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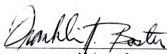
ARGUING FOR CHANGE: ARGUMENTS BY ACTIVISTS, NON-ACTIVISTS
AND IN THE MEDIA REGARDING DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS

presented by

Michelle Lynn Campo

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Ph.D. degree in Communication



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By

Michelle Lynn Campo

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
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ABSTRACT

ARGUING FOR CHANGE: ARGUMENTS BY ACTIVISTS, NON-ACTIVISTS AND IN THE MEDIA REGARDING DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS

By

Michelle Lynn Campo

In September of 1997, domestic partner activists at Michigan State University (MSU) claimed victory when the Board of Trustees approved health and other benefits for same sex partners of gay, lesbian and bisexual employees. This multi-method study examines arguments surrounding this issue, issues management strategies used by activists, and media and public framing of issue arguments. Methods included interviews with key individuals who lobbied for domestic partner benefits, content analysis of newspaper coverage and a poll of the campus community. In addition, 52 interviews with administrators through undergraduate students were conducted, asking them to support their opinions and opposing opinions about partner benefits. Level of activism, argumentativeness, and verbal aggression were also assessed. It was expected that activists would be better than non-activists at making arguments and counterarguments. This study also examined whether an activist's ability to make arguments is a transferable skill by asking participants to make arguments about a second issue, campus parking. Analysis of the interviews with activists revealed four key shifts in the strategies used to achieve passage of benefits. Strategies leading to their eventual success involved working directly with

decision makers and minimizing public and media involvement. Results of the interview analysis suggest an indirect effect of activism on the ability to create complex arguments and counterarguments. Two mediators were found. Verbal aggression was found to be negatively related to activism and to the ability to create complex arguments. Argumentativeness was found to be positively related to both activism and argument construction. The idea that the ability to argue is a transferable skill was also supported. Comparing arguments from a content analysis of newspaper coverage with the public opinion poll revealed differences in argument patterns. Little evidence for media effects on public opinion were found. Although these data do not support an agenda-setting effect of the media setting the public agenda, the historical data does suggest that activists had some influence on both the media agenda and the policy agenda. The poll data did not support pluralistic ignorance, and instead suggest that different groups within MSU have a clear idea of other groups' attitudes.

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For Everyone Who Has Ever Taught Me to Argue

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KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS

ADJB.....	Anti-Discrimination Judiciary Board
ALGBTS.....	Alliance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Students
COGS	Council of Graduate Students
GLFSA.....	Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association
LAHRPAC.....	Lansing Area Human Rights Political Action Committee
MSU.....	Michigan State University
UFAC	University Faculty Affairs Committee



Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Argumentation and activism go hand in hand because activists need well constructed arguments to persuade others, particularly policy makers, to see their conclusions and recommendations as the correct course of action for a particular social issue. Therefore, it may be plausible to think that activists need to become skilled at constructing arguments, counterarguments, and shaping the arguments of others. Arguments change over the life of a social issue as activist groups strategically frame their arguments, reframe old ones, and counter others. The relationship between argumentation and activism can then be thought of in at least three different ways:

- (1) Activist groups must create, maintain, and counter the arguments of others. This effort may be thought of as a type of public relations, or issues management. Activist organizations need to decide how best to manage an issue so that outcomes, such as policy changes, will be as they desire. Activist groups need to consider their audiences, the opinion climate, where their political opportunities lie, and which arguments to put forward, among other factors.
- (2) In the course of managing an issue, there are competing forces seeking to shape public opinion and media content. How the themes or frames, or even specific arguments presented in the media, compare

to those made by the public and by activist organizations must be examined so activists can be more successful in achieving their goals.

(3) Individually, activists might be expected to construct more complex arguments than non-activists. One might expect that the ability to argue is intertwined with level of activism because activists are expected to participate in public and private debates over social issues. In addition, activists may be different than others in terms of certain personality characteristics that may also impact their ability to argue.

Using a multi-method research design, this project draws from a public opinion poll, content analysis of local newspaper coverage, historical analysis, and interviews with activists and non-activists to investigate these assumptions. To test these issues, two campus controversies were studied. The first is the central issue of the study and was used to examine questions in all three areas. The second issue was employed in order to ascertain if the ability to argue is issue specific. Specifically, if activists are better at arguing, then these skills are expected to be manifested consistently across issues.

The central issue involves Michigan State University's debate over, and eventual decision to grant, domestic partner benefits to gay, lesbian, and bisexual employees. The second issue is familiar to nearly everyone on college campuses. It centers on campus parking problems. In the upcoming sections I



shall first review and define critical terms surrounding these areas. Many of these concepts overlap among the three areas of study. Next, I shall explain briefly the two campus issues, and the chapters that follow.

Activism

Many definitions of activism can be found in the literature. Most revolve around someone who fights for change or fights to maintain the status quo. However, one important distinction that is not always made is that between activism and ideology (Kerpelman, 1969; 1972). Ideology is a series of beliefs about something (Kerpelman, 1969; 1972).

If all ideologues were activists, there would be many more activists in the world. Grunig and Grunig (1997) note that very few participate as members of activist publics. Neuman (1986) suggests that only 5% of adults in the United States can be considered activists, characterizing them by high levels of knowledge and involvement. Frequently, ideology is what initially draws many activists together. Moreover, not all activists are ideologues. What separates activists from non-activists is participation in organized efforts, often in the form of a political or social organization (Kerpelman, 1969; 1972). Alinsky (1971) uses this assumption in his book, Rules for Radicals, by providing activists with lists of ideas for activities and actions in which to engage in order to obtain the desired response from people in power.

Activists also tend to be different from non-activists in other ways. Activists do not tend to simply participate. Rather, they are also much more likely to lead groups, voice their opinions publicly, and to have extensive arguments with

others (Kerpelman, 1969; 1972). Although it has been found that activists tend to argue more often, it does not follow that they are any more skilled at it. A central focus of this study is to test such notions, and to find out, for example, if activists are higher in the personality characteristic of argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer, 1982). In addition, being argumentative is not the same thing as being verbally aggressive, which is defined as the desire to dominate others in conversations (Infante & Wigley, 1986). Often, activists are assumed to be verbally aggressive as well as argumentative. One hypothesis of this study is that although activists will be higher in argumentativeness than non-activists, there will be no difference in their level of verbal aggression.

Studies of activists are common. They often center on case studies of particular social movements. The research questions often address issues of organization, mobilization, life cycles, and policy changes (e.g., Gamson, 1990; Gitlin, 1980; McAdam, 1988; Morris, 1984). Studies of activists from the perspective of actual dialogue and speeches are also common in the rhetorical field. In part, this study bridges social science and rhetorical approaches (Billig, 1996).

