

#### Value

An amount considered to be a fair and suitable equivalent for something else...

Worth in usefulness or importance to the possessor; utility or merit...

A principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable...

#### System

A group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements forming a complex whole.

A functionally related group of elements...

An organized set of interrelated ideas or principles.

A social, economic, or political organizational form.

#### Principle

A basic truth, law, or assumption...

A rule or standard, especially of good behavior...

The collectivity of moral or ethical standards or judgments...

A basic or essential quality or element determining intrinsic nature or characteristic behavior...

Definitions from dictionary.com

## In this lecture...

- Value System
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- Connections
  - Values
  - Attitudes
  - Assumptions
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  - Text
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  - Received

This is an interesting part in the class for me. It's when I ask you to look inward to discover more about how and why you respond to arguments in the way that you do.

# Value Systems



For the purposes of this class, a value is a “principle, standard, or quality considered worthwhile or desirable” and a system is “an ordered and comprehensive assemblage of facts, principles, doctrines, or the like...” (dictionary.com). So if we put the two together, we have an internalized group of qualities or principles that one finds worthwhile or desirable.

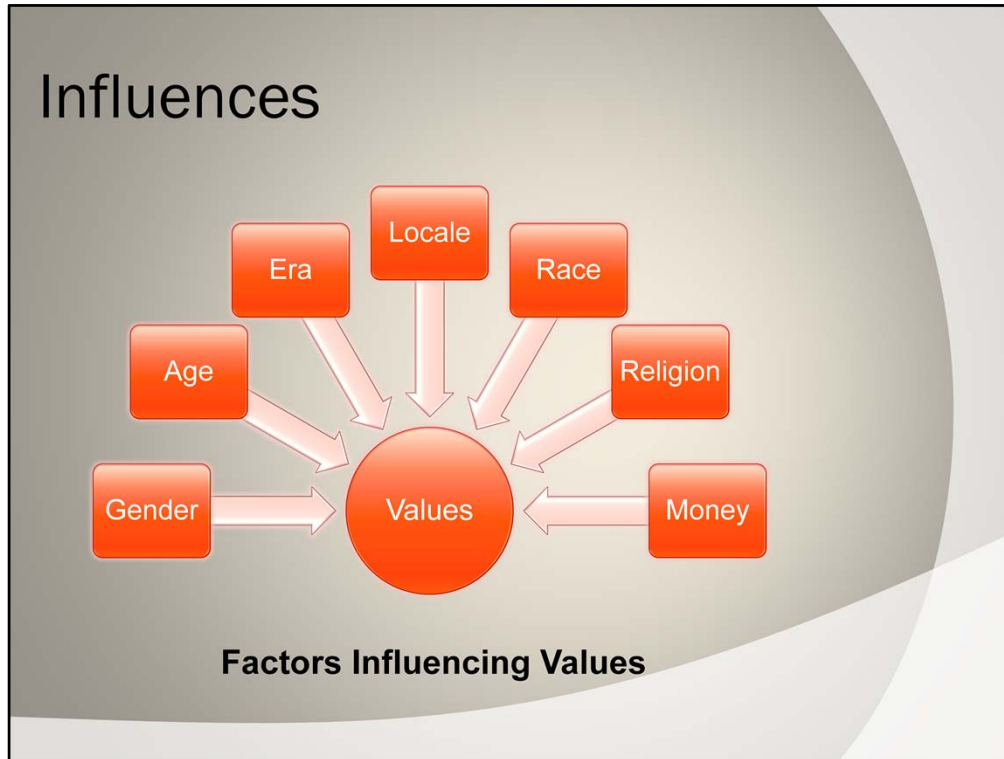
In any group of people there will be a wide range of value systems at work; no two will value exactly the same things to exactly the same degree. And each person’s value system affects the way the world is viewed and engaged.

What are your principles?

How do your principles affect your decisions?

When faced with choosing between one principle and another, how do you decide?

Do you expect others to live up to the principles you believe to be important?



