nation until it privatizes its economy, reduces its taxes and lowers its labor and environmental standards (Stiglitz, 2002).

The IMF, another byproduct of the Bretton Woods accord, has also gone on to wield great influence over the global economy. Unlike the World Bank, however, the IMF has traditionally been unconcerned with eliminating world poverty, only recently placing that issue on their agenda (Stiglitz, 2002). The IMF's purpose is twofold: to loan capital to countries struggling to balance their debts; and to eliminate trade regulations so the economy runs smoothly and grows at a steady rate (Stiglitz, 2002). In other words, if a country is having trouble paying off its loans to the World Bank, the IMF will assume the debt. In exchange for the IMF assuming this debt, the government must comply with IMF regulations such as privatizing one's economy, deregulating trade, removing all barriers/taxes on trade, and lowering labor and environmental standards. One of the

criticisms of free trade is that the IMF concerns itself only with the nations' GDP and export growth, not with the quality of life for the working class (Dollar & Kraay, 2004; Oxfam, 2004; Stiglitz, 2002).

The framework for this system of multinational trade was provided by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (hereafter, GATT), implemented by President Truman in 1948 (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002). Under the guidance of GATT (which was replaced by the WTO in 1995) the World Bank and IMF would redefine the world economy, helping to increase global exports from US\$94 billion in 1965, to over \$5,400 billion in 1999 (Sklair, 2004, p. 72). During this time of rigorous promotion of global trade, the world economy grew closer and faster than ever before.

Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the World Bank and IMF loaned billions of dollars to the developing world throughout Latin America and Southeast Asia. "Overall, between 1972 and 1981, the external debts of developing countries increased sixfold, reaching \$500 billion by 1981" (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002, pp. 113-114). Yet it was the oil industry that benefited most from this exchange, literally fueling the infrastructure of developing countries. Oil producers then deposited their profits, which the banks used to continue making sizable loans (nicknamed Petrodollars) to the developing world (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002, p. 113). Profits plummeted, however, when developing nations could no longer repay their debts.

By the early 1980s, the world felt the impact of the massive loans of the 1970s. Developing countries, particularly in Latin America, had accumulated more debt than they could repay, (Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002, p. 113-115). The IMF responded by

restructuring those loans under the condition that these developing nations would liberalize their economies. These nations had previously employed strategies such as regulation, planning, state ownership, industrial policy, and fiscal management to gain the ability to pay off their loans (Yergin and Stanislaw, p. 109). They were now forced to lower taxes, cut government spending, discard tariffs, and most importantly, open their markets to foreign trade.

For the leaders of the global economy, these poverty reduction strategies highlighted the need for a global trade infrastructure (Gilpen, 2001; Stiglitz, 1999; Yergin & Stanislaw, 2002). That is, instead of advocating classical, liberal, free trade economics, the leading financial institutions were now creating rules concerning trade regulation, government spending, privatization, and so forth. In other words, free trade was not free at all. Countries had to adhere to strict policies if they wanted admittance into the world economy.

After more than a decade of laissez faire economics brought on by the Reagan and Bush administrations, the Clinton administration formed a regional trading bloc with its implementation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (hereafter, NAFTA). This contract between the United States, Canada and Mexico removed all barriers and tariffs on trade between these nations. Consequently, many American jobs were outsourced to places where people worked for less. Simultaneously, out of the need to fill factory jobs in the cities, the Mexican government cut off public funding (e.g., water and electricity) in rural areas, coercing families to migrate and find work in the cities (Winn, 1999).

Multinational corporations, now able to escape tariffs, assumed control over the farms that families were forced to leave.

This situation resulted in devastation for Mexican peasants. Forced from their rural homelands, millions of Mexicans migrated to the cities, trying to find low paying factory jobs. Unable to afford the cost of urban living, most families constructed makeshift, shanty homes on the outskirts of the cities. And with the use of modern technology by multinational corporations, there was now little demand for manual labor on the farms (Winn, 1999). In short, “free trade” came at a high cost to the working class of all nations, rich and poor.

Global Trade and Public Opinion

As the public became increasingly aware of the growing gap between core and peripheral economies, so grew the public scrutiny of economic globalization. Grassroots movements such as Oxfam’s Make Trade Fair campaign gained increasing support in the late 1990s from those who shared a vision of a global economy that fostered prosperity for all nations, not just those with political and economic power. Other Americans may share less concern about the fate of developing nations than the security of their own livelihood, fearing that their own jobs might be outsourced. Thus, the perception of globalization has evolved since the initial usage of the term in the early 1980s. Likewise, people still struggle with the meaning of globalization, both its causes and effects.

The purpose of this thesis is to analyze and evaluate free trade rhetoric in the post-Seattle climate. Economics, like any human process, is contingent on human discourse.

Therefore, we must try to understand the attitudes behind the push for expanding free trade if we want to make sense of its success. By studying the rhetorical strategies used to argue both for and against free trade, we can gain a better understanding of the knowledge, values, concerns, and viewpoints making free trade possible.

As the global economy changes form, people continue to negotiate its meaning. Terms like liberalism, free trade, fair trade, human rights, workers' rights, and environmental rights are constantly in flux. At the same time, access to information, public debate, societal values, private concerns, and use of language all contribute to our conceptions of an ideal economic system. In short, how we communicate about world trade will undoubtedly shape the future of the global economy.

The task of this thesis, then, is to unveil the power of discourse in the global economy. Likewise, we must observe the key actors in this discourse, as well as the rhetoric they employ. As the debate over free trade continues, opposing interests emerge, each seeking greater control and employing persuasive discourse to attain its version of an ideal global economy. For advocates of free trade, this ideal involves trade between nations barring any regulation on trade, labor or the environment. For advocates of fair trade², this ideal involves a far more regulated system of trade "which aims at sustainable development for excluded and disadvantaged producers" (Fairtrade Foundation, 2006). To that extent, fair trade advocates believe the global economy should allow government regulation when it is in the best interest of the people.

² Fair trade advocates are often and inaccurately referred to as the "anti-globalization" movement, a problematic misconception I will address in my analysis.

Several actors participate in the rhetoric of free trade. Public officials ultimately determine how their nations will enter the global economy or if they will enter at all. Their discourse, however, is largely influenced by financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, responsible for loaning capital to the developing world and determining how it will repay its debt. Overseeing the entire process is of course the WTO, setting the standards for how nations will engage in trade. Multinational corporations also influence the conversation, wielding the power to work with whichever nations will accommodate their production with the most appealing labor and environmental standards. Together, all of these voices help contribute to the public discourse of global development economics.

Free Trade and the Power of Think Tanks

Over the past thirty years, a powerful group of voices has emerged in the debate over trade: the unique and extremely influential collection of Washington think tanks. Think tanks may be defined as research organizations used to provide advice on specific issues. Such independent think tanks include the Cato Institute, American Enterprise Institute and Hoover Institute, among several others. The term “independent” may be misleading, however. While these institutes do not receive funding from special interests groups per se, they do receive generous donations from various sources: corporations, entrepreneurs and private foundations that share their political and economic views. Cato, for example, receives funding from Federal Express, Philip Morris and many private foundations including the Sarah Scaife Foundation and the David, H. Koch

Charitable Foundation, helping Cato to maintain an annual budget of \$6 million (Stefancic & Delgado, 1996, pp. 69-70).

Since the 1970s, think tanks have been widely used by the by the political and economic right in the United States, engaging in what Stefancic & Delgado (1996) refer to as a “war of position.” Unlike a war of maneuver, a war of position “occurs as political actors develop their ideological stances” (p. ix). According to Stefancic & Delgado, this war of position has resulted in a major ideological shift in the United States over the past few decades. While liberal intellectuals have flocked to the academy, those on the right have been recruited by wealthy foundations that share their views (p. x). The authors note:

One should not be surprised to discover that foundations with such origins hesitate to support the development of intellectual positions that might cast some doubt on the virtues of capitalism—or at least the distribution of foundation resources would be skewed in the direction of supporting those who support capitalism. (p. xi)

Thus, there is an obvious and stark bias found in many Washington think tanks, which according to Stefancic & Delgado (1996), are partly responsible for an ideological shift to the right in U.S. public opinion.

So while Cato may technically serve as an independent voice, it receives hefty financial support in exchange for its political biases. This support has enabled Cato to develop into one of Washington’s biggest power players over the past decade (Stefancic & Delgado, 1996). Through their research and editorial writing, Cato influences both public policy and public opinion on a daily basis. Lobbying public officials, providing testimony before Congress, advising the Clinton and Bush administrations, and writing

for major periodicals such as the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and the *Washington Post*, Cato has made a major impact on the tide of public affairs over the past decade (Stefancic & Delgado, 1996).

Four things now seem clear. First, the Seattle protests created a spark in the debate over world trade. Before these events, there was little public dialogue over quality of life in developing nations. Second, many actors influence public opinion on the state of the global economy and thus shape this debate. From financial institutions to grassroots movements, the dialogue is constantly in flux. Third, new media (e.g., the Internet) have played an important part in this debate. Websites have contributed much of what people know and influenced how they feel about the global economy.

Finally, we ought to give more attention to Washington think tanks, for as much influence as they have, they are hardly scrutinized in the same manner as public officials. Yet their views are drastically shaping public opinion, today more than ever. A particularly strong voice in this discussion is the Cato Institute. This thesis will examine the free trade rhetoric of the Cato Institute in the post-Seattle climate. It will analyze the arguments presented in support of free trade in Cato's editorials written after the Seattle protests and for the general public.

In the following chapter, I will examine the work of several scholars to provide a theoretical framework necessary for understanding Cato's rhetoric. It will explore not only the literature in the rhetoric of economics (e.g., McCloskey, 1998), but also the work in other areas applicable to the context of this thesis, such as the rhetoric of

administrative power (e.g., Wander, 1984; King, 1976) and the rhetoric of social movement response (e.g., Griffin, 1952).

Chapter Three will explicate the rhetorical strategies Cato employs to promote free trade, explaining the functions of those strategies, as well as their significance to the debate over free trade in general. Finally, the conclusion of this thesis will address the significance of Cato's rhetoric as it applies to public discourse in general, and the implications of this study for a rhetoric of economics. In short, I hope this thesis will shed light on the power of rhetorical discourse to shape the global economy.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework and Method

We may define rhetorical criticism as the unveiling of persuasive messages in human discourse. We should also recognize that persuasive discourse becomes most prevalent in the face of uncertainty, situations in which people lack the information necessary to make unquestionably correct decisions and are unable to determine fully the outcome of those decisions (Zarefsky, 2005). In the midst of such ignorance, confusion or some combination of the two, rhetoric emerges. Those with vested interests, favoring one course of action over another, strive to advocate their positions. In the effort to persuade others to think or act a certain way, the rhetorical speaker manipulates the intricacies of language, thought and human experience, hoping to convert the undecided.