Argumentation

The term argument can have at least two different meanings. An argument can be either a conclusion with a supporting reason(s) (Mills, 1968; O'Keefe, 1982), or it can take the form of a dialogical argument as a particular form of interaction (O'Keefe, 1982). From the observations of classical rhetoricians to present day communication research, the study of how to construct arguments

has been a central focus. Rhetoricians and persuasion researchers have been interested in the effects that arguments can have on influencing someone with a particular proposal or proposition (Fisher & Sayles, 1966). How people are affected by arguments has been studied by both the social sciences and the humanities. Kuhn (1991) examined arguments bridging both perspectives by performing a study examining people's abilities to argue, counterargue, generate alternative theories, and reason logically. Kuhn asked her 160 subjects, who ranged from teenagers to senior citizens, to argue about common social problems, including crime, children's failure in school, and unemployment. She found, among other things, that the ability to argue, counterargue, and provide epistemological understanding varied significantly with age. The most compelling explanation for this outcome is that arguing is something that takes practice, and older people have had more practice. Kuhn (1992; 1996) argues that both pre-adolescents and adults exhibit better reasoning skills with repeated engagement or exercise. Activists at any age often have a great deal of practice arguing. Therefore, it can be suggested that if the key variable is practice, then, in general, activists will be better than non-activists at generating arguments supporting their own position and at generating arguments supporting an alternative position. This should be true not only for the issues that activists are directly involved with, but for those with which they are simply familiar. In addition, if this hypothesis holds, it can also be suggested that those fighting to change the status quo, or "the movement", will be better at arguing than those fighting to maintain it, or "the counter movement" (McCarthy & Zald, 1977). One

process that could produce this result is that because those fighting to change the status quo are often on the defensive, they will also have a better understanding of the arguments of those opposed to them than the reverse (Robinson & Keltner, 1996). In part, the point of this study is to extend Kuhn and examine these ideas empirically. The present study adapts Kuhn's interview protocol testing various types of reasoning, including the ability to generate causal theory and justification, contradictory positions, instrumental reasoning, and epistemological reasoning. Pertinent results comparing and contrasting two social issues are presented in Chapter 5.

Media, Framing, and Public Opinion

Research surrounding media and argumentation often falls under a few different rubrics: agenda-building (e.g. Cobb and Elder, 1983), agenda-setting (e.g. Dearing & Rogers, 1996; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Rogers & Dearing, 1988; Rogers, Dearing & Bregman, 1993), issues management and framing (e.g. Gamson & Modigliani, 1989, Iyengar, 1991). Agenda-building research often examines the way in which different publics compete to place their issue on the policy agenda. An agenda is defined as "a list of issues and events that are viewed at a point in time and ranked in a hierarchy of importance" (Rogers & Dearing, 1988, p. 565). Agenda-setting research examines the way in which different agendas, sometimes the media's, are set by others. Issues management and framing are very closely related to the study of argumentation in that they tend to examine specific arguments or major patterns of arguments that get presented to the public or to policy makers in order to obtain a specific

desired outcome. In the creation of an issue, it is critical not to ignore that for any given issue there are competing arguments. For social movements, there are typically countermovements, media, and other publics whose agendas and arguments do not match theirs. Often it is critical for a movement to attempt to gain a voice through the media (Kielbowicz & Scherer, 1986). The media in turn are often dependent on activists for comments about a conflict (Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993).

Studies of social movements and media are becoming more common (e.g., Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Gamson & Stuart, 1992; Wolfsfeld, 1984a; 1984b; 1987). Framing research concerns itself with finding major patterns of arguments in everyday life (Goffman, 1986) and in the media (e.g. Campo & Salmon, 1997; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Iyengar, 1991). The present study explores how specific arguments made by activists and non-activists compare with specific arguments presented in the media. In addition, it is suggested that the level of knowledge about domestic partner benefits will be relatively low among the campus community.

In addition, the opinions of the “public” and their perceptions of the issue may also match the argument made by activists, by the media, or be quite different from either or both. Other questions can also be asked, such as whether the public perceives people who are similar to them as holding similar opinions. This idea is referred to as false consensus (Ross, Greene & House, 1977). Further, it has been shown that often individuals are not accurate in judging the majority’s opinion. These questions are often explored by public opinion

researchers interested in pluralistic ignorance (e.g. Allport, 1924; Fields & Schuman, 1976). How the campus community perceives the majority opinion on domestic partner benefits and how they believe other groups perceive the issue of domestic partner benefits will be addressed Chapter 4.

Recent studies have examined factors that influence political mobilization (Gould, 1993; Weinberg & Gould, 1993), success of community activists in the political process (Wolfsfeld, 1984a; 1987), and efforts to affect policy makers and media representatives (Anderson, 1991; Kriesberg, 1988). Activists at Michigan State University were successful in gaining domestic partner benefits for university employees. Who those activists chose to influence, which tactics they used and how they succeeded are areas that are addressed in Chapters 3 and 4.

Organizational Communication

Activism can also be thought of in the context of organizational communication. Interorganizational literature has given increased attention to new organizational forms, including coalitions and consortia, that are essential for activists. Organizational forms include characteristics of an organization that identify it as distinct from other organizations and similar to others in its class (Romanelli, 1991). Role distinctions within communities are not always easy given limited resources and skills. Personnel overlap and personal relationships exist which cloud organizational boundaries (Lincoln, 1982). In the case of community activism, it is not always clear how to separate clearly the boundaries between social movement organizations, such as citizen action groups, and other community organizations including media, local businesses, and politicians.

Local politicians, for example, may also be business owners, or they may regularly write columns for their small town paper. Such role sets make them boundary spanners.

Community activism succeeds or fails depending on its ability to influence decision makers. Attempts to influence powerful others are often built on alliance formation. In smaller communities, influence may be based as much, if not more, on personal rather than professional ties. Community structures are inherently interorganizational linkages (Laumann, Galaskiewicz, & Marsden, 1978). Social movement organizations or citizens action groups that form around a specific issue are one such link in an interorganizational community chain. Others include media, local businesses, government, other groups within a broader organization such as a university, and other community based organizations which also may have an interest in promoting solutions to human rights problems. These groups are likely to have varying degrees of similarity between motivations behind human rights interests, opinions about how to resolve the situation successfully, and criteria for what is a successful outcome.

According to the organizational communication literature, linkages can form for many reasons including strategic interdependence, a needed resource (Gulati, 1995; Oliver, 1990), personal contacts (Galaskiewicz & Burt, 1991), preexisting networks (Morris, 1984; Oliver, 1990; Wolfsfeld, 1984a; 1987), similar ideology or goals (Martin, 1990), symmetry, reciprocity, and to gain legitimacy (Oliver, 1990). Whatever the reason, resource mobilization theorists (e.g. McCarthy & Zald, 1977) believe that interorganizational links are essential to the

success of a social movement. Morris (1984), for example, found that preexisting networks led to the success of many events in the civil rights movement.