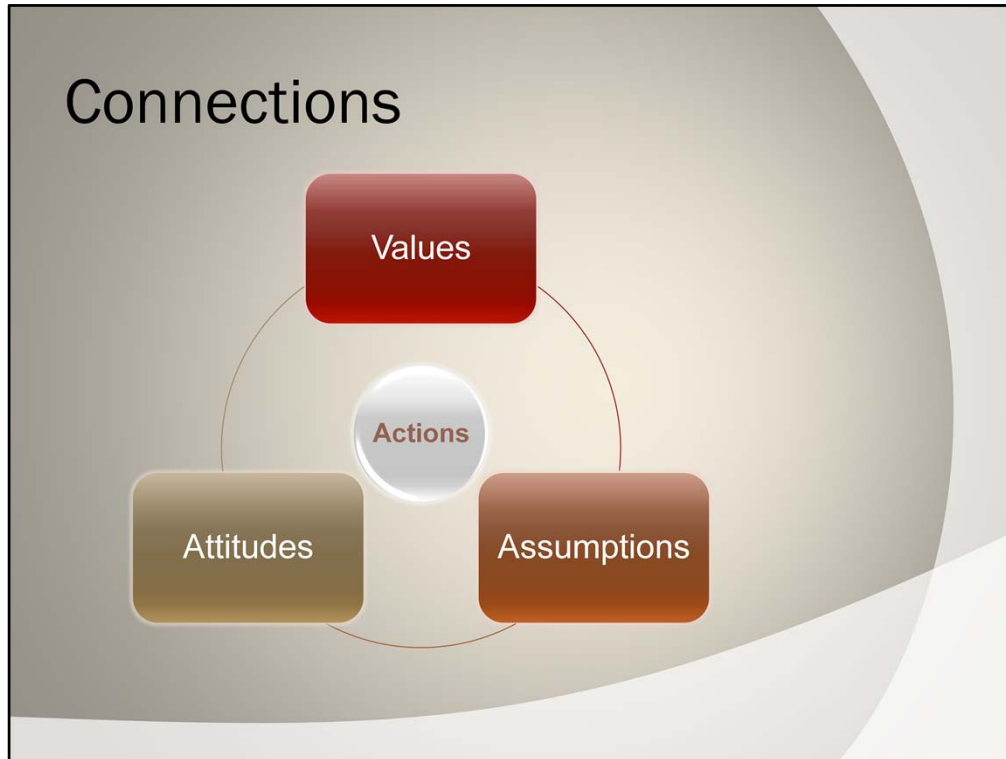
Many factors influence the way our values develop. Some are as fundamental as our race, gender, age, and even the birth order in a family. The time and area in which we grew up has a big effect. So does our socio-economic status and faith.

Sharon Begley points out that “What we believe determines what we see.” She offers evidence in the form of two studies which found that women are perceived as responding emotionally and men appropriately by participants viewing a series of photos. She wrote, “[W]omen in the photos felt sad, angry or afraid because they were ‘emotional,’ but the pictured men felt those emotions because they were ‘having a bad day’—even when the expressions and their explanation was identical.” (<http://www.newsweek.com/id/203458>). Such perceptions, held by both men and women, have an effect on the way females see not only themselves but also the rest of the world.

“Driving while black” is a phrase describing racial profiling applied to drivers. The government and most police departments claim there’s no real problem and that racial profiling is not a significant issue. However, a careful study done by Prof. John Lamberth discovered that on the New Jersey Turnpike “73.2% of those stopped and arrested were black, while only 13.5% of the cars on the road had a black driver or passenger.” The high rate was also despite the finding that black drivers committed no more traffic offenses than white drivers. (<http://academic.udayton.edu/race/03justice/dwb03.htm>). It’s clear that the police feel far differently about racial profiling than those being stopped because of their skin color. The police are reacting to unrecognized assumptions they make about their law and order values.

Michael Moore writing in *Time Magazine* said Bernie Madoff “stole \$65 billion from some already quite wealthy people. I know that’s upsetting to them because rich guys like Bernie are not supposed to be stealing from their own kind.” Why did Madoff do that? He certainly couldn’t spend that much money in a lifetime. He clearly valued money and the power that came with his position more than he valued his friends – from whom he also stole vast sums. Moore also asked, “And what of Madoff’s clients themselves? What did they think was going on to guarantee them incredible returns on their investments every single year — when no one else on planet Earth was getting anything like that? Some have admitted they did have an inkling ‘something was up,’ but no one really wanted to ask what it was that was making their money grow on trees. They were afraid they might find out it had nothing to do with gardening” ([http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1894410\\_1893837\\_1894189,00.html](http://www.time.com/time/specials/packages/article/0,28804,1894410_1893837_1894189,00.html)).

Clearly, Madoff’s value system was not the only one in need of attention.



While we rarely overtly consider the values we hold, they are always acting upon our decision making processes. Values affect the attitudes we hold as well as the assumptions we make. And all of those affect the arguments we make or reject and the actions we take in complex situations.

The officer who deals with a lot of street crime may develop an attitude that most people of color are criminals. Since the officer values law and order, when someone of color is driving in an “unusual” area or just driving in general, that person is suspect because of the assumptions being made by the officer.

The Democrat railed against policies of George Bush; now the Republican rails against the policies of Barack Obama. In both cases it is more likely the president’s political party has evoked a greater response than the content of the policies merit. This is because of the values held and the assumptions being made on each side of the issues.