In 1980, at the University of Iowa, scholars from several fields formed an interdisciplinary group to study rhetoric, not in relation to what existing programs in rhetoric were doing or what the study of rhetoric had done historically, but on how professional scholars argue in various fields of study (Nelson, Megill & McCloskey, 1987, pp. ix-xi). It was in this context that one of the world's leading economists, Donald McCloskey (now Deirdre McCloskey), began his work on the "rhetoric of economics." In her book by the same title, McCloskey (1998) focuses on the study of economics as a human conversation rather than an objective science. Specifically, McCloskey illustrates several rhetorical strategies economists employ (e.g., metaphor, lore of the academy, statistical significance, thought experiments), while advocating their view of the economy (McCloskey, 1998, p. 24-27).

McCloskey (1998) analyzes the rhetorical strategies used in economic discourse, revealing that even economists, when trying to speak objectively, employ literary and persuasive strategies to support their claims. In this way, the expert discourse of economics is really an “economic conversation,” a human conversation (p. xix). Because all human discourse is rhetorical, it follows that all scientific discourse is rhetorical (p. xx). Economic discourse is no exception. Therefore, “a literary criticism of economics is just a way of showing how economics accomplishes its results” (p. xxi). McCloskey executes her literary criticism through careful analysis of rhetorical strategies used by influential economists. It is important to note that McCloskey is writing about economic discourse specifically within the economic community. In other words, McCloskey is interested in how economists communicate with other economists.

As discussed in Chapter One, economic debates are becoming increasingly public. The politics of economic policy have significantly impacted mainstream discourse and fiscal policies in the United States (Aune, 2001). The public audience of contemporary economic arguments calls for an expansion of McCloskey’s work into other areas. This thesis directs the conversation about the rhetoric of economics into the debate over globalization, centering on notions of free trade and fair trade. The public rhetoric of the fair vs. free trade debate reveals the role of ethos in economic rhetoric. The battle for ethos is perhaps the most important aspect in the public debate over free trade. In this chapter, after introducing the notion of ethos, I discuss specific rhetorical strategies to establish ethos in economic rhetoric.

Ethos

Aristotle asserts the importance of establishing ethos with one's audience: "The orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief, he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, in the right frame of mind" (1378a). Any successful act of rhetoric—whether a single speech or a social movement, inspired by lobbyists and CEOs or grassroots campaigns—begins with ethical appeal. If the speaker cannot convince her audience she is intelligent, concerned for the general good, and concerned for her audience specifically, none of her rhetorical strategies will have any persuasive effect.

Because the general public lacks a formal understanding of the global economy, the need for free trade advocates to establish ethos becomes especially important. Simons (1996), in his analysis of the Gore-Perot NAFTA debate on Larry King Live in 1993, discusses the theory of "rhetorical rationality," which occurs when audiences have little knowledge on which to base their decisions (p. 275-276). Therefore, logical reasoning would be lost on them, and they are thus forced to side with those utilizing the most persuasive characteristics (e.g., credibility, style, and support). The idea of rhetorical rationality is especially important in public discourse about free trade. Since the complexities of the global economy can be difficult to understand for those untrained in economic theory, the public is led to base their decisions not so much on the content of the persuasive messages but rather on those aspects of discourse they do understand (e.g., credibility and style). Debaters are less likely to win support based on their statistics of

GDP and export growth. Members of the audience base their decisions on matters they understand.

For this reason, how a speaker handles himself provides internal evidence necessary for auditors to make their decisions, especially when external evidence, the facts of the case, are difficult to understand, if not absent altogether (Simons, 1996, p. 282). In the case of Gore and Perot's debate over NAFTA, little external evidence was given, and auditors were left to decide purely on the internal evidence available (p. 282). Had the audience been more informed about the issue, credibility would have been a less important factor.

Thus in the context of the debate over free trade, an issue on which the public has little external evidence, internal evidence may serve as a deciding factor for the public to base its decisions. The fair trade movement's credibility, for example, is lost to many people when the media represents the movement with nothing more than footage of the anarchist group, the Black Bloc, throwing bricks through the store windows of Gap and Starbucks. But credibility is just as important for free trade. As my analysis will illustrate, free trade advocates fight to maintain their credibility as Americans lose jobs and third world nations struggle to repay loans.

One may categorize ethos in two ways: by discrediting the opposition and establishing one's own authority. Cato discredits its opposition in through: (1) diasyrmus, (2) unfavorable metaphors, and (3) ad hominem attacks. Cato establishes its own authority by (1) using lore of the academy, (2) appropriating the values of its opposition, and (3) statistical significance. Cato does not merely employ these strategies frequently;

it centers its discourse on these very strategies. Ultimately, what each strategy shares is an illustration of Cato's attempt to establish ethos. This chapter will expand on these strategies to provide a framework for analyzing Cato's rhetoric. I will first explain the strategies used to discredit one's opposition.

Discrediting the Opposition

Concerning the debate over trade, ethos appeals most often play out as a battle of "who cares most about the poor." The participants in this debate have been forced to defend their own character in addressing free trade. As part of this strategy, both free trade and fair trade advocates have in part chosen to establish ethos by discrediting their opposition. Strikingly, as I will discuss in my analysis, both sides of the debate offer similar criticisms of each other. For example, Cato will mock the fair trade movement for being dominated by wealthy, white, North American and Northern European males, the same criticism fair trade advocates levy against groups like Cato.

Diasyrmus

Diasyrmus, the act of "rejecting an argument through ridiculous comparison" (Rhetoricae, 2003), is less often discussed than other rhetorical strategies such as ad hominem attacks and metaphors, but it is nevertheless extremely persuasive in economic discourse (McCloskey, 1998, p. 80). Cato attempts to disparage any form of government regulation by comparing it to communism. This strategy, also referred to as "straw-man"

argument, false dichotomy or either-or politics, functions to polarize the debate and eliminate alternative solutions to a problem.

Wander & Jenkins (1972) describe the attempt by the orator to persuade the audience that there are only two ways to approach a problem: the orator's way and her opponent's way. After stating her position, the orator then alludes to the disastrous effects of her opponent's philosophy, forcing the audience to side with the orator. Alternative solutions are never discussed. What makes this strategy so fascinating is the cooperation it demands from both sides. Both the orator and his opponent must buy into the either-or framework to make their ideas persuasive in opposition to each other. Each side will present the public with a solution to a problem, forcing the public to choose one of the two options given. However, alternative options will be ignored, thereby creating the illusion that a problem must be handled in one of only two ways. Either or politics is used to limit the spectrum of solutions to a problem. In the present context, it is the rhetorical strategy to limit ideas that are allowed in the discourse addressing globalization, thus limiting who participates and thus who determines the future of the global economy.

Metaphor

The metaphor is a useful tool for persuading public audiences. Burke (1969) describes metaphor as a form of perspective, "a device for seeing something in terms of something else" (p. 503). By comparing one object or concept to another, we are able to view that object in greater depth, from a clearer perspective. "[I]t is by the approach

through a variety of perspectives that we establish a character's reality" (p. 504). When one has difficulty understanding a concept, it is appropriate that she try to see that object in terms of something she does understand, thus connecting the unknown to the known.

In the realm of economics, often-used metaphors include "demand curves," "game theory," "friction," and others (McCloskey, 1998, p. 44). Economists refer to these metaphors as "models," but they are metaphors all the same. And while necessary to help us understand economic theories, many people—including economists—overlook the metaphor itself (p. 45-46). "The metaphors of economics often carry in particular the authority of Science and often carry, too, its claims to ethical neutrality" (p. 47). As with rhetoric in general, economists need not avoid metaphors, but they must recognize their dependence on them. "The unexamined metaphor is a substitute for thinking" (p. 46). The problem is that most economists fail to recognize their use of metaphor and likewise fail to be objective (p. 45-46).

In the debate over free trade, the use of metaphor becomes increasingly important, for, as Burke (1969) explains, metaphors are most useful when describing those things we do not understand. For most people, this list includes the global economy. Through metaphor, the act of comparing the unknown to the known, we may gain a deeper understanding of the economy. However, metaphors can also be misleading, especially when taken literally.

Cato employs a wealth of metaphors in their free trade rhetoric. For example, it refers to government regulation as dictatorship, prisons, burdens, and so forth. My analysis will explicate such metaphors, which I label metaphors of oppression, in the

attempt to fully understand their function and potential effectiveness. Cato also employs metaphors of war, comparing free trade to a weapon, specifically a weapon in the United States' War on Terror. Recognizing that much of the general public lacks a formal training in economics, such metaphors are especially significant. In other words, if the content of the debate sounds foreign, audiences have reason to treat metaphors more seriously.

Ad Hominem Attacks

Cato's free trade discourse is a response to the criticism of free trade, led by the fair trade movement, which ultimately took form at the "Battle in Seattle." Those in power (e.g., G-8 nations, multinational corporations, and wealthy entrepreneurs) are fighting to maintain their influence over the global economy as the fair trade movement challenges their control. King (1976) specifically points to four strategies used by confronted elites in the effort to maintain their power: "ridicule: humor as counterrevolution," "crying anarchy," "setting impossible standards," and "co-optation" (p. 128-131). The first strategy, ridicule, attempts to embarrass the movement and hopefully weaken it. The second strategy, crying anarchy, associates the social movement with anarchy or extremist politics, thereby scaring the public into believing their society is in jeopardy. By associating fair trade advocates with unruly protesters, the public is lead to reject their cause. "Setting impossible standards" refers to the power to define the terms and set the standards in life. King notes, "Today the victor's definitions are everyone's definitions . . . His vision of the world seems the only vision"

(p. 127). Thus, Cato attempts to define certain actions (e.g., regulation, protection, government intervention) as communist, thereby giving those policies a negative connotation in mainstream American discourse. If Cato is able to associate its vision with those ideals held highly in the United States, as well as associate their opposition with dictatorship, they have already won the debate. Finally, the strategy of co-optation refers to the programs set by the elite in order to help its opposition. The idea behind this strategy is that concessions make it more difficult for opponents to wage criticism. In the case of free trade, governments will co-opt developing nations in the form of food or debt relief. While these programs help those countries temporarily, the structures creating such poverty are still in place. Yet, when the public observes this ongoing charity, they fail to see the need for radical change.