Understanding how solutions and policy decisions are reached is an important area of study for political scientists, sociologists, and organizational and communication scholars. In addition, practical lessons can be provided for politicians, media personnel, local businesses, citizens action groups, and other stakeholders in community disputes. Political decision making, community activism and social movements, and interorganizational linkages have been rich areas of study, but the question of how local activists influence the decision making process through interorganizational linkages and the communication strategies that they employ to reach those goals is ripe for study. This study proposes to examine the interactions between stakeholders based on the strategies and arguments an activist organization uses over time to promote social change. This issue is examined thoroughly in the discussion of the history and issues management surrounding domestic partner benefits at Michigan State University (MSU), which is addressed in Chapter 3.

The Issues

Two issues have been selected for use in this study. The central issue surrounds Michigan State University's recent decision to extend domestic partner benefits to its gay and lesbian employees. The second issue pertains to parking problems on Michigan State University's campus. Both issues were chosen because they have been well publicized and should be familiar to those being



interviewed. The second issue is one experienced equally by staff, faculty, and students on a nearly daily basis at MSU. This second issue is meant to test whether or not the ability to argue is issue specific.

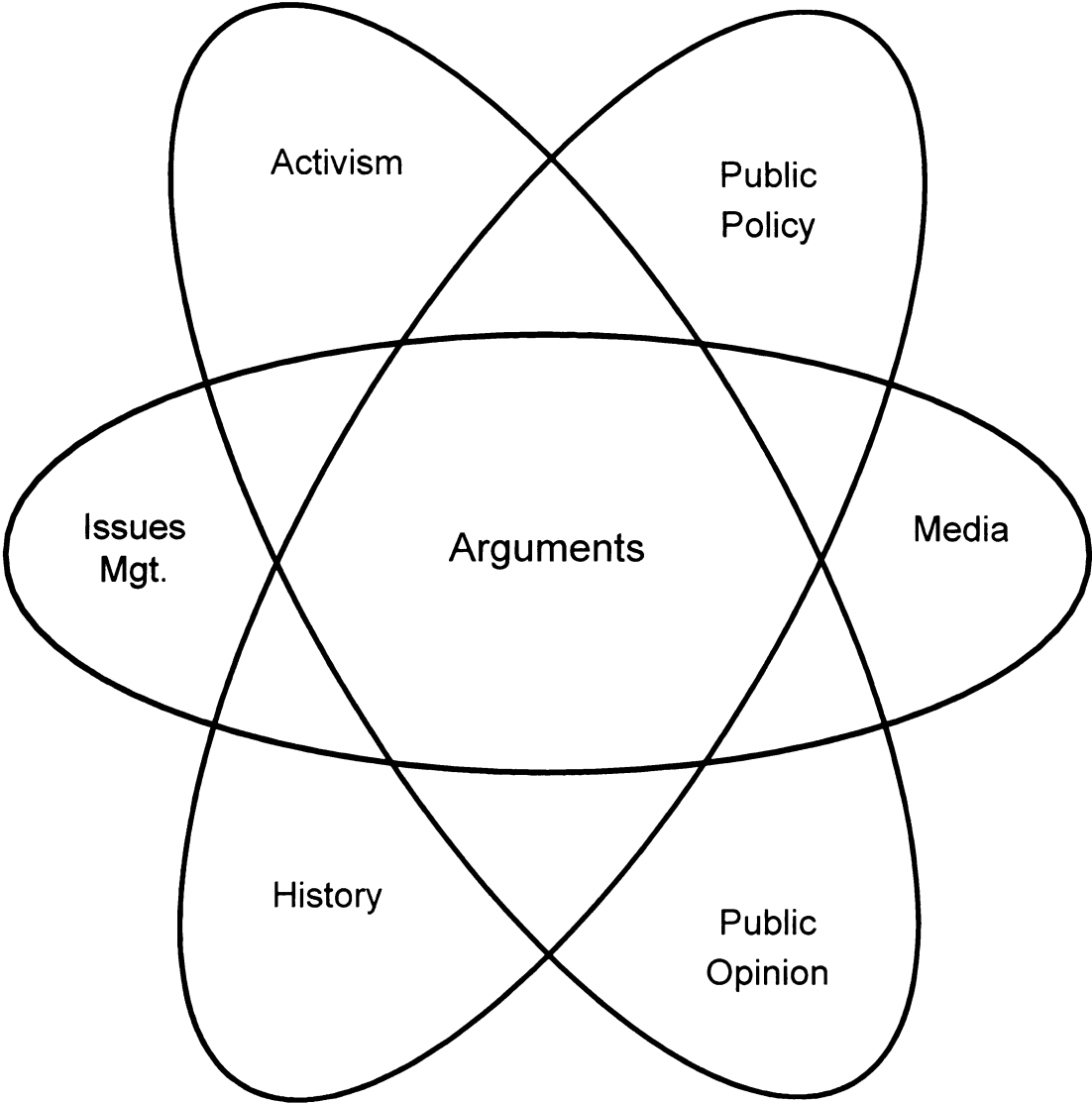
Domestic partner benefits at MSU. Depending on who you ask, domestic partner benefits have been an issue at this University since either the late 1970's, when sexual orientation was added to the University's anti-discrimination clause, or the 1990's, when this issue was reviewed by the MSU Board of Trustees. This issue received considerable attention in the 1990's when a University-wide task force was appointed by MSU to study gay and lesbian issues on campus. After nearly a year of study, several subcommittees of the task force recommended that the University extend health and other benefits to domestic partners (Moving Forward: Lesbians and Gay Men at Michigan State University, 1992). The issue received increased attention in November of 1995, when the MSU Board of Trustees opted to table the issue of granting domestic partner benefits for two years in order to study it in more detail. The issue was tabled, in part, because of the level of controversy surrounding the issue. For several years, the Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association (GLFSA) was actively involved in lobbying to get these benefits extended, while members of local fundamentalist Christian groups actively lobbied against these benefits. In September 1997, the MSU Board of Trustees voted to extend domestic partner benefits to its gay and lesbian employees. The benefits, however, were not extended to heterosexual domestic partners or to any undergraduate or graduate students without assistantships.

Parking on campus. Whether or not one drives on the MSU campus, it is not possible to ignore the vulturous way in which people circle the campus and its parking lots, often to the point of not only being a hazard to other drivers, but to pedestrians and bicyclists as well. Parking problems are a nearly constant source of conversation on campus and frequently are addressed in newspaper articles. Depending on status, people attribute the cause of the parking problems to different sources. It is not uncommon, for example, to hear undergraduates complain that there is not enough commuter parking, while staff and faculty often are heard arguing that students are not even supposed to be driving on campus and therefore cause the parking problem. Graduate assistants often sit in the middle of the debate, but with their own unique spin: that it is unfair that they cannot park on the north side of campus.

Dissertation Organization

The chapters that follow address these questions. Chapter 2 reviews the overall methodology for this study. Chapter 3 examines the history and issues management strategies used by GLFSA to get these benefits passed. Chapter 4 examines public perceptions and media depictions of this issue. Chapter 5 examines the relationship between level of activism and ability to create arguments. Chapter 6 summarizes the relationship between argumentation and activism and the role it plays in managing social issues. It also points to new directions for future study. In all of these chapters, arguments serve as the central focus of this study (see Figure 1 below).