Many Christians view Muslims with a deep suspicion, and the reverse is equally true. They need not know anything about one another other than the label of their faith in order to make assumptions about the other person. Each is responding to values and assumptions born of their respective religions.

The thin person looks at the fat person and sees someone with little self discipline, without ever learning what factors may influence the other person’s choices. The wealthy may hardly even recognize the poor or the disadvantages that work to keep them poor, and the poor may develop bitterness toward wealthy people in general.

The values we hold – for thinness, law and order, faith, politics, and all other aspects of life – cause us to make assumptions about others. We act on these assumptions, these stereotypes, even if we do not recognize that we hold them.

# Establishing Value

- Time spent
- Money spent



Look inward for just a few moments. What is it that **you** value? What assumptions are you likely to make because of those values? If you've never thought of what your deepest values might be, you can look at some external signs to help you along.

I've been told that if I want to discover what someone valued, I should look to the ways in which that person spent **time** and **money**. What does the way you spend your time and your money say about you?

Remember the old adage, "do as I say, not as I do"? It's a reference to the way people act on their real values even when they are saying something else entirely. The many instances in which politicians have been caught doing the very things they caution others not to do is an example of this. We can also look to some of the most powerful celebrities, such as Rush Limbaugh repeatedly attacking drug abusers while deep in the throes of his own addiction, to see how "actions speak louder than words" even when the words are being shouted over and over and over again.

Our values are more clearly revealed in what we do than in what we say.

## Values in Words



Glenn Beck

Let me ask you something.

Someone comes across the border in the middle of the night. Why are they doing that?

Really three reasons. One, they're terrorists; two, they're escaping the law; or three, they're hungry. They can't make a living in their own dirtbag country.

*The Glenn Beck Program.*  
Premier Radio Network. 4/27/09

The words we use often reveal our attitudes about others. In this excerpt, Glenn Beck is not only characterizing all of the people who come into the country illegally as belonging to one of three groups - terrorists, criminals, or poor – he's also characterizing Mexico with the unflattering adjective of "dirtbag." Regardless of how he attempts to modify or expand his thinking on the subject, he cannot escape these words that reveal his lack of respect for other people and other nations.

(The entire quote can be heard at Media Matters:  
<http://mediamatters.org/mmtv/200604280003> )

What is equally problematic is that Beck will respond to the arguments on a variety of subjects made by others based on these assumptions. We all respond to arguments based on our own values and assumptions, especially if we have not examined our values to see if they conform to what we **think** we value.

# Seeing Values



<http://retrocomedy.com/2009/07/01/the-15-creepiest-vintage-ads-of-all-time/>

These are real ads from the 1950s and early 60s. In each case the man is clearly dominant, and the woman is receiving his righteous control, anger, or wrath. These ads can be thought of as reflective of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century attitudes and values. But social values have changed in the past 50 years, and an advertiser who tried to use this type of campaign today would be laughed out of a project – or fired for lack of appropriate sensitivity.

Notice that all three ads incorporate some measure of violence against women. One has turned her into a trophy; one makes her a child; and the last implies that not choosing the right office product is an offense worthy of the death penalty. And yet, in all three the woman is a highly attractive representative. Even while being spanked she maintains a ladylike posture and wears high heels.

Examining advertising can reveal a great deal about a society's beliefs and expectations.

## Analyzing Values

- Sexy adult hairdo
- Arched brow
- Baby blue eyes
- Porcelain skin
- Pouty lips
- White dress
- White teddy bear

○ **CHILD sex ok**



Here's another ad from the same era. She's charming, isn't she? Can you tell if she's 18 made up to look like a 10-year-old or a 10 year-old made up to look like she's 18? Notice how the elements are at once **ambiguous** and **strong** in relaying the message.

The sexy adult hairdo and arched brow contrast with the clear and wide blue eyes that lack the sort of smoky makeup one would expect with such flirty curls. The porcelain skin, full cheeks, and broad nose whisper child while the pouty lips, slightly parted and glossed, scream Angelina Jolie. A starched white sundress and perfect white teddy bear - licking her delicate long-fingered hand - complete the picture and the message.

What is that message? Child innocence is **SEXY** and child sex is **okay**. This is an ad that places the values of sexual pleasure and product profits above the safety of children.