Establishing Authority

In conjunction with the rhetorical strategies used to discredit one's opposition, ethos also involves strategies to establish one's own authority. Through its use of "lore of the academy," Cato bolsters its assumed role of an economic expert, thereby appearing intellectually superior to the fair trade movement. Next, by appropriating the positive values of the fair trade movement, Cato appears morally superior as well. Finally, through the rhetoric of economics statistics, Cato attempts to cement its arguments supporting free trade. I will now discuss some of the literature focusing on these strategies, beginning with lore of the academy.

Lore of the Academy

One of the primary strategies used to establish authority is what McCloskey (1998) refers to as “lore of the academy,” the notion that economists have a certain expertise, an economic understanding the layperson lacks. According to this logic, then, the public should trust the economist and not question her wisdom. This strategy can be employed through several methods. Some economists exploit the unequal relationship between the educated economist and her audience by neglecting to explain key components of her analysis, assuming the audience should understand those components already (p. 35). When the audience is not given any explanation of the economist’s methods, they are forced either to take the economist at her word or admit their ignorance in asking for an explanation. This maintains the power of the economist and her ability to control the rhetorical situations through her expertise.

Put simply, economists often try to speak over their readers’ heads rather than connecting with them. As my analysis will show, in the case of Cato, the think tank often tries to justify third world poverty in the name of economic theory. Its audience is supposed to accept its argument based on the expertise of the institute and of economists in general. But there are several other methods by which experts wield their power as well. Concerning the public sphere, we observe other phenomena, such as “technocracy” and “mystification.”

In the realm of public affairs, Wander (1984) refers to this strategy as “technocracy,” a political trend beginning with the Kennedy administration in the 1960s.

This administrative strategy is premised on the belief that public affairs should be left to the experts, not the public. Technocracy works as long as the public stands back and lets the experts do their jobs. Thus, the government maintains secrecy, withholding knowledge the public lacks. Today, officials justify technocracy in the War on Terror, claiming that if the public were to learn what the government knows, that would be a risk to national security.

As my analysis will illustrate, Cato, too, plays the role of the technocrat, employing a rhetoric that suggests the public should simply trust those in charge to run the economy efficiently. When it addresses the fair trade movement, for example, it employs a condescending tone, one that suggests fair trade advocates are misled and lack the proper knowledge to make intelligent economic decisions. Not only is the public supposed to feel safe in their ignorance, they are meant to feel unqualified to contribute to the conversation.

Woodward (1975) discusses the “mystifications” used by one culture over another in the attempt to gain and maintain power. In this process, no tool functions more effectively than language. “Knowing one’s place in the world is a major step towards accepting it” (p. 300). Knowledge is critical for elites to maintain control. Economic experts use mystifying language to maintain power. In the case of trade, we may apply this concept to the relationship between Core and Periphery (metaphors used describe countries’ economic statuses). The term, “Core” refers to wealthy, developed nations, whereas the term “Periphery” refers to poor, undeveloped or developing nations³. The

³ See Wallerstein (2000).

term, “Semi-periphery” is also sometimes used to refer to those countries not quite belonging to either of the former groups. The danger in using such language is the false consciousness it may potentially create, members of both the Core and Periphery believing the Core is superior, thus making it easier for members of the Core to create the rules of the global economy without consent from the Periphery.

Appropriating Values

Ethos involves establishing one’s authority by appropriating the values of the opposition. The fair trade movement reflects what Griffin (1952) calls an “anti-movement” in that their “rhetorical attempt is to arouse public opinion to the destruction or rejection of a certain institution or idea” (p. 185). In this case, the fair trade movement is fighting the idea of free trade, attacking the values and assumptions of an unregulated economy. Cato, then, serves as the “defendant rhetoricians who attempt . . . in the anti-movement, to defend institutions” (p. 186). Its rhetorical objective is to arouse public opinion to defend the idea of free trade. While free trade advocates must discredit the arguments of the fair trade movement, one rhetorical strategy is to reframe the movements’ values or goals to appear similar to their own. Cato must convince the public that free trade is in both their best interest and the best interest of other nations. Cato is responding to a social movement that has challenged both the merit and character of free trade advocates. One of the ways to respond to such an attack is to appropriate the values of the movement.

Statistical Significance

Statistical significance refers to the likelihood that a particular result did not occur by chance. Thus, the greater that likelihood is, the greater the statistical significance is. Statistical significance is often and incorrectly held synonymous with statistics themselves. Ironically, statistical significance does not consider the initial significance of the data themselves (McCloskey, 1998, p. 114). Thus it is not the same as scientific significance. Statistical significance only ascertains the likelihood of getting a certain result from a certain sample. The sample itself, however, is not questioned. Thus, “it is not known whether the range picked out by the level of significance affirms or denies the hypothesis” (p. 115). In other words, the significance of the sample size is entirely subjective. Intervals, for example, are “relevant only if you have already chosen, on scientific grounds, what constitutes Big and Small” (p. 115). Accordingly, economists must begin taking into account the unpredictability of real economies. It is not acceptable for leaders to make major global-economic decisions based on sample groups if economists cannot prove those sample groups accurately reflect all people involved.

In the realm of economic discourse, statistical significance is especially persuasive (McCloskey, 1998, p. 114). Cato uses statistical significance in a variety of ways. Statistics such as GDP, per capita income and yearly exports are all used to support arguments for free trade. However, as my analysis will show, these statistics do not give the whole story. GDP and yearly exports, for example, show how much a country is producing and trading, but they do not touch on the living and working

conditions of the working class. Similarly, per capita income shows what the regions are making on average, but those numbers can be very misleading when the wealth is not evenly distributed. A median income would provide a much more accurate picture of what the average citizen really earns and how well wealth is being distributed.

Another example of statistical significance is the case-in-point argument, the claim that what applies to one, applies to all. If plan A works somewhere, it will work somewhere else. Lacking support for their claims, economists often point to single instances to back their assertions and theories. In short, case-in-point arguments persuade audiences to over generalize. The danger of case-in-point arguments, McCloskey notes, is that they lead readers to believe the economy functions in a vacuum with no outside variables (p. 26). Likewise, what works for one country at one moment at history, will inevitably work somewhere else at some other time, as well. Readers should be wary of case-in-point arguments, recognizing that their presence often reflects lack of proof for one theory or another.

Cato frequently employs case-in-point arguments to support their claims. To support the success of free trade, for example, economists and pundits will refer to the success of Taiwan or South Korea. Because those countries have done relatively well since opening their economies, the public is meant to believe all countries will have the same success. Countries not meeting the standards of those success stories, Brazil or Honduras for example, go unmentioned. Another example of case-in-point arguments falls under the category of testimonial. Often, free trade advocates such as Cato will interview those who have experienced upward mobility under economic globalization.

The purpose of this testimonial rhetoric, then, is to persuade others to associate economic globalization with upward mobility based on the testimony of a selected few.

Research Questions

The overarching research question of this thesis is, “How does Cato battle for ethos?” To answer this question, I will analyze two of Cato’s rhetorical strategies: discrediting its opposition and establishing its own authority.

RQ#1. How does Cato discredit its opposition?

- 1a. How does Cato employ diasymus?
- 1b. How does Cato employ unfavorable metaphors?
- 1c. How does Cato employ ad hominem attacks?

RQ#2. How does Cato establish its own authority?

- 2a. How does Cato employ “lore of the academy?”
- 2b. How does Cato appropriate values?
- 2c. How does Cato employ statistical significance?

Method

The debate about the merits of free trade takes many forms in numerous areas of public discourse. The challenge for this thesis was to choose a set of rhetorical artifacts that is significant both in the extent of its public dissemination and the tenor of its arguments. As research institutes dedicated to public commentary on policy issues, think

tanks often play an important role in forming American policies, both foreign and domestic. Think tanks publish research reports, policy briefs and editorials, which are valuable examples of public discourse. One of the leading think tanks in the nation's capital is the Cato Institute.

The Cato Institute was chosen as the artifact of this analysis for several reasons. First, Cato has significant influence over the public sphere. As one of the leading voices behind the Bush administration's push for the privatization of social security, the institute clearly exercises great leverage in the political community. Likewise, it is one of the leading voices in the free trade movement. With its power to access and influence national and international leaders in the global economy, it is our responsibility as communication scholars to interrogate Cato's discourse, to analyze its arguments and evaluate their merit in the realm of public affairs. It is of specific interest to this thesis that all of Cato's publications are made publicly available online. This is beneficial for conducting my rhetorical criticism because it allows me to see the full scope of their free trade rhetoric.

Not only does Cato influence public policy, it also helps shape public opinion. Widely considered the leading libertarian think tank, Cato's potential influence on public opinion is significant. Unlike speeches by WTO officials or G8 ambassadors, op-ed articles enter mainstream discourse on a daily basis. Editors at Cato write for some of the world's leading economic periodicals including the *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes* and *Fortune*, among several others.

This thesis will analyze editorials written by members of the Cato Institute and published in various national and international mainstream periodicals (e.g., the *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, and *Fortune*). By concentrating specifically on editorials written for the public, we will gain better insight into how Cato directly shapes public opinion. Cato's online archives provide 22 "research areas" including Civil Rights; Government and Politics; Domestic Issues; and International Economics and Development. Under this latter research area, 10 "topics" are provided. These topics include Economic Freedom, Globalization, Poverty, Trade, Growth and Development, among others. Under each topic, information is provided in the form of books, published studies, and opinion and commentary.

My analysis will focus specifically on Opinion and Commentary featured under the topic of Globalization. I chose Opinion and Commentary because I particularly want to analyze rhetoric that directly enters mainstream discourse, and these pieces are published as editorials in mainstream periodicals. I chose the topic of Globalization because it is the most inclusive topic listed under the broader research area of International Economics and Development. These editorials cross-sect several other important issues including trade, poverty and economic freedom. If I were to concentrate on either of those areas individually, I would ignore the others. In other words, editorials found under other topics are also provided under Globalization. Thus, studying the topic of Globalization will provide the widest scope of Cato's opinions on free trade.