Figure 1: Dissertation Overview





Chapter 2

METHODS

The methods used included a public opinion poll, content analysis of local newspaper coverage, and interviews with activists and non-activists. The approach taken was consistent with Blumer's (1948) assumption that triangulation on public issues is important in order to learn which publics matter. In addition, the central issue fit Blumer's criteria of beginning with a decision and reflecting back on how it occurred. Understanding the context of any social problem or issue provides added depth and insight into the issue. Therefore, in part, the issue of domestic partner benefits serves as both a qualitative case study (Stake, 1995) and a quantitative case study (Yin, 1994) of a decision making process and the arguments surrounding it.

History and Issues Management

This section of the dissertation includes information from interviews and archival data. Each are treated below.

Interview sampling and recruitment. Key members of GLFSA and the University administration, as identified through archival records and referrals, were contacted and asked to participate in an interview (N=10). Requests for participation were made through a combination of telephone and email requests. Of the 10 people contacted, eight agreed to participate. The two who declined were both administrators. Both felt that they did not know enough about the issue to participate.

Interview protocol. A semi-structured interview protocol was created that included five key questions. Participants were asked how they became involved in the issue, their knowledge of the history of the issue, their own personal contributions to the issue, whether or not they had any records they could share, and who else should be included in these interviews (See Appendix A). All interviewees signed a consent form that included places for two signatures to authorize their willingness to participate and their willingness to have their name used with their interview comments. All except one person allowed me to use his/her name. This person is referred to as “Alex” in the history chapter.

Two of the interviews were group interviews, involving two and three individuals respectively. These requests for group interviews were made by the interviewees themselves, who felt that their responses would be more valid in a group setting and that they would be less redundant for the interviewer. Both of these interviews involved activists. All interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed word for word. All interviews, except one, were conducted in person. The exception was because the individuals involved had left MSU and were now living out of state. The interviews varied in length from 30 to nearly two and a half hours. The transcript length varied from approximately six to 20 single-spaced, typed pages.

Archival data sources. The history chapter is supported by other archival data available publicly, including media data, minutes from University meetings, and other public documents. Since this information is public record, actual names are used when linked to these data sources in the subsequent analysis.

History analysis. Qualitative analysis was used to reconstruct the history and management of this issue from the interviews and archival data. The analysis is conducted from the perspective of the activists involved. Not enough was known about the perspective of others, such as the University administration and opposing activists, to include their perspectives. In addition, the perspective of the pro-domestic partner activists, and how this issue was managed by GLFSA, was main focus of this study.

Public Opinion Poll

Sampling and procedures. A stratified random sample was drawn of 540 people within the MSU community. The sample included administrators (N=60), faculty (N=120), staff (N=120), undergraduates (N=120) and graduate students (N=120). Samples were drawn from a combination of campus directories and from the Human Resources Department's database. The poll was conducted by a team of trained staff comprised of students and community volunteers over a two-week period in November of 1997. A large percentage of the sample could not be reached by telephone despite two attempts, resulting in a valid sample of 261. The total number of respondents was 169, with a valid response rate of 64.8%.

Questionnaire. The questionnaire took approximately 7-10 minutes to complete. It included questions regarding knowledge of domestic partner benefits, opinions toward them, respondents' perceptions of others' opinions, media use and content, and a series of demographic questions (see Appendix A). Arguments and premises were probed to elicit complete responses.

Content Analysis of Newspaper Coverage

Sampling. Various types of newspapers were selected for review. The newspapers included The State News, The Lansing State Journal, The Detroit Free Press, and The Detroit News. These newspapers were selected because they were the most commonly named sources of news in both the poll and the interviews. The State News is the campus student newspaper. The Lansing State Journal is the major newspaper of the greater Lansing area. The Detroit News and The Detroit Free Press are the major newspapers available and read widely across the state. All relevant news articles from January 1, 1992 until January 1, 1998 were collected. The Moving Forward report, which was the first official University report recommending the adoption of domestic partner benefits, was released in 1992. January 1, 1998 is the date that marks the official start of MSU providing domestic partner benefits. The analysis included all news articles, stories and features related to partner benefits at Michigan State University. Editorials were not included in the analyses.

Procedures. Fifty-one articles pertaining to domestic partner benefits were collected and analyzed. All news articles were coded for length, arguments presented both for and against domestic partner benefits, and people cited in the articles. All coding was completed by two coders to enhance reliability. Inter-coder reliabilities ranged from $\kappa=0.90$ to $\kappa=1.00$.

Argumentation Interviews

Sampling and recruitment. Fifty-two members of the campus community participated in the interviews. Eighty people were asked to participate in an in-

person interview that lasted approximately an hour and a half. Requests for participation were made through a combination of telephone and email requests. Of the 80 people contacted, 14 declined to be interviewed and 14 failed to respond after multiple attempts, resulting in a response rate of 65.0%. The sample was drawn in a variety of ways. Initially, those suspected to be high in activism were identified through media and other archival records and involvement on the board of GLFSA. Attempts were made to include both activists for and activists against domestic partner benefits. At the end of each interview, participants were asked for names of activists both in favor and opposed, and for the name of someone with whom they worked who they considered to be a non-activist and who would also self-identify as a non-activist. In the end, very few activists against the issue were included because it proved extremely difficult to obtain names of activists working against domestic partner benefits. This outcome may have occurred because either few existed or they were not easily identifiable. In addition, the refusal rate was higher among those who were against partner benefits than those who were for them. It was suggested by an interview participant that the inability to identify those against partner benefits was in part due to a campus climate that dictated it was unacceptable to voice this opinion, due to the University's push for diversity and its anti-discrimination clause. This comment suggests the possibility that a "spiral of silence" was operative (Noelle-Neumann, 1984).

Interview protocol. A modified version of Kuhn's (1991) protocol was initially adapted for both domestic partner benefits and parking on campus. The



protocol included questions testing various types of reasoning, including the ability to generate causal theory and justification, contradictory positions, instrumental reasoning, and epistemological reasoning for each issue. In addition, open-ended questions were added in the following areas: activism, media coverage, and demographic measures. A copy of the interview protocol can be found in Appendix A.

At approximately the midpoint of the interview, between the sections on partner benefits and parking, participants were given written measures. The first was a slightly modified version of Kerpelman's (1969; 1972) Activity Scale, which was used to assess level of activism. The Activity Scale includes measures of individual's actual behaviors, such as organizing activist groups, participating in activist groups, engaging in political arguments, or writing something designed to influence others. The other questionnaire consisted of a combined shortened version of the verbal aggression (Infante & Wigley, 1986) and argumentativeness scales (Infante & Rancer, 1982). Verbal aggression items included being careful to avoid attacking others' intelligence, attempts to make others feel good, and trying not to damage someone else's self-concept in an argument. Examples of argumentativeness items included feeling nervous and upset after an argument, finding an argument an intellectual challenge, and feeling that arguing creates more problems than it solves. The original published scales were shortened based on Boster and Levine's (1988) confirmatory factor analysis. All interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed word for word. The transcript lengths ranged from approximately 10 to 20 single-spaced, typed pages.

