

Cogno-Intellectualism, Rhetorical Logic, and the Craske-Trump Theorem

Michael H. F. Wilkinson
Institute for Mathematics and Computing Science
University of Groningen

Abstract— This paper presents a breakthrough in rhetorical logic, a promising field of science, of great value to those writing research proposals. It provides new, and utterly convincing tools for closing embarrassing gaps in your reasoning, without resorting to brute-force methods, such as actually thinking about the problem in the first place. The Craske-Trump Theorem, along with the Trump-Craske Conjecture will allow researchers in any field to use the technique of “Proof by Intimidation” fully.

I. IMPRESSIVELY LONG PARAGRAPH

I was suitably impressed by the seminal paper by Martin Trump [2], suggesting that the name Craske-Trump *Theory* would be a very impressive name, and that if anyone had a theory in search of a suitably impressive name, they could use it. It is a rare and magnanimous gesture when scientists are so selflessly prepared to attach their name to other peoples’ work. Indeed, the name Craske-Trump Theory has a distinguished feel about it, and this is just what the powerful, but underrated field of *rhetorical* logic has been looking for. Rhetorical logic is a form of logic which is used more than any other, by politicians, salesmen, and researchers writing research proposals and grant applications. It requires a particular skill in treating unknown quantities in a confident, sweeping way, which reassures or overawes the readership or listeners. In various schools of logic, things may be false, until proven true, or, alternatively, true until proven false. In rhetorical logic, unproven things are true or false as suits your need in an argument. It is therefore essential to be able to make confident assertions on any topic you were either too thick to master, or couldn’t be bothered to learn. This makes it the most cogno-intellectual of all forms of logic. It calls for obscure, but learned-sounding names, theories, and other jargon. The proposed name “Craske-Trump Theory” is inspirational for this purpose. However, I propose to make a small improvement on this name, changing it to Craske-Trump *Theorem*. It will be defined simply as that theorem you need to prove your point, whatever your point may be. I will also add further functionality, in the form of the Trump-Craske Conjecture, and the Craske-Trump-Wilkinson Operator. Before going into these extensions of Martin Trump’s work, I will describe one of the most important tools in rhetorical logic, viz. “Proof by Intimidation” [1].

II. PROOF BY INTIMIDATION

A well-known technique in mathematics is “Proof by Induction.” Reasoning using induction works along the lines of:

- prove that some property holds for the first case of a problem
- prove that *if* the property holds for any given case, it automatically holds for the next.
- Hey presto, it holds in all cases.

Induction is simple, and this is one of its shortcomings in everyday life. Mathematicians may be satisfied that induction works (in fact it is *obvious* to them that it works), but to lay people it seems unsatisfactory. Induction looks like some sort of cheap trick, that must be wrong somewhere.

The situation is very different for “Proof by Intimidation.” The aim here is to make something sound terribly difficult, using as much jargon as possible, and then ending with “so *obviously* X holds.” Though the argument may be completely obscure, even totally incorrect, proof by intimidation is understood by everyone who is too vain to admit they don’t understand you. In this context, citing the Craske-Trump Theorem in a tone implying that *anyone* in this field (regardless of the field) should know what it is, can go a long way towards achieving the goal of complete intimidation.

III. USE OF THE CRASKE-TRUMP THEOREM IN GRANT APPLICATIONS

Everyone who has ever written a grant application has run into at least one of two problems: (i) you need some property to hold for your argument but cannot prove it, or do not have the time before the deadline, and (ii) you have a *totally* new idea, which does not seem to connect too well with any of the topics in the call for proposals. In the first case, the Craske-Trump Theorem is the tool of choice, if we define the Craske-Trump Theorem as that theorem which will prove any proposition we happen to need. In this way the Craske-Trump Theorem is to logic what Skinner’s Constant is to physics. Skinner’s Constant is that number which your result must be added to, subtracted from, multiplied with or divided by, to get the right answer. Care must of course be taken that we do not use the Craske-Trump Theorem to prove things that are *patently* wrong, but only as a stop-gap measure for areas of doubt.

In the second case we may require some intimidation to suggest the new idea is in fact part of some undefined, but well respected scientific tradition. In this case the title *Trump-Craske Conjecture* can be applied to any new research question to give it the required dignity.

Mathematicians will of course object that this whole reasoning is not obviously correct. This, however, is important. Anything already proven by mathematicians is by their definition *obvious*, and therefore does not need the benefits of rhetorical logic, and the Craske-Trump Theorem. To formalize matters for mathematicians, we will introduce a logical operator, called the Craske-Trump-Wilkinson Operator, which has a symbol \mathcal{O}_{CTW} . If P is some proposition then $\mathcal{O}_{CTW}(P)$ is *always* true.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

I have shown conclusively that the Craske-Trump Theorem may work wonders in the case of grant applications. By implication, it should be workable in many other areas. In fact, the Trump-Craske Conjecture States that the number of uses for the Craske-Trump Theorem tends to infinity, as more and more people use it. Since this is only a conjecture at this point, more work is needed on the foundations of rhetorical logic. I am confident that the Craske-Trump Theorem will be instrumental in proving its own worth, and indeed, validity.

REFERENCES

- [1] J. Cohen. On the nature of mathematical proof. *The Worm-Runner's Digest*, 3(3), 1961.
- [2] M. Trump. Theoretical impressiveness. *Annals of Improbable Research*, 5(4):2, 1998.