In total, this thesis analyzed 34 editorials posted under the topic of globalization. After carefully reading each article, I looked for whatever rhetorical themes emerged.

For the purposes of this analysis, I considered themes to be rhetorical strategies used by more than one author. After identifying rhetorical themes, I was able to categorize them into two broad strategies of ethos: discrediting the opposition, and establishing authority. I then analyzed the editorials within each of these themes, to see if it could be subcategorized into more specific themes. After identifying the various rhetorical strategies in Cato's battle for ethos, I selected representative quotations and used these examples to write up my analysis for the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Analysis

While the purpose of this chapter will be analytical, I do wish to make one argument I believe is central to fully understanding the context of this text: Cato's free trade rhetoric is primarily a response to the fair trade movement, which took form at the WTO protests in Seattle, 1999. Both the timing and content of my artifact will support this claim. Cato's editorials in various areas date as far back as 1981. However, Cato's archives listed under the topic of Globalization posts a total of 35 editorials, the first of which was written on April 15, 2000, the same week of the IMF/World Bank protests in Washington, D.C., the second major protest in the fair trade movement, and only four months after the WTO protests in Seattle. In addition, the majority of Cato's arguments supporting free trade directly address its critics' claim that free trade hurts the poor. In addition to defending the merits of free trade, those arguments often and directly attack the character of the fair trade movement as well. It is reasonable to assume, then, that the events in Seattle and the subsequent movement it inspired, prompted Cato to respond to free trade criticism in the form of public editorials, thereby using the medium of print as its platform for defending free trade.

This analysis will explicate the rhetorical strategies Cato employs in its battle for ethos in the debate over free trade, dividing those strategies into two categories: discrediting its opposition, and establishing its own authority. In the first category, Cato uses three rhetorical strategies: (1) Cato employs *diasyrmus*, comparing any form of government regulation to the extreme left (e.g., communism and dictatorship); (2) Cato uses unfavorable metaphors to describe the fair trade movement; and (3) Cato employs

ad hominem attacks against the fair trade movement. In the second category, Cato also uses three strategies: (1) Cato employs “lore of the academy;” (2) Cato appropriates the values of its opposition; and (3) Cato employs the rhetoric of economic statistics, attempting to connect poverty to government regulation and economic growth to upward mobility for the poor. I have organized my analysis according to these rhetorical strategies.

Discrediting the Opposition

As my analysis will illustrate, the bulk of Cato’s rhetoric lies, first, in their attempt to discredit the fair trade movement and, second, in its attempt to establish authority. Thus free trade is cast as the only moral and logical choice in the debate over how nations should engage in trade. Rarely does Cato employ any real data supporting the merits of free trade, and the statistics that are used (e.g., export growth, per capita income and gross domestic product) hardly represent the poor and working class. I will begin with Cato’s attempt to discredit its opposition, discussing its use of *diasyrmus*.

Diasyrmus

Diasyrmus may be defined as “the act of rejecting an argument through ridiculous comparison” (Rhetoricae, 2005). In the context of this thesis, Cato attempts to disparage any form of government regulation by comparing it to communism. Likewise, Cato compares governments that attempt to regulate their economies to communist regimes (e.g., North Korea and the Soviet Union). By framing the issue of trade in a way that

offers readers only two choices—in this case, free trade or communism—Cato not only oversimplifies the issue but also depicts alternatives to free trade in the most extreme form. The implication is that communism failed, and so will any government's attempt to regulate its economy. This strategy, often called false dichotomy, polarization or either-or-politics, attempts to appeal to the public by showing them only the extreme alternative to the proposed action.

Lawson (July 3, 2002) employs diasymus in his response to the then-recent G-8 protests in Canada:

Both as an ideology and as a practical system, communism has utterly failed to deliver the goods. Eastern European nations are now rushing to become members of the European Union, and China is undertaking market-oriented reforms . . . One would think that this failure of communist central planning would have unleashed a groundswell of support for its main ideological alternative: economic freedom or market capitalism. (para. 1 & 2)

The function of this passage is to make the extreme contrast between free-market capitalism and its polar opposite, communism. For Lawson, one must choose only between the two; there is no middle ground. Likewise, the fall of Soviet Russia provides a strong argument for the case of free trade.

Lawson implies G-8 and WTO protestors are nothing more than communist sympathizers. “But as the anti-globalization protestors in Seattle and at last week’s G-8 meeting in Canada demonstrate, economic freedom still has a long way to go to win over the hearts and minds of many people” (para. 2). In the world Lawson creates, if one protests the rules of free trade (an ironic perspective in itself), he or she must be a communist. This rhetorical strategy illustrates Cato’s attempt to dichotomize and

oversimplify the debate over free trade by likening the fair trade alternative to a failed economic system.

In addition, Lawson's use of the term "anti-globalization," a phrase used quite frequently to describe the fair trade movement, illustrates another form of diasymus. The fair trade movement is not against globalization, and activists publicly say so. Advocates do not value an isolated world in which there is no trade between nations. Instead, they promote a fairer practice of trade between nations. Lawson's use of the term anti-globalization suggests that the movement is neo-Luddite and xenophobic, fearing both modern technology and outsiders. Thus, the fair trade movement is cast as archaic, if not absurd, thereby once again leaving free trade as the only reasonable economic philosophy.⁴

Larsson (February 4, 2002) attacks fair trade advocates (whom he also calls anti-globalization) for their unethical rhetorical strategies. He recalls a 1999 brochure published by the Teamsters, the United States Steelworkers of America, Friends of the Earth, and Public Citizen. The brochure depicts the WTO as a dinosaur "GATTzilla," carrying a barrel of DDT and crushing congress with his foot. Larsson argues:

That demagogy meshes well with the anti-capitalist ideology of less respectable groups. For example, the British National Party, the extreme right-wing nationalist party in Britain, seeks to revive industry by excluding imports. Sweden's neo-Nazi Socialist Front calls for the reinstatement of Sweden's traditional industries, "through a redirection of trade policy in favor of the greatest possible self-sufficiency and a reversion to ecological agriculture." That's right on cry with the Seattle protests that trade should be "local not global." (para. 5)

⁴ Indeed, the pervasiveness of the moniker "anti-globalization" illustrates the fair trade movement's difficulty in establishing its own credibility, but that exceeds the scope of this thesis.

After Larsson points to the extremism of certain examples of fair trade rhetoric, he engages in the same type of discourse, using a straw argument against fair trade by pointing to an extremist, neo-Nazi organization. He carefully sandwiches the Socialist Front in between the British National Party and the Seattle protests, thereby associating the former with the latter. Thus, fair trade is cast as the latest brand of neo-Nazism, again leaving free trade as the only sound economic philosophy.

Larsson follows his allusion to neo-Nazism with a warning that echoes Nazi Germany itself. He cautions, “But this is not a movement only of Naderites and nationalist fringes. The critics of the WTO and free trade have many friends inside the establishment” (para. 6). Ironically, Larsson’s language sounds remnant of a time when people feared the infiltration of Jews into their communities. Larsson warns his readers of the presence of alternative voices holding positions of power in the American government. Thus, Larsson’s strategy serves as yet another attempt to compare fair trade to an extreme political ideology (e.g., Nazism). By noting that a Neo-Nazi organization advocates protectionist policies, Larsson connects Nazism to all leaders or movements advocating protectionism, implying that protectionism is nothing more than a front for Nazism and, thus, cannot be trusted.

Dorn (January 14, 2004) juxtaposes those countries that have successfully incorporated economic reform with those that have not. “Countries that have cut themselves off from the global economy, such as North Korea, have failed to develop.” Here, Dorn implies that the refusal to enter into the global economy based on the terms of economic and political reform, puts a nation in the same ranks as North Korea. But the

reference to North Korea serves another important purpose as well. North Korea is a communist nation with a horrific history of human rights violations. Again, the attempt here is to persuade readers to connect extremist governments or organizations (e.g., North Korea) to the fair trade movement itself. The implication is that fair trade is itself an extremist movement, thereby positioning free trade to the center.

In another use of diasymus, Rahn (June 24, 2003) responds to the European Commission's decision to punish certain nations for unfair tax policies, earlier that month. "In the 1770s, a certain European nation tried to stuff a destructive tax regime down the throats of the American Colonies. We certainly ought not to let Europe try this gambit on us and our friends again, 230 years later" (para. 16). By alluding to such a crucial time in American history, Rahn's analogy serves several functions. First, most Americans will agree that the British were wrong to tax colonists without representation. Second, this practice constituted just cause for a revolution. Third, the colonists were also the underdogs in the Revolutionary War. Assuming the analogy Rahn creates, the EC is wrong; a break from the EC is justified; and those countries being penalized for their tax policies are also underdogs, exploited by a "regime." According to this logic, then, Americans above all should feel morally responsible to speak out against the actions of the EC.

Rahn (July 12, 2003) continues his attack on the European Commission and OECD's decision to penalize certain nations for their tax policies:

You are probably thinking they are going after Fidel Castro of Cuba, Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, of the rulers of several African countries—all of whom have managed to greatly reduce the standard of living and liberties of their people while increasing misery and poverty. No way. Instead, these European political

leaders and bureaucrats have declared war on the political leaders and statesmen who brought their people record prosperity and economic opportunity, and upheld the rule of law and liberty. (para. 1 & 2)

Rahn polarizes free trade and protectionism by juxtaposing liberal and nationalist governments. Not only does Rahn criticize the European Commission (hereafter, EC) and the OECD for their decision to penalize those liberal states, he also points to the hypocrisy of the law by questioning their decision not to penalize such left-leaning countries as Cuba, Venezuela and Africa, thereby placing those organizations in the ranks of Cuba and Venezuela for penalizing liberal economies. According to this reasoning, these organizations must be controlled or at least influenced by communist regimes. Thus, the EC and OECD must be stopped. They are communist sympathizers and do not respect economic freedom.

Cato's ability to contrast free trade economics only with communist regimes thus illustrates the rhetoric of diasyrmus and its potential dangers. The function of this strategy is quite simply to offer readers no viable alternatives to free trade. If given only a choice between free trade and communist dictatorship, most readers will likely choose the former, because Communism has already failed. The strategy also functions to treat all policies short of free trade as if they were inherently communist. Thus the extreme right gets pushed into the middle, and the middle gets pushed to the extreme left. As a result, leaders such as President Bush come across as middle-of-the-road, a phenomenon that benefits both President Bush and the Cato Institute—Bush for appearing more centered, and Cato for attacking a right-wing figure, thereby bolstering its claim to be

independent. Finally, alternative voices in the debate over free trade are meshed with the communist regimes in Cuba, North Korea and the former Soviet Union.