Interview Analysis. For each interview, four causal diagrams were created for the respondent's position and an alternative position for both the parking and domestic partner benefits issues. The length of each causal chain, number of causal chains, and integration were assessed (for an example, please see Appendix B). A causal chain is a series of premises that follow logically to a conclusion. The progression in the chain must be connected to the next point explicitly by the interviewee or the chain stops. This link was done with words or phrases such as "therefore," "it follows that," or "this leads to that". All chains ended with the same conclusion, such as "therefore the university should (or should not) grant domestic partner benefits". The number of steps or antecedent points is the length of a causal chain. If chains share points, then that was considered to be a point of integration. Coding procedures for argumentation was consistent with Kuhn's (1991) coding procedures. Cognitive complexity of arguments was measured by creating an index of the total amount of integration per subject with the average length of each causal chain, which is a slight modification of Schroder, Driver and Streufert's (1967) measure.

A sub-sample of the transcripts was coded by two people in order to enhance interrater reliability. Fifteen interviews were randomly selected and causal models were created for the respondent's own position and an alternative position for both parking and domestic partner benefits (60 causal models). Of these, only two differed, one in the number of causal chains and the other in the length of a causal chain, resulting in nearly perfect interrater reliability. The second coder also reviewed all of the remaining causal diagrams of the first

coder to identify errors such as missing arguments. Very few discrepancies were found and these suggestions were incorporated into the other causal diagrams. Two participants were found to be outliers on cognitive complexity items and were eliminated from further analysis, resulting in a sample of 50 interviews.

Chapter 3

HISTORY AND ISSUES MANAGEMENT

Issues are created and manipulated (Blumer, 1948). They are often the result of strategic efforts by individuals, groups and organizations to make their position heard. Social movement organizations (McCarthy & Zald, 1977) actively work to contribute to changes at the micro and macro levels. These changes are often interrelated in that the social movement itself creates and exemplifies a new pattern of action. In addition, they may change governments and other institutional processes (Kreisberg, 1988).

The issue of domestic partner benefits is a relatively new issue, not only for Michigan State University, but for organizations nationwide. The Human Rights Campaign estimated in September 1999 that 2,856 employers now offer domestic partner health benefits to employees in same sex relationships. Of these, 71 are Fortune 500 companies, 445 are other private companies, non-profits and unions, 99 are colleges and universities, 73 are state and local governments, and 2,168 are other smaller employers (Human Rights Campaign, 1999). Wilson (1999) stated that this was becoming an increasingly common issue facing employers, one which most employers would not have considered ten or fifteen years ago. It has become a major source of organizational conflict and change. This issue has been strategically managed by activist groups nationwide, including an organization at Michigan State University eventually named the Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Faculty and Staff Association, or GLFSA.

This chapter focuses on how this issue was created and managed from the perspective of GLFSA, and includes data from archival records and from interviews with GLFSA activists.

On the surface, it would have appeared that there were two events leading to the University's eventual decision to grant domestic partner benefits, and that they were both relatively recent: the Board of Trustees votes in November of 1995 and September of 1997. Examining this issue and this group, in particular, reveals the complexity of this effort. GLFSA very strategically managed this issue from the late 1980's, and there have been several key shifts in the way that they managed this issue from a communication perspective.

Many public relations theorists (e.g. Caywood, 1997; Crable & Vibbert, 1985; Grunig & Grunig, 1997), political scientists (e.g. Cobb & Elder, 1983), and sociologists (Blumer, 1957; 1971; Gamson, 1961; 1966; 1990; Gitlin, 1980; Jenkins, 1983; Klandermans, 1997; Klandermans & Tarrow, 1988; McCarthy & Zald, 1977; Morris, 1984, Morris & Mueller, 1992; Snow & Benford, 1988; Tichenor, Donohue & Olien 1980, Tilly, 1978), for example, have long suggested that groups can and do actively create issues and bring about policy decisions. Many of these theorists have offered frameworks to explain how this phenomenon occurs. Crable and Vibbert (1985) suggested the "Catalytic Model" of issues management and policy influence in order to understand and examine the steps by which groups influence decision making. Their model builds on an earlier model (see Jones & Chase, 1979) which limits the role of organizations as being more reactive to policy decisions. In the Catalytic Model, Crable and

Vibbert (1985) suggest five key stages in issue management: situation assessment, goal establishment, the move toward imminence, the move toward current status, and a move toward making an issue critical. This model is not always unidirectional, as changes in the environment may cause the group to step back and reassess along the way. Although any political process has steps involved, these models tend to oversimplify the communication processes involved. For example, needs assessment, which Crable and Vibbert (1985) see as the first phase of this model, is an on-going process. GLFSA, and other activist organizations, must constantly monitor and assess their environment and make needed adjustments along the way if they are going to continue to work in a proactive environment. Rather than working from these models, this chapter will assess key shifts in the management of this issue that led to changes in what and with whom GLFSA chose to communicate. There were four key periods that were analyzed: (1) The creation of the University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues and the release of the Moving Forward report in November 1992, (2) The period leading up to the eventual decision regarding a staff members' request for a spousal ID card for her domestic partner, called the "Kate Murphy case", (3) The period leading up to and the eventual decision by the MSU Board of Trustees in November 1995 to table the issue of domestic partner benefits, and (4) The events leading up to the September 1997 MSU Board of Trustees meeting when they chose to grant domestic partner benefits.

The following section is based on archival data and interviews from several key people who released the use of their names for identification in this document. They included:

- (1) Terry Stein. Terry Stein was president of GLFSA during the first vote of the Board of Trustees and co-chaired the University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues. At the time, he was a professor in the Department of Psychiatry. Dr. Stein retired in 1996.
- (2) Christopher Carmichael. Chris Carmichael was the first president of GLFSA. He co-chaired the committee on Campus Climate of the University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues. He was an academic specialist on campus working for the MSU Museum. Mr. Carmichael left the University in 1996.
- (3) John Huebler. John Huebler was president of GLFSA during the second vote of the Board of Trustees. He co-chaired the committee on Staff Concerns and Employment Issues of the University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues. He was a computer specialist for Administrative Information Services. Mr. Huebler left the University in 1998.
- (4) Mary C. Murphy (Kate). Kate Murphy served on the board of GLFSA for a number of years. She co-chaired the committee on Special Concerns of Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Students of the University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues. Dr. Murphy is an administrator in the Department of Residence Life.