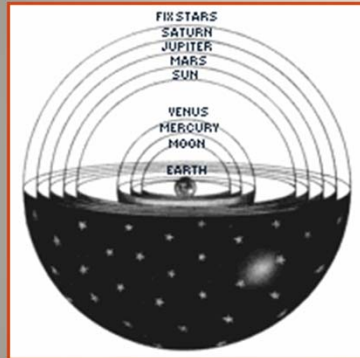
## Editorial Values



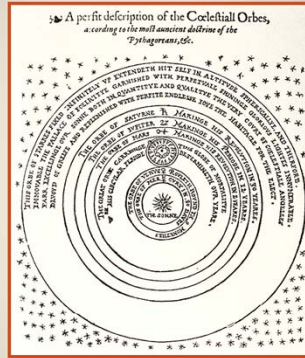
Editorial cartoons are another excellent source for and of warrant analysis. In this example, the cartoonist, Chan Lowe of the South Florida Sun Sentinel, skewers three recent “read my lips” hypocrites. Former Vice-President Dick Cheney is reputed to be one of the masterminds of the US torture policies during the past administration even while extolling the virtues of the Geneva Convention. John Edwards, former presidential and vice-presidential candidate who lauded “traditional values” of marriage, was caught in a tawdry affair. And Bristol Palin, daughter of vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin, had a baby with her boyfriend – without benefit of marriage, even though her mother was running on staunch “conservative values”.

Editorial cartoons often employ caricature – the cartoonish exaggeration of features – and symbols to quickly convey their message.

# Effects on Arguments



**Ptolemaic View**  
Universe as an onion with Earth at the center.



**Copernican View**  
Universe as heliocentric (sun at center) with fixed stars at the edges.

What happens when values and assumptions collide with **fact**? Too often values and assumptions win out. It takes a very strong critical thinker to alter thought and behavior based on facts that contradict feelings, beliefs, and assumptions based on values.

Ptolemy was a Roman astronomer who lived from 41 to 68 A.D. He held a vision of the universe based as much on his religious principles as his scientific ones. For Ptolemy everything revolved around the Earth, which was at the center of the universe. His assumptions were made based on the limited observations he was able to make combined with the philosophical assumptions to which he had been exposed. Nicolai Copernicus' theory of heliocentrism, published in the mid-1500s, placed the Sun at the center of the universe with the planets orbiting and the stars in fixed positions around the edges. Johannes Kepler soon challenged the Copernican view with his own theory that included multiple solar systems dispersed throughout the universe, ours being only one of many. What happened to the "truth" of each theory? It was **replaced at some point with additional factual knowledge**. The assumptions made based on Ptolemy's worldview could not hold against the evidence of Copernicus and then Kepler. Nor could their theories stand up to the later evidence afforded by more sophisticated scientific tools and techniques. Yet each leap that technology and science made was greeted with derision and scorn.

People tend to prefer the status quo to change, even if change would be an improvement. Wayne M. Zygowicz had this to say about emergency services in our nation today,

Various innovations I observed made it seem like the Europeans were more mechanically and technically advanced than their peers here in the US. Their vehicles were fast, safe and fuel efficient. Their rescue clothing is light, durable and high visibility. Their cots were crash tested, rated to 10Gs and never had to be manually lifted in or out of the ambulance. The fire apparatus was compact, maneuverable and well engineered while other equipment was compartmentalized, quickly deployed, and never had to be lifted. Everything was designed with safety in mind and much of it required by law.

So why haven't we implemented many of these innovations here in the US? One word quickly came to my mind, **tradition**. Things we do here are often based solely on tradition; red fire trucks, box ambulances, black firefighting gear, lifting patients with sheets, hard backboards for spinal injuries, leather fire helmets, side-facing bench seats in an ambulance, just to name a few. There are better and safer ways of doing business. I've seen them. Tradition often stands in the way of improved safety and efficiency.  
(<http://connect.jems.com/profiles/blogs/the-mother-of-invention>)

These examples warn that our individual visions are limited by time, technology, interpretation, and the **values we hold most dear**. We may not be able to see what is right before us if a value lens creates a cloud of assumptions which cannot be penetrated.

# Resources

- ◉ The 15 Creepiest Vintage Ads of All Time
  - <http://retrocomedy.com/2009/07/01/the-15-creepiest-vintage-ads-of-all-time>
- ◉ Checklist for Personal Values
  - <http://www.selfcounseling.com/help/personalsuccess/personalvalues.htm>
- ◉ Daryl Cagle's Political Cartoonist's Index
  - <http://www.cagle.com/news/Edwards09/4.asp>
- ◉ List of Values
  - <http://www.stevepavlina.com/articles/list-of-values.htm>
- ◉ The Mother of Invention - Science vs Tradition
  - <http://connect.jems.com/profiles/blogs/the-mother-of-invention>
- ◉ The Power of Personal Values
  - <http://www.gurusoftware.com/GuruNet/Personal/Topics/Values.htm>