Unfavorable Metaphors

Burke (1969) describes metaphor as a type of perspective, “a device for seeing something in terms of something else” (p. 503). By comparing one thing to another, we are able to view that object in greater depth, from a clearer perspective. “[I]t is by the approach through a variety of perspectives that we establish a character’s reality” (p. 504). When we have difficulty understanding concepts, metaphors help us connect the unknown to the known. Because they are most usefully employed when describing those things we do not understand, metaphors become increasingly important in the debate over free trade. For most people, the global economy is a complex and confusing sphere, with unfamiliar concepts and jargon. Thus metaphors provide people with a deeper understanding of the economy. However, metaphors can also be used to create negative images of a movement. As this analysis will illustrate, Cato employs specifically malicious metaphors to describe the character of the fair trade movement.

For example, Rahn (June 24, 2003) compares taxation to prison. “It is often difficult for many people to move from the prison of tax oppressive regimes, but not so financial capital, which could flee by electronic means overnight” (para. 11). Here, two metaphors are used: prison and regime. Prisoners are of course being jailed against their will. No one in her right mind would choose to be imprisoned. Thus, in this light, no one in her right mind would support being taxed. Furthermore, this “prison” of taxation is

controlled by a “regime,” striking any notion that taxes may actually be used to help the economy. Regimes care only about asserting their power and try in no way to promote general public welfare. The function of both metaphors is to instill in readers the notion that taxes are inherently oppressive and no logical person would support them.

Taylor (August 31, 2002) responds to people’s criticism of President Bush for neglecting to participate in the U.N.’s conference on sustainable development. Such criticism, Taylor notes, is similar “to the lions that cry that the lamb has refused their invitation to dinner” (para. 2). He goes on to employ a similar, more graphic metaphor of the conference, had Bush attended. “The real reason the Euros are upset is that they had hoped to beat on the president like a Mexican piñata for his refusal to go along with the Kyoto Protocol and the rest of their international environment agenda” (para. 2). Taylor assumes Europe’s only motivation to have Bush attend the conference is to engage in “America bashing” and an “international smack-down.” In this light, it makes sense for Bush not to attend such meetings. He would attend only as a helpless, potential victim of unwarranted assaults. Taylor’s metaphor not only positions Bush as the potential victim, it also vilifies the U.N. as manipulative animals, preying on the weak. Thus, the U.N. is cast as a vicious attacker, interested not in dialogue, but rather in berating American leaders. Thus, the metaphor also functions to polarize the United States from the international community. According to Taylor’s reasoning, the U.N. is anti-American, so it is reasonable for President Bush to reject it.

It is also important to note the enthymeme Taylor creates. Besides the metaphor of an “international smack-down,” Taylor defends Bush’s decision not to attend for

another reason. “It’s not as if there is any real business on the table in Johannesburg either. No treatises, not protocols, not binding agreements—just a lot hand-wringing about how poverty in the third world is a Western conspiracy” (para. 3). The implied warrant is the belief that unless there is a contract or something of that nature to be signed, there is no purpose to meet; mere dialogue is pointless. Furthermore, the way to which Taylor refers to such dialogue again illustrates diasymus in that it compares criticism of Western policies to mere “conspiracy “ theories, thereby once again making critics of free trade appear foolish and unrealistic.

Reynolds (September 26, 2002) employs an unfavorable metaphor of the IMF, noting, “Once free of the IMF’s Python-like embrace, reformed IMF’s victims often adopt the exact opposite policies” (para. 6). He notes the same about Russia: “Once free from the IMF program, however, the Putin government pulled Russia out of the IMF’s suffocating squeeze” (para. 9). Reynolds also refers to Putin’s metaphor for the IMF’s offer to accept more IMF loans as a “suicide note” (para. 9). This editorial employs two metaphors, the first of which compares the IMF to a snake. The snake feeds itself on the prey of innocent creatures; the IMF feeds itself on the lives of the poor. By referring to indebted nations as its “victims,” Reynolds implies that such countries lack any autonomy in their relationship with the IMF. Citing Putin’s metaphor of a “suicide note,” Reynolds continues the theme of death. In other words, to enter into a relationship with the IMF is to bring about one’s own demise. Thus, according to Reynolds, the only way to escape such prisons is through a free-market economy. Finally, the testimonial

Reynolds provides comes not from a member of the working class, but from a leader of the developing world, a strategy to which I will return later in my analysis.

Larsson (January 15, 2002) attempts to address the “misplaced sentiments” of the fair trade movement: “Now, with the recession and increased unemployment, the protectionist sentiment is again trying to disguise itself in the clothes of global solidarity” (para. 1). Here, Larsson suggests the fair trade movement has been awaiting a moment of vulnerability, so that it may exploit the trust of the people, particularly the working class. The metaphor of clothing itself in a disguise furthers the notion that movement is untrustworthy, phony, a façade. For Larsson, that façade of “fair trade” and “global solidarity” are meant only to hide protectionist values. From this perspective, fair trade advocates cannot be trusted; they appear as a friend to the poor, but their intentions are not honorable.

The metaphors found in Cato’s discourse further reveal the think tank’s attempt to cast the fair trade movement as untrustworthy, immoral and oppressive. Given the complexity of global-economic policy debate, metaphoric discourse grows especially significant. Because average American readers lack a formal understanding of the global economy, metaphors offer saliency and comfort. Intimidating jargon is replaced by familiar images with which the public can identify. In addition, by constant use of such negative metaphors, readers may be persuaded to visualize the fair trade movement through such metaphors unconsciously. Thus, the repetition of negative images is likely to eventually influence audiences in their own perception of the movement.

Ad Hominem Attacks

Through ad hominem attacks, attacks on character, Cato has chosen to vilify the “anti-globalization” movement. This includes mocking the movement, questioning its intentions, and even asserting that the movement would rather see Peripheral countries in poverty than thrive economically.

DeGregori (Oct. 3, 2002) attacks the character of “Green, Environmental and Anti-Globalization NGOs” (para. 1). DeGregori criticizes the media’s rhetorical role in the fair trade movement.

The media seem to have bought into the agenda and terminology of the anti-globalization groups. For instance, a “hunger activist” for the media is someone who promotes a particular anti-technology ideology and is not someone who has actually helped people in need gain access to food in the most effective way possible: by growing more of it themselves. (para. 2)

Here, DeGregori positions free trade as the underdog, misunderstood and vulnerable to attack. From this perspective, the fair trade movement is deceptive and has succeeded in fooling the media, perpetuating the claim held in some come circles that the American media is controlled by the left. Thus, by this logic, fair trade is not really a representative for the poor. Cato uses its own channels (e.g., editorials in select periodicals) to show how the rest of the media have been fooled by the left.

Attacking the merits of the fair trade movement once again, DeGregori (October 7, 2002) gives a colorful description of then-recent G-8 protests in Genoa. “Recently we have witnessed the rise of ‘civil society’ in the form of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)—groups that claim to be the voice of the poor and powerless” (para. 1). Here DeGregori mocks the fair trade movement, using quotations to suggest these terms are

merely a façade, covering up the true character and true intentions of the protesters.

According to DeGregori, being the “voice of the poor and powerless” is an ironic claim, for these protesters neither represent nor care about the poor. Thus, the ironic tone in this passage functions to position protesters in the opposite light in which they care to be shown.

He refers to the fair trade movement as a “battle against the evils of globalization, multi-national corporations and modern technology and biotechnology” (para. 1). With an almost sarcastic use of the word “evil,” DeGregori carefully creates a melodramatic tone, making the protesters again appear foolish and unrealistic. The protesters are cast as neo-Luddite and xenophobic, fighting not against economic exploitation but instead against “globalization” and “modern technology.” This is a common strategy for Cato, casting protesters as anti progress and opposed to the idea of the world functioning as a whole.

In this editorial, DeGregori also uses anticategoria, attempting to turn free trade critics’ words against them. DeGregori describes the fair trade movement as “dominated by wealthy, white, male Northern Europeans and North Americans,” the same language often used by the fair trade movement to criticize the establishment (para. 1). By doing this, DeGregori implies that fair trade advocates are guilty of the same class structure they attempt to criticize and, therefore, are no better than their targets of criticism and their policies are no better for poor citizens.

Many of Cato’s ad hominem attacks specifically utilize the events of 9-11, attempting to associate WTO protesters with terrorists, thereby transferring the public’s

anger from those events onto the protesters in the fair trade movement. For example, soon after the attacks on 9-11, Lukas (September 21, 2001) makes the following comments about upcoming protests in Washington D.C.:

Police here can certainly deal with the activists, however frustrating the experience may be. But the symbolism of the protests is sickening. Even as Washingtonians honor their fallen, the enemies of capitalism and modernity have no qualm with further traumatizing a city still reeling -- mentally, if not physically -- from foreign attack. At the least, D.C. police forces have been stressed and deserve not to work long hours baby-sitting disgruntled college students and left-wing extremists seeking to disrupt the government in a time of crisis. (para. 2)

By noting the September 11 attacks, Lukas attempts to transfer people's anger from those events onto the WTO protesters. Lukas meshes the "symbolism" of free trade protests with the symbolism of the attacks, employing the phrase, "enemies of capitalism and modernity." Not only does the phrase make protesters appear primitive, it also associates them with the terrorists. The image of "stressed" police officers furthers his claim that protesters care about no one but themselves. The phrase, "baby-sitting disgruntled college students" functions to downplay the seriousness of the protests. Marching in the streets, according to Lukas, is just a ploy of bored, aimless college students with nothing better to do. Thus, they should not be taken seriously. Lukas continues:

New Yorkers should be especially outraged, as the upcoming protests directly mock their loss. The late Minoru Yamasaki, architect of the World Trade Center, once remarked that his creation "should ... because of its importance, become a living representation of man's belief in humanity, his need for individual dignity, his belief in the cooperation of men, and through this cooperation his ability to find greatness." Until last Tuesday, he was correct: The seemingly-mighty edifice was a symbol of American free enterprise, of the marvels that can be achieved by people working together voluntarily, free from the edicts of kings, ayatollahs, or lords. Capitalism equals freedom, and the building was, in many ways, capitalism's monument. (para. 3)

In this passage, Lukas pits the protesters against New Yorkers in the wake of their tragedy, noting that the protests “directly mock their loss.” His testimony from the World Trade Center’s architect functions to associate values such as “humanity,” “dignity,” and “cooperation” with the practice of free trade. Finally, Lukas notes, “Capitalism equals freedom.” Providing no warrants for this claim, Lukas relies solely on the vulnerable state of New York, attempting to victimize the practice of free trade along with those who died on September 11.