- (5) Cheryllee Finney. Cheryllee Finney was on the board of GLFSA at the time of the second vote of the Board of Trustees. She also served as domestic partner benefits coordinator for GLFSA in 1997. Ms. Finney was also active in the Clerical-Technical Union on campus, where she also had some involvement working on domestic partner issues. Ms. Finney is an editor with the Centennial Review.
- (6) Brent Bilodeau. Brent Bilodeau has served as a liaison to the GLFSA board. He is the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Student Coordinator for Students in the Office of Student Affairs and an advisor to the Alliance of Lesbian, Gay Bisexual and Transgendered Students.
- (7) Sue Carter. Sue Carter served on the University Faculty Affairs Committee and the workgroup that considered domestic partner benefits. Ms. Carter is an associate professor in the Department of Journalism and an attorney.
- (8) "Alex". "Alex" was a university administrator who was involved with the domestic partner benefits issue. "Alex" did not want to be identified by name.

The University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues

Some form of institutional protection for gays and lesbians has existed at Michigan State University since February 25, 1977 (Moving Forward, 1992). On that date, the MSU Board of Trustees voted unanimously to revise the anti-discrimination policy to include sexual orientation. Despite this step, many university policies did not reflect what many would call equal treatment. In one of



several moves to respond to a perception of an increase in incidents of hate crimes against gays and lesbians on campus and to discuss these issues, a faculty group formed in 1989. The faculty discussion group reviewed a University document entitled "Institutional Diversity: Excellence in Action", commonly known as MSU IDEA. The document addressed diversity issues on campus, but sexual orientation was not discussed in any detail. The group recommended several changes to Provost David Scott. As a result of the meetings with Provost Scott and others, formation of a university task force to examine gay and lesbian issues was suggested in 1990. According to Terry Stein and Chris Carmichael (personal communication, December 16, 1997), at this point Provost Scott and Vice Presidents Moses Turner and Roger Wilkinson invited two consultants from Rutgers University to MSU to discuss gay and lesbian issues. The purpose of the Rutgers consultants' visit in December 1990 was to talk about the process of issuing a comprehensive report on gay and lesbian issues on their campus, and to help inform the larger community about the need for a similar task force at MSU (Moving Forward, 1992). The University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues was formed shortly thereafter with the support of several University administrators, including President John DiBiaggio. At the urging of the consultants, the task force included representation from all units and strata of the university (Moving Forward, 1992). Professor Anita Skeen of the English Department and Professor Terry Stein of the Psychiatry Department served as chairs of the task force, which included 48 members and eight sub-committees. The numbers and breadth of representation provided many opportunities for

lasting interorganizational linkages that had not previously existed. These included links between GLFSA and upper-level administrators, union officials, and others that proved invaluable later in the process. Chris Carmichael (personal communication, December 16, 1999) recalled that one of the strategies that emerged from the structure of the task force was that:

It was an enormous body of people... We had straight people and gay and lesbian people and people from all over the University who were basically supportive folk. Later it became very helpful that they had been involved with the process of the task force because they were much more up to speed on our issues as these other things started percolating through the University.

The first meeting of the task force was held May 9, 1991.

At the same time that the task force was being formed, the faculty discussion group grew into the MSU Gay and Lesbian Faculty and Staff Association (GLFSA). In the spring of 1991, the approximately 40 charter members wrote bylaws and elected officers (Moving Forward, 1992). Academic staff member Christopher Carmichael was its first president (Terry Stein, personal communication, December 16, 1997).

The task force spent a great deal of time researching the issues through surveys, focus groups and public forums (Moving Forward, 1992). The results of these studies and the ensuing recommendations were released in the form of a report in November 1992. Moving Forward: Lesbians and Gay Men at Michigan State University included hundreds of task force recommendations in seven

categories: creating a supportive environment, working at the University, learning at the University, being a student at the University, responding to special challenges, moving ahead and organizing for the future. Despite the long list of recommendations, Terry Stein (personal communication, December 16, 1997) stated that "everyone saw domestic partner benefits as probably the top one or two or three issues that we were dealing with." John Huebler, who served as co-chair of the Staff Concerns and Employment Issues Work Group that at inception, said the group saw domestic partner benefits as a key issue. Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1999) stated that "in terms of our working group, it was a foregone conclusion that domestic partner benefits were going to be one of the recommendations, even though we hadn't done the study yet." This was the first official university document to recommend granting domestic partner benefits.

According to Kate Murphy, the day that the task force released its report was the day of Acting President Gordon Guyer's first public appearance (personal communication, December 15, 1999), and Provost Scott, who had helped form the task force, had left the University. This was significant because key administrative leadership that had been responsible for initiating the task force was gone and in its place were individuals who were temporary, and therefore unlikely to act on the recommendations. GLFSA and the task force were proud of the report, felt that it was comprehensive and were hopeful the recommendations would be implemented (Kate Murphy, December 15, 1999). Following the release of the report, an implementation advisory group was

formed by the new Provost to study the recommendations of the task force and to advise the administration on how to implement them, but this had very little influence on the administration (John Huebler, personal communication, December 15, 1999).

The Kate Murphy Case

GLFSA and task force members became frustrated that implementation of recommendations seemed to remain at a standstill. Shortly after the task force report was released, Peter McPherson, a conservative Republican, was appointed president of the University. The changes in upper-level administration represented what political sociologists would call significant changes in the political opportunity structure that allow activists and others more or less entry into influencing the system (e.g. Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; Tarrow, 1983; Tilly, 1978). These changes proved significant in later attempts to gain cooperation from the University in implementing domestic partner benefits.

Because of feelings of frustration regarding the lack of response from the University administration, GLFSA began to examine alternate methods of persuading the University to implement domestic partner benefits. In October of 1994, nearly two years after the task force report was released, The State News reported that six members of GLFSA filed a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Judiciary Board (ADJB), asking the University to grant domestic partner benefits for same sex couples under the University's anti-discrimination

policy (Pfeiffer, 1994). Former GLFSA president Chris Carmichael, current GLFSA president Terry Stein, and staff member Kate Murphy were among them.

Other strategies were also used. One of the arguments that had been used by the opposition was that if MSU administrators granted domestic partner benefits, then donations would decrease in protest. GLFSA, in response, initiated a campaign asking alumni and other financial contributors to the University to withhold donations (Pfeiffer, 1994). Former GLFSA president Chris Carmichael (personal communication, December 16, 1999) described this policy as very difficult for him on a personal level:

I really felt that I could not give, even though I was passionately attached to my unit, the MSU Museum, that has been very inclusive of gay and lesbian concerns in any way they could be inclusive as a staff and as an administrative unit, but I couldn't financially contribute to an institution that was so clearly not supporting me. It was a real hard thing. It was symbolic, but I think it was important.

Also during 1994, Wayne State University became the first state university in Michigan to extend benefits to same sex domestic partners of employees (Pfeiffer, 1994). This helped to provide GLFSA with evidence of a precedent having been set at a similar university in the state, and began to erode the argument that it was against state policy for a state university to provide these benefits since these couples are not legally recognized even under common law (Zaroo, 1995). In early 1995, the University of Michigan followed suit when their Board of Trustees also extended benefits to same sex domestic partners.