Lukas continues by stirring the public’s anger through vivid imagery noting, “[T]he still-smoking rubble is a reminder of the horrific consequences that can occur when adherents of a primitive philosophy commandeer modern technology in pursuit of their nefarious ends” (para. 4). First, the visceral phrase “still-smoking rubble” emphasizes the immediacy of the 9-11 attacks, implying that it is much too soon for protesters to take to the streets. Second, the term “primitive philosophy” is used to describe both the terrorists and the fair trade movement, thereby linking the two. Lukas subtly warns his reader that such “horrific consequences” may also be occur with the fair trade movement. According to Lukas, both terrorists and protesters “commandeer modern technology in pursuit of their nefarious needs.” Thus, this passage serves not only to frame the protesters as callous for choosing this time to protest, it also links the protesters with the terrorists themselves.

Lukas goes on to assert, “For the anti-globalization faithful, however, America, and the economic freedom she defends, has always been the villain, to be opposed at all costs” (para. 5). In this statement, Lukas attacks fair trade advocates for opposing both

globalization and economic freedom. In light of Bush's rhetoric that terrorists hate Americans for their freedom, Lukas' comment not only insults protesters, it compares them to terrorists once again. By stating that economic freedom is the "villain" of protesters, Lukas creates an enemy in the fair trade movement. He then links the protesters with terrorists again, noting, "Like terrorists, the anti-globalization movement is disdainful of democratic institutions. When elections don't go your way, then maybe hurling a fire extinguisher at a policeman will get your message across"(para. 5). In this passage, for the first time, Lukas links protesters to terrorists through the actions of protesters, pointing to those who use vandalism in their protest. Thus protesters and terrorists are linked not only by their supposed ideologies, but also by their methods.

Continuing the 9-11 theme, Lindsay (July 30, 2002) associates the campaign for free trade with the War on Terror:

Doing what's right won't be easy. To make real progress, a significant expenditure of political capital will be needed. But as we fight to rid the world of terror, we should likewise labor to fill the world with hope. Strengthening the bonds of peaceful commerce among nations can serve that mission – but only if the White House is willing to take on special interests that oppose it. (para. 13)

Here, Lindsay incorporates morality into the debate, noting that, "Doing what's right won't be easy." The language echoes that of President Bush in his war on terror, constantly reminding the people that America must "stay the course" in the name of freedom. Second, Lindsay links free trade to the War on Terror by drawing the conclusion that we must rid the world of terrorists in order to bring the world "hope" through "peaceful commerce." In the broader sense, those who oppose free trade also oppose the war on terror.

Preble (October 20, 2003) continues to link free trade to the War on Terror by advising President Bush to “promote free trade as a weapon against global terrorism.” Exploiting the emotional vulnerability of American readers in light of the September 11 attacks, Preble’s metaphor meshes free trade ideology with homeland security. Likewise, readers are persuaded to connect government regulation with global terrorism, leaving free trade as the only viable option for America’s national security.

Ad hominem attacks serve as a well-used rhetorical strategy for Cato, particularly in the wake of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks. By attacking the character of the fair trade movement, Cato attempts to discredit it, assuring that the public does not view fair trade advocates as ambassadors to the poor. By juxtaposing the movement with American values (e.g., freedom and democracy), Cato creates an enemy through its evil and archaic description of the fair trade movement.

Establishing Authority

My analysis thus far has explicated Cato’s strategies to discredit its opposition with diasyrmus, unfavorable metaphors, and ad hominem attacks. The latter half of this analysis will explicate Cato’s rhetorical strategies to establish its own authority. While discrediting the opposition is a crucial element of establishing one’s own authority, Cato uses explicit strategies to promote itself as a credible expert in the debate over free trade. Cato uses three rhetorical strategies in this effort: using lore of the academy, appropriating values of the opposition, and relying on statistical significance. I will begin with “lore of the academy.”

Lore of the Academy

In the context of this thesis, the technique “lore of the academy” refers to Cato’s attempt to establish authority by referencing experts. This includes Cato’s consistent choice to either cite specific economists, or, as this analysis will show, cite hypothetical economists to support their claims. By “citing hypothetical economists,” I am referring to passages including such phrases as, “economists know” or “other economists agree” but fail to actually cite any specific economist’s work. Whether the economist is real or hypothetical, Cato relies heavily on this technique as a way to support their self-proclaimed authority on the issue of world trade.

For example, Gwartney and Lawson (July 9, 2003) establish their credibility by alluding to hypothetical economists. The major premise of their argument is, “Economists know that the quality of political and economic institutions exerts a major effect on the growth and prosperity of nations” (para. 1). The minor premise is, “In general we know that the greater the economic freedom, the greater the political freedom, and the greater the prosperity for all involved. The good news is that economic freedom can be measured” (para. 1). The inherent conclusion, then, Cato’s report measures “prosperity for all involved.” However, the authors provide no evidence to support this claim; the argument works only on the authorial assumption that economic freedom constitutes “prosperity for all involved.” In the context provided, readers should believe that assertion merely because “economists know” (para. 1). Cato asserts that they do not need to provide data for their arguments; the only warrant they need to provide is the

authority of hypothetical economists. Economists are experts, and thus, we should listen to them.

Similarly, Rahn (June 24, 2003) cites more hypothetical economists in his attempt to persuade the public that “harmful tax competition” is wrong:

More objective and competent economists have clearly demonstrated that the concept of “harmful tax competition” is without intellectual merit, particularly given that most countries have taxes far above the revenue and growth maximizing rates, so tax competition can only be beneficial. (para. 13)

Rahn establishes credibility by noting that there are other economists who agree with his view of “harmful tax competition.” He does not create an argument based on economic data; he merely mentions that other economists (i.e., experts) agree with him. This strategy works only if the author’s reader is persuaded by authorial appeals, and it is most likely that she is. Because the global economy is a complex system, people rely on experts to tell them how to manage it. Thus, Cato excuses itself from providing real data based on the premise that its audience would not understand it anyway.

By frequently referencing economists, real and hypothetical, Cato positions itself on the side of expertise. For lay audiences, the mere reference to another economist may be enough to persuade them. Cato’s other strategy is to create an implied reader that agrees with its viewpoints and knows what it knows. Thus, Cato’s language often carries the tone of consensus: “Surely you agree with me” or “Can you believe what these anti-globalization idiots are doing?” This tone casts Cato’s viewpoint as that of the status quo, thus relieving itself of the burden of supporting its claims. The implied reader enforces Cato’s use of “lore of the academy.” By assuming the reader should already know something, Cato enforces its own authority (McCloskey, p. 10). Thus, Cato’s arguments

are based on its authorial tone and its implied reader, instead of the merit of its arguments and its ability to connect its data to social warrants.

Appropriating Values

In its editorials on globalization, Cato also attempts to address the needs of the poor, thereby appropriating the values of its opposition, the fair trade movement, which is generally associated with concern for the poor. Thus, some members of Cato applaud the fair trade movement for its intentions; others question their intentions altogether. But in both cases, Cato attempts to establish ethos by addressing the needs of the poor, while also appearing intellectually superior.

In the attempt to vilify the fair trade movement while simultaneously appropriating its values, Rahn (June 24, 2003) attacks the voices behind government regulation: “Most people understand that when businessmen get together to limit competition, the public interest is rarely served, and the same is true of government bureaucrats” (para. 12). Here, Rahn carefully positions “businessmen” against “the interest of the people.” His tone is anti-elitist, like the fair trade movement. Rahn’s concern is for the people, and he does not agree that a select group of “businessmen” are capable of serving those interests. Fittingly, the term “businessmen” is used only to describe those who speak out against free trade. Cato describes businessmen and women who advocate for free trade not as business people at all, but instead, ambassadors to the poor. Thus, in this case, Cato casts itself not as an economic guru, but instead, as the

only true voice for the poor. As ambassadors to the poor, Cato and its allies are on the side of global citizens that the fair trade movement strives to protect.

Lukas (Sept. 21, 2001) refers to protesters as “deeply caring” yet “shallow thinking” (para. 1). He goes on to note, “Hurtling oneself against a police barricade in protest of free trade may be fun. But it’s hardly a brave act for spoiled children of affluence” (para. 10). The language serves to mock the idea that protesters represent the poor and underprivileged; they are after all, “spoiled children.” However, the choice to refer to protesters as “deeply caring” implies that Lukas also cares because he does not question their intentions. By commending the goodwill of the “anti-globalization” movement while questioning its intellect, Lukas thereby appropriates fair trade values, while maintaining intellectual superiority.

Dorn (Jan. 14, 2004) offers a similar assessment of the fair trade movement, noting, “Critics of globalization have good intentions—to alleviate poverty and close the gap between rich and poor countries—but those ends are more likely to be achieved by economic freedom than government intervention” (para. 2). The choice to applaud fair trade advocates does several things. Instead of referring to his critics as “spoiled children,” Dorn applauds their motives, likewise implying that free trade advocates *also* wish to close the gap between rich and poor countries. But his statement communicates that assertion without having to spell it out for the reader. After all, to say, “We here at Cato also want to help the poor” would sound overzealous. Dorn gets his message across by both politely acknowledging his opposition, implying that his intentions are just as noble.

In the same breath, Dorn discredits the competence of the fair trade movement, concluding, “. . . but those ends are more likely to be achieved by economic freedom than government intervention” (para. 2). His purpose is to establish the intellectual superiority of free trade advocacy. Dorn does so by avoiding criticism of the movement’s ideals, but rather questioning the means by which they choose to promote their goals. After quickly dismissing the fair trade viewpoint, Dorn proceeds by giving a lesson in economics. Thus, the tone in Dorn’s writing is condescending. While he does not explicitly mock fair traders’ intentions, he congratulates fair traders for their efforts despite having no knowledge of how the economy is run. It is a patronizing attempt to address his opposition.