Staff member Kate Murphy had been one of the six members who initially filed suit with the ADJB. She also filed a second case later with the ADJB to try to obtain a spousal ID card that would have granted her partner the same free access to university facilities, such as libraries and athletic facilities, that married spouses have. The ADJB ruled that the original case was outside of their jurisdiction (Kate Murphy, personal communication, December 15, 1997). However, in June of 1995, the ADJB ruled that the spousal ID card policy was in direct conflict with other MSU anti-discrimination policies (Snow & Wilson, 1995). However, on July 26, in a memo sent to Kate Murphy and later released by Murphy to The State News, the President overturned this decision, saying that it was too closely tied to the domestic partner benefits issue and that the implications needed to be examined further before any changes would be made.

GLFSA and Kate Murphy made the strategic decision not to go to the press with this issue until late August when more of the MSU community was on campus. Murphy felt that this decision by the President suggested that her partner was not a member of the MSU community, and it “became a watchword for a lot of the people in GLFSA” and made others see the lack of equal treatment to which everyone, regardless of sexuality, could relate (Kate Murphy, personal communication, December 15, 1999). John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1999) commented on the significance of this case in GLFSA’s fight for partner benefits:

I think the whole thing that Kate went through was very key in terms of public attitudes. And I really love that when you work on an issue, when

you can bring a human face to it, whether it's a gay-lesbian issue or anything else, it is one thing in theory, but it's another thing when somebody says "this is who I am, this is how it what is going on affects me and my family, and this is how it needs to change". And a lot of people say "Yeah, that's right".

Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1997) felt betrayed by the President and said she learned a valuable lesson.

Politics is learning to deal with the political climate and realizing that everyone has their gloves on and you have to put yours on, too. That is just the way that it is. That was a tough lesson.

This ADJB decision and the dismissal of the others shifted GLFSA's focus to the MSU Board of Trustees, who now appeared to be the only decision making body that would favorably rule on granting domestic partner benefits.

The November 1995 Board of Trustees Meeting

Following the Kate Murphy case, it became apparent from the President's office and from other sources that the MSU Board of Trustees would address domestic partner benefits at its November board meeting. The strategy that GLFSA took was to gain as much visible support as possible. They were very public about their actions and their desires to get the University to grant domestic partner benefits. This was a period where GLFSA took advantage of some of the boundary spanners that they had within their ranks and with the affiliations they had made with people serving on the task force. For example, GLFSA member and domestic partner activist Cherylee Finney noted that the president of the

Clerical-Technical Union, Rondy Murray, had been on the task force and later became head of the coalition of bargaining units on campus. Finney noted that as a result, “she was able to answer questions even from the people that... were more resistant. She was able to say ‘so what’ and really just talk to people. And once people say ‘so what’, quite often other people just say ‘yeah’” (personal communication, December 15, 1997). Several of the seven staff unions, including the Clerical Technical Union, began to lobby for domestic partner benefits in their contract negotiations with MSU administration.

Support was also garnered from the University Faculty Affairs Committee (UFAC) and from the Council of Graduate Students (COGS). The UFAC began to look at the issue of domestic partner benefits in September 1994, when the committee was approached by Provost Lou Anna Simon. Professor Sue Carter helped to examine materials from other universities where domestic partner benefits were in place. A small workgroup was formed, including Sue Carter, which examined the documents and put forth a recommendation that was endorsed by the UFAC and Academic Council in 1995 that benefits be extended for both same and opposite sex domestic partners of employees (Sue Carter, personal communication, February 11, 1998). COGS similarly voted in early November 1995 to pass a resolution supporting the extension of benefits to domestic partners (Barnard, 1995).

Another source of help came from the Human Resources Department at MSU. It issued a report that was made available to the MSU Board of Trustees outlining the procedures used by other employers for granting partner benefits,

expected costs to MSU based on the experience of other employers, sample affidavits of partnerships used elsewhere, and other pertinent information.

GLFSA felt the research done by Human Resources was very objective. Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that "The kind of reports that they have put together for the Board were very objective. I think the objectivity diminished and minimized the big arguments that everyone had against having domestic partner benefits". Although the Human Resources staff did not formally endorse benefits, the information they provided helped to erode many arguments that the opposition had raised. This process of what Condit and Condit (1992) refer to as "incremental erosion" is an important strategy that involves the use of rhetoric by activists to slowly and steadily challenge and deny the assumptions on which their opponents build their case. This report countered many of the oppositions' arguments. For example, the document provided evidence that the cost for providing benefits was extremely low, that few actually signed up for the benefits due in part to tax ramifications for unmarried couples, and that proof of domestic partnerships could be provided and monitored, minimizing the argument that employees would sign up roommates and friends.

Much of the strategy that GLFSA took was to involve as many people as publicly as possible. According to Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1999):

If I were going to summarize a strategy that we utilized in that initial campaign leading up to the November '95 vote, it would be that we were kind of in your face, out there, visible, talking to the media, trying to stir up

as much support as we could by talking to colleagues, talking to friends in the community, talking to members of the legislature, members of the Michigan state legislature, members of community activist groups, and then regular contact with Board members. A lot of us called and visited with members of the Board prior to the meeting.

GLFSA board member John Huebler commented that a core group from GLFSA met several times with staff from President McPherson's office in the fall of 1995. It was the President who advised GLFSA that domestic partner benefits would be on the agenda, at least as a discussion item, for the November Board of Trustees meeting (John Huebler, personal communication, December 15, 1997). The President advised GLFSA that it could not be predicted how the Board of Trustees would vote, and that GLFSA should prepare by doing some lobbying. GLFSA board members also spoke regularly with reporters from The State News and other local and state-wide media. GLFSA member Brent Bilodeau suggested that these strategies were encouraged by the President and by others, to "mobilize; do a letter writing campaign, be very public... line up people to come and speak" (personal communication, March 18, 1998).

According to a State News article, Dr. Nancy Pogel, executive staff assistant to President McPherson, reported that the Board of Trustees would probably vote on domestic partner benefits at their November 9, 1995 meeting (Snow, 1995). GLFSA made sure that they had a number of advocates prepared to speak at the Board of Trustees meeting (Brent Bilodeau, personal communication, March 18, 1998; John Huebler, personal communication,



December 15, 1999). This Board of Trustees meeting and the impending discussion of domestic partner benefits were very highly publicized prior to the meeting, which led to a large turnout of both supporters and opponents of domestic partner benefits that was reported to total more than 100 people (Carter, 1995). The appearance of the opposition, although expected, was the first formal group opposition that GLFSA had encountered.

After hearing from those attending the board meeting, President McPherson spoke and advised the Board of Trustees to vote against domestic partner benefits (MSU Board of Trustees' Minutes, November 9, 1995). This recommendation came as a shock to GLFSA members, who had not anticipated that the President would speak against extending benefits. The Board did not follow the recommendation, however. They put forth a substitute motion that was unanimously passed by the eight members of the Board of Trustees to study the issue further and not to take any action on the issue for 24 months (John Huebler, personal communication, December 15, 1999).