Making a similar argument, Larsson (January 15, 2002), asserts “But while some critics may be disingenuous in their push for so-called “fair trade,” others are doubtless sincere – it is worthwhile understanding why their sentiments are misplaced” (para. 1.) Like many Cato members, Larsson questions the intentions of the majority of fair trade advocates. But it is in his attempt to address the “doubtless sincere” that Larsson is especially condescending. By attempting to understand “why their sentiments are misplaced,” Larsson assumes that he has already won the debate. Instead of arguing his position, he begins by addressing how his opposition is wrong.

Bandow (April 25, 2001) both vilifies protesters and appropriates the values associated with the fair trade movement. Like DeGregori, Bandow attempts to discredit the fair trade movement through mockery:

Despite the worst efforts of violent protestors in Quebec, leaders of countries throughout the Western hemisphere concluded their Summit of the Americas by

proposing a broad free trade agreement. Curiously, globalization has become the latest cause of left-wing activists. These First-World demonstrators self-righteously pose as defenders of Third-World peoples, even as they advocate leaving the latter destitute. (para. 1 & 2)

The idea here is that the protesters are spoiled and do not deserve to speak on behalf of the Third World. That Cato also represents a First World perspective on how to eliminate Third World poverty is ignored. The words “self-righteously” and “posing” again suggest that protesters’ intentions are merely a façade. In this light, protesters are concerned only about themselves and use this movement for their own selfish interests.

Bandow carefully appropriates the values associated with the fair trade movement, asserting that, “Bringing the world’s poor into the global economy is the best hope for raising them out of poverty” (para. 1). While the passage functions as a way to discredit the protesters on one hand, it also functions to illustrate Cato’s concern for the poor, thereby establishing goodwill for the case of free trade. The argument can be made, that if Cato did not care about eliminating poverty, they would not address the poor in their arguments.

The passage also illustrates, once again, the conflation between the terms “free trade” and “globalization.” Bandow notes, “Curiously, globalization has become the latest cause of left-wing activists” (para. 2). Here Bandow mocks the movement by implying that protesters do not so much care for the poor as they do going out and causing trouble. According to Bandow’s rhetoric, such protesters find a different issue every week; globalization just happens to be the latest avenue for college students and aging leftists to let out steam. Thus, the public should not take these people or their issues seriously.

Lukas (June 23, 2000) attempts to discredit the fair trade movement by asserting that the poor have already rejected the movement's help. "Perhaps most telling is that the anti-globalization message is falling on deaf ears in developing countries, which are resisting attempts by their self-proclaimed defenders to link labor and environmental agendas to trade" (para. 2). Here Lukas rhetorically positions protesters as opposed to the interests of the poor, whom they are trying to defend. He supports his argument through testimonial:

As one Gabonese diplomat who was blocked from attending the Seattle World Trade Organization meetings noted with disgust, "[The protesters] understand nothing, and are as remote from our problems as you'd expect from middle-class whites in Washington state." Mexico's president, Ernesto Zedillo, was even more damning: "Forces from the extreme left, the extreme right, environmentalist groups, trade unions of developed countries and some self-appointed representatives of civil society, are gathering around a common endeavor: to save the people of developing countries -- from development." (para. 2)

The persuasiveness of these quotes is in their sources. The leaders of poor nations are asserting that fair trade advocates do not actually help the poor. Testimonials are strong rhetorical devices because they provide firsthand what the people in question have to say, instead of relying on statistics or theories to argue what is in the people's best interest. In this case, however, the testimonials do not actually reflect the opinions of the people in question. The question is whether or not free trade helps the poor citizens of developing nations. Lukas, however, provides the testimonials of a diplomat of one country and the president of another. The poor is left voiceless. Lukas' decision not to include testimonials from the poor and working class also reflects the ideological position of free trade advocacy. For Cato, the poor and working class lack the ability to speak for

themselves. And as the following section on statistical significance will illustrate, the poor is hardly considered in the evidence used to support free trade.

Statistical Significance

In the *Rhetoric of Economics*, McCloskey (1998) illustrates several rhetorical strategies economists employ in economics, or what she calls the human conversation about economics. One such strategy is the rhetoric of statistical significance. Statistical significance refers to the likelihood that the results of a given experiment did not occur by chance. What is not considered, however, is the significance of the samples used to achieve those results in the first place.

For example, Dorn (January 14, 2004) tells his readers why and how economic freedom will benefit all nations. Dorn begins his argument with a basic enthymeme, first making an assertion about economic freedom and then supporting it with a case-in-point argument: “Economic freedom and limited government under the rule of law are crucial for peace and prosperity in the 21st century. Globalization has helped foster political reform, as in South Korea and Taiwan” (para. 1). First, Dorn paradoxically forges “limited government” with “rule of law,” suggesting it is the government’s responsibility to enforce its own restriction from economic affairs. And why are “economic freedom and limited government” necessary? For it brings “peace and prosperity.” The warrant in this argument: If it worked in South Korea and Taiwan, it will work everywhere. But the deeper implication of the argument is that economics is universal. What works for one economy will undoubtedly work for another. Variables are not considered. Neither are

the numerous countries whose economic reforms failed to nurture the success of South Korea and Taiwan: Mexico, Brazil and Honduras, just to name a few.

Illustrating another example of statistical significance, Reynolds (September 26, 2002) employs more case-in-point arguments to advocate deregulation:

In 1982, South Korea slashed its highest income tax rate by 19 percentage points, later cutting that tax rate in half. In 1983, Mauritius cut the top tax from 70 percent to 35 percent. In 1985, Chile slashed its top tax from 65 percent to 35 percent, massively reduced tariffs and corporate taxes, and eliminated Social Security taxes through privatization. In 1986, Jamaica cut its top tax rate from 58 percent to 33 percent. In 1999, Malaysia suspended income tax altogether. In 2001, Russia adopted a 13 percent flat tax. (para. 6)

Here Reynolds employs a bandwagon argument, noting several countries that have “chosen” to deregulate their economies over the past two decades. Reynolds does not, however, provide any information on how these policies have affected the poor in these areas. Nor does he discuss the conditions upon which these countries deregulated their economies. Reynolds only wants to show that poor, developing countries want to deregulate, thereby discouraging the developed world from standing in their way. The argument works to persuade lay audiences who may not ask why those countries deregulated their economies or what the effects have been.

Lawson (July 3, 2002) notes that the protestors’ goals are to alleviate poverty, protect the environment and close the gap between the rich and poor. He then rebuts these efforts, claiming these goals can only be achieved through economic freedom, which to him means “each individual plays the role in his economic life, not the government or central plan” (para. 4). He supports this claim by citing a study, “Economic Freedom of the World: 2002 Annual Report,” co authored by him and fellow

Cato member, James Gwartney. The study finds a positive correlation between economic freedom and higher incomes for both the rich and poor. Based on that information alone, one is persuaded to believe economic freedom fosters higher incomes. The problem with applying that logic to this study, however, is that it assumes the link found between the two variables is cause and effect. But this is not a cause-and-effect study. It is cross-sectional rather than longitudinal, so it does not span any length of time. Thus it is not clear which came first for the richest nations, higher incomes or economic freedom. The United States, for example, has a long history of using government regulation at times when its economy needed a boost. For Lawson, however, the statistic is enough to persuade him that economic freedom *causes* prosperity.

Taylor (September 4, 2002) links level of income with quality of environment, arguing against the idea of environmental regulation:

[V]irtually every serious analyst is now well aware of the link between economic growth and environmental quality. Once per capita income reaches a certain point (somewhere between \$2,500 and \$9,000, dependent upon the pollutant), ambient concentrations of air and water pollution begin to decline in real terms. Analysts have also found a link between poverty and deforestation, between poverty and land degradation, and between poverty and environmental health threats. (para. 7)

Taylor begins his passage with a blatant appeal to authority, noting that economists support his position. “[V]irtually every serious analyst” is aware of this link. Therefore, there are virtually no economists who disagree, and of those who do, most are not serious about their work. In short, Taylor leaves no room for debate. Those who agree with him are experts, and those who disagree are not serious economists. His argument also assumes that economic growth is only defined as “per capita income.” He then uses

enthymeme to connect the relationship between economic growth and environmental quality, with his own position, free trade. In other words, because most economists recognize a link between economic growth (per capita income) and environmental quality, the reader should support Taylor's call for an unregulated economy. The implied warrant: Free trade equals economic growth, which equals a healthier environment.

The most important function of Taylor's argument is to make it appear that only economic growth can fight poverty, deforestation and environmental health threats. He makes three connections: economic growth and environmental quality; poverty and deforestation; and poverty and environmental health threats. According to this logic, only economic growth (which, for Taylor, means per capita income) will create a healthier environment. But many aspects of this process are left unexplored. For example, the question of why this link occurs is never asked. Perhaps, once per capita income rises, people gain the political power to regulate pollution. If this is this case, environmental regulation is still the answer to protect the environment. The point here is only to illustrate the connections Taylor wants his readers to make, as well as the plethora of data he omits from his statistics

Thus the level of significance found in Cato's statistics is debatable. They rely heavily on the temptation to assume isolated cases may speak for the entire realm of phenomena. Likewise, they choose only to mention those artifacts that support their claims. And when they conduct global studies, the significance of their findings is exaggerated. They claim links between phenomena constitute cause-and-effect relationships, a fallacy which any student taking Introduction to Statistics is bound to

catch. The danger in this type of rhetoric is that not all readers will recognize how Cato's discourse falls short of scientific research.

As this analysis has shown, Cato's rhetoric ultimately illustrates a battle for ethos in the debate over free trade. Cato has chosen to fight this battle primarily through two main strategies: discrediting its opposition and establishing authority. The conclusion of this thesis will explain the significance of these strategies, as well as the broader issues they reflect. Finally, it will address implications for further study of the rhetoric of economics.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

The free trade rhetoric of the Cato Institute reflects several broader issues in contemporary public debate. Above all, it indicates the struggle for power in the global economy, illustrating, in this case, the attempt by a political elite to discredit an unfavorable social movement. Washington think tanks—many, well-funded appendages of the far right—have tapped into legitimate, mainstream media and are thus able to disseminate their agendas in the form of public editorials. By examining the strategies of organizations such as Cato, we gain an understanding of how powerful think tanks attempt to influence civil discourse.

Specifically, the free trade rhetoric of the Cato Institute illustrates the importance of ethos in contemporary politics, particularly for public discussion of complex issues, such as the global economy. In the face of ignorance, the public is forced to base their decisions on character. As this analysis illustrates, ethos may be established by discrediting one's opposition (e.g., diasyrmus, unfavorable metaphors, and ad hominem attacks); and establishing one's own authority (e.g., using lore of the academy, appropriating values, and statistical significance). Regardless of how they are specifically employed, each of these rhetorical strategies reflects a battle for ethos, emphasizing character instead of evidence. Actual economic theory rarely enters Cato's public editorials. That is not so say Cato does not play the role of the economic expert—it certainly does. It also relies on various statistics and data to support its claims, but social-scientific methods of economic inquiry are rarely employed.

Strategies

Concerning Cato's attempt to discredit its opposition, all its strategies rely on character. Cato compares the fair trade movement to the extreme, employs unfavorable metaphors for the movement, or unleashes ad hominem attacks against it. By calling into question the character of the fair trade movement, Cato attempts to discredit the movement's efforts to speak for the poor. Once Cato is able to raise public doubt over the movement's concern for the poor, the entire movement loses its credibility.

By referring to the fair trade movement as "anti-globalization," protesters are cast as neo-Luddite and xenophobic. Cato frames the movement as "anti-globalization" for that is a much easier position to combat than the advocacy of fair trade. Globalization is a complex—perhaps inevitable—process that offers many advantages to the world. When protesters are cast as anti-globalization, they appear anti-technology and anti-progress as well. Cato claims fair trade advocates want an isolated world where countries do not interact. Then, by comparing the goals of the fair trade movement to extremes such as communism, Cato attempts to polarize the debate over free trade into a debate between capitalism and communism instead; no alternatives are provided. Again, by framing the debate in this particular way, Cato positions itself against a much weaker argument. In other words, it is much easier to discredit communism than the idea of fair trade. In addition, Cato's thematic use of unfavorable metaphors for the fair trade movement attempts to create a specifically negative image of the movement in the public mind, thus making it harder for the movement to establish credibility.

In both cases—the attempt to cast the fair trade movement as anti-globalization, and the attempt to cast its desired outcome as communist—Cato illustrates the rhetorical function of defining the terms. If the public accepts Cato’s terminology, the think tank has little left to accomplish. It is then able to debate the issues on its own terms, not necessarily the terms that most accurately reflect the reality of the situation. It also provides a much tougher task for the fair trade movement. Instead of merely protesting the practice of free trade, it has to redeem itself in the public eye, proving to uphold the values of freedom and democracy that Cato suggests it lacks.

Cato’s attempt to establish its own authority is important as well. By using the lore of the academy, Cato reinforces its role as the expert on economic affairs. The ability to cite economists, real or hypothetical, is a powerful tool, for it can intimidate the general public, often lacking a formal knowledge of the global economy. In addition, statistical significance bolsters Cato’s authority once again. Statistics are powerful tools, for, as the expression goes, “the numbers don’t lie.” But while the numbers may not lie, they may not represent the reality they are purport to either. Cato’s rhetoric functions on the premise that the general public does not know how to interpret statistical data. Cato is thus able to offer various data to support its arguments, whether or not such data truly back those claims.

While lore of the academy and statistical significance are used to position Cato as intellectually superior, appropriating the values of the fair trade movement is used to position Cato as morally superior as well. The fair trade movement already lacks the economic authority of economic voices such as Cato. So when Cato attempts to position

itself as a voice for the poor, it is a potentially dangerous moment for the fair trade movement. Once Cato is able to position itself as both intellectually and morally superior, it has won the battle for ethos. The public is then more likely to support its advocacy for an unregulated, free market economy.

Audience

To properly understand the functions of these various strategies, we must take into account the audience for whom Cato is writing. The periodicals in which its editorials on globalization appear, are largely to the right economically (e.g., *The Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, and *Fortune*). We can safely assume, then, that Cato's audience is largely to the right as well. Thus Cato is likely not trying to convert anyone through its rhetoric. Nevertheless, as my analysis illustrates, it does consistently address its opposition. On the surface, this may seem to be a peculiar strategy. Its function, nevertheless, is quite shrewd. Cato's rhetoric serves as an arsenal for its readers, a plethora of arguments its readers may use when discoursing with those who disagree with them. In other words, Cato is arming its readers to make free trade arguments in their everyday lives. Cato is not writing to convert the fair trade movement. It is writing to help its audience argue against such fair trade advocates.

We must also note Cato's implied reader, a reader who agrees with it on how to run the global economy. Cato spends little time explaining why it thinks the fair trade movement is wrong; instead, it argues why fair trade protesters are horrible people. Such bold rhetoric is based on the premise that Cato is writing for a favorable audience.

Through its assertive language, Cato assumes its reader thinks like Cato does, thus eliminating the need to establish common ground. Black (1970) refers to this type of process as the second persona, noting how “The discourse will exert on [the auditor] the pull of an ideology. It will move, unless he rejects it, to structure his experience on many other subjects” (p. 113). Likewise, Cato’s rhetoric does more than argue free trade; it sends cues to its reader on how to view the global economy. Cato’s tone suggests that Cato’s opinions reflect those of the status quo. It assumes, for example, that its readers share its views of protesters and their methods. The significance of this strategy is that it fails to provide readers with any social or economic warrants supporting Cato’s views. Cato merely assumes the position of the status quo.

The Persona in Between

Perhaps the most important function of Cato’s rhetoric is to create the illusion of representing the poor, achieved through constant use of what may be called the persona in between. Persona may be defined as the role one displays in public. For rhetorical scholars, the concept of persona has stirred much controversy over the past century. In 1925, Herbert Wilchens noted, “We have not much serious criticism of oratory” (1982, p. 41), thus calling upon scholars to study more than merely the biography literary styles of public figures, attributes of what we may refer to as the first persona. Instead, Wilchens believed rhetorical criticism required the following:

a description of the speaker’s audience, and of the leading ideas with which he plied his hearers—his topic, the motives to which he appealed, the nature of the proofs he offered. These will reveal his own judgment of human nature in his audiences, and also his judgment on the questions which he discussed. (p. 70)

And for several decades to come, this method of rhetorical criticism prevailed (Brock & Scott, 1982, p. 33).

Almost a half century later, Edwin Black (1970) expanded on Wilchens' method noting, "[E]ven after one has noted of a discourse that it implies an auditor who is old, uncommitted, and sitting in judgment of the past, one has left to say—well, everything"(p. 112). Black expanded the implied auditor, what he called the second persona, to include the more subtle ways in which auditors are influenced by public discourse. "Actual auditors look to the discourse they are attending for cues that tell them how they are supposed to view the world, even beyond the expressed concerns, the overt propositional sense, of the discourse" (p. 113). Thus, much more than the immediate purpose of a given speech affect the attitudes of the audience present.

But what is to be said of those not present, not even considered? Wander (1984) addressed this issue by calling upon scholars to find the voids in public discourse, addressing what or who is not being addressed (Wander, 1984). Who is not considered, represented or allowed to speak? Wander referred to this group as the "third persona" (p. 209). Scholars have since heeded his call, explicating such voids in several areas of public discourse. Yet it seems that public actors have also gotten more savvy in their attempt to appear as if they are representing particular minorities (in terms of numbers or power) when they actually are not.

Concerning the free trade rhetoric of the Cato Institute, its arguments suggest that free trade benefits the poor. To support this argument various statistics are employed (e.g., per capita income; gross domestic product; and export growth). All these statistics

are then lumped into the realm of “economic growth.” In reality, however, these statistics do very little to measure how much free trade benefits the poor. For example, if a wealthy group of individuals move into town, it will certainly help raise levels of per capita income. It does not mean, however, that the poor and working class are any better off. If a certain company produces twice as much product this year than last, gross domestic product looks great. But if that company does not pay its employees living wages, the poor and working class are no better off. If companies export twice as much product this year than last, export growth appears quite strong. But again, when employees lack the right to organize labor and demand better pay and benefits, they fail to reap the rewards of such apparent economic success.

So it is difficult to say where exactly the poor stand in Cato’s rhetoric. We certainly cannot say they are ignored. Much of Cato’s discourse directly refers to the idea that free trade benefits the poor. Likewise, the poor cannot reflect the third persona. However, as my analysis illustrates, the poor is not truly represented either. Testimonies of public officials in the Third World do not reflect the sentiment of the poor. Statistics such as GDP and export growth do not reflect progress of the poor either.

Thus, in the context of Cato’s rhetoric, the poor represent a persona somewhere between second and third, not truly addressed nor truly ignored. They are represented only in name. Statistics and testimonies serve as a façade, creating the illusion of representation. Unless scholars begin to interrogate how this strategy functions, organizations such as Cato will continue to parade themselves as advocates for the poor and marginalized.

Future Implications

The primary limitation of this thesis is that it does not measure the rhetorical effectiveness of the Cato Institute. This thesis does not include any quantitative data measuring public responses to Cato's rhetoric. Because Cato's voice is meshed with many other voices advocating the same agenda, it would be difficult, even with quantitative data, to determine the effectiveness of Cato's rhetoric. However, one is easily able to measure Cato's funding over the past 39 years. One may assume that if Cato's funding, accounting for inflation, steadily increases, that Cato's rhetoric has been effective, at least according to its contributors. Such information can be found at mediatransparency.org. From 1985—when it began receiving grants—through 2004, Cato has received \$18,707,458 (Media Transparency, 2006).

There are several implications for the future of this research. In addition to merely measuring funding, we must also interrogate the sources of such funding and explore potential relationships between the sentiments of those actors and the outcome of think tank research. We may also conduct qualitative research. We may, for example, interview the public to learn how much people know about Washington think tanks and what they think about them. We can also learn where the public stands in relation to the ideologies of such think tanks. Through longitudinal research, we can explore the relationship between think tanks and public opinion. Though we may not ever truly be able to measure the effectiveness of these think tanks, we can locate patterns in their research, and discover relationships between it and several other variables including public policy and public opinion.

Above all, economic rhetoric will continue to be important as we negotiate the future of the global economy. As McCloskey (1998) observes, economic theories are not absolute; they reflect a human conversation about the economy. The future of the global economy is largely influenced by the minds of a few, and it is our responsibility as communication scholars to analyze and evaluate their discourse. Most importantly, the public must recognize how select individuals and organizations can shape this human conversation about economics. In short, how we communicate about the global economy will undoubtedly affect its future.

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