The September 1997 Board of Trustees Meeting

GLFSA activists learned multiple lessons from their experience at the November 1995 Board of Trustees meeting. Brent Bilodeau (personal communication, March 18, 1998) summarized some of the reasons behind their defeat at the Board of Trustees meeting:

We really didn't know the political system well enough at the time to know the votes were counted months before, and if anything it felt like a



smokescreen to lead people to believe that we would have a voice, that we would have an opportunity to be heard.

Looking back, John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) also commented about GLFSA's naivete regarding how the Board of Trustees operated:

We believe we only had two votes in favor in November of '95. It was conceivable that there were as many as three. Actually it is conceivable that there were as many as 4 in favor of it. There were at least 4 against it. So, in retrospect, the best we had was a 4-4 tie, which would have caused it not to pass. It is true that the issue was better served by the vote to do nothing for two years. Bitter as that was, it was true that saved the issue. That doesn't justify all the things that were said that day, but I just want to make sure it doesn't look or sound like I am agreeing with what they voted to do. We were very naïve. We went into that meeting thinking we could potentially have 5 votes in favor, and that was completely wrong.

There were intense emotional reactions from GLFSA members and supporters who felt very passionately about this issue. This included support from the staff of the campus newspaper. The editorial board published an article in the November 10, 1995 issue of The State News condemning the delayed vote and lack of support for granting benefits, and providing phone numbers of all the members of the Board of Trustees and President McPherson so readers could call them (Editorial Board, 1995). In a similarly unusual move for an "objective" media source, The State News board of directors voted shortly thereafter to

enact a limited economic boycott of the University, including changing all meetings to off-campus sites (Johnson, 1995). The support of news staff proved helpful in the months to come.

Undergraduate student supporters, including members of the Alliance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Students (ALGBTS), reacted passionately. Brent Bilodeau (personal communication, March 18, 1997) described it in this way:

I remember being there present and being there with students [at the Board vote]. There was a feeling of complete betrayal. Complete betrayal. A feeling of being screwed over, being fucked over. I don't know how else to articulate that. But my impression was that the impact on students was devastating. And it was really that decision that shifted student organizations on this campus--I'm thinking about the Alliance in particular, which had not really for a number of years been particularly activist in its orientation--I think the decision caused many students to see with crystal clarity how institutionalized homophobia and heterosexism were operating at the highest level within the institution and at many other levels. The feelings of student mistrust for administration probably at that time were at the highest level I had ever seen.

Brent Bilodeau said that in the months following the vote, he and a member of the counseling center were approached by students about how they live in an environment that is characterized by rampant homophobia and heterosexism. Brent explained that "essentially they were asking us to teach them how to be...

activists” (Brent Bilodeau, personal communication, March 18, 1997). This led to the founding and the formation of the Homophobia Action Group, a student activist organization on campus.

For many, the interesting part about the Board of Trustees vote was that they perceived that opinions on campus supported the extension of benefits. One administrator (“Alex”, personal communication, January 16, 1998) commented that :

It’s an issue that I think... based on bargaining unit feedback, that you tend to have a relatively small set of people that are adamantly opposed to it... But I think that most people are actually fine with this. But I think that you get very stringent pronouncements made by a very small set.

Brent Bilodeau (personal communication, March 18, 1997) also perceived overall campus support:

My perception was, is, that every segment of the university almost universally embraced the movement toward DPB’s. When we look at what all the faculty and staff groups, the bargaining groups, the student organizations. And so my perception was, the first time around, universal support, very low opposition... In some ways one could say that certainly in terms of sort of the popular opinion of the community certainly outweighed what was happening with the board. The reality though is that the board ultimately had the power... and that is not where popular opinion was.

The activists learned several key lessons. One was that public opinion, both around the campus and in the state, seemed to matter very little. The second was that the President was not the ally that many had perceived him to be. The third was that the President's view did not matter. The Board did not vote with his recommendation. Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1997) stated:

In the process of going through this the first time, we learned something about how decisions are made at the University, and we learned that having the President as an ally was not essential to getting what we wanted.

The fourth was that the only thing that mattered ultimately was what members of the Board thought and how to best count votes in advance. The fifth lesson was that despite the fact that The State News staff and editorial board had been extremely supportive, media attention and public attention are not necessarily a positive contributor. Cheryllee Finney (personal communication, December 15, 1997) commented:

We really learned that all the public stuff, all the hullabaloo, all the things that we did, really have very little impact. If anything, those actions seemed to just cause the Right to mobilize, and brought our challengers forward.

The major shifts simplified GLFSA's points of attack. The MSU Board of Trustees became the major focus of their attention, while other paths were nearly

eliminated. In addition, GLFSA began to directly communicate with Board members instead of using the President as a mediator (see Figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2: Overall Strategy of Influence Leading to November 1995 Vote

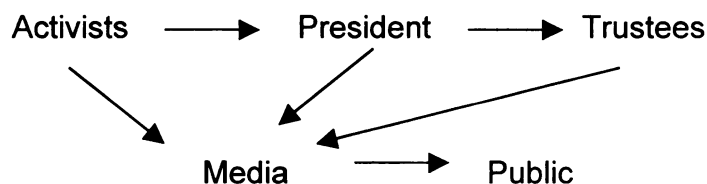
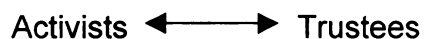


Figure 3: Overall Strategy of Influence Leading to September 1997 Vote



Some strategies continued. GLFSA renewed its call for a donation boycott. The group continued to erode arguments such as the cost of providing benefits and that insurance companies would refuse to participate. According to John Huebler, these arguments began to disappear, and he perceived the economic boycotts had increased (personal communication, December 15, 1997). In addition, GLFSA did make a series of public statements decrying the Board of Trustees' decision and making it clear that they would be looking for public statements and records of candidates for the Board in the coming election.

Cherylee Finney (personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted an increase in GLFSA's ability to organize members. John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that one positive outcome of the November board meeting was that a number of people started joining or re-

joining GLFSA, or becoming more involved in assisting with this effort. Huebler noted that “nothing motivates people to organize like depression”.

Another important strategy was added. Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1997) commented that GLFSA began that year to have annual receptions each fall where key administrators were invited. Murphy added that the popularity of those receptions grew over the years and that her perception of the outcome was that “GLFSA improved in the eyes of the institution [MSU] as a viable campus organization, as a powerful campus organization.” Being seen as powerful has been noted by scholars as an important factor in persuasion. Heath (1997, p. 180) wrote that “Power and persuasion support one another. Persuasion helps people committed to the belief that groups that have power deserve to keep it and, therefore, their policies and actions are correct.”

GLFSA noted that despite the fact that the Board had placed a two-year study period on the issue of domestic partner benefits, the administration seemed to be doing little. In January of 1996, in a memo to GLFSA President Terry Stein, President McPherson outlined how the Board would study the issue. He noted two factors. The first was that the Board of Trustees would follow the experiences of peer institutions and that they would continue to monitor state and federal legislation (Johnson, 1996). The GLFSA reaction to this memo was that this was effectively non-action and that the Human Resources Department had already provided a comprehensive report outlining these climate issues.

In 1996, two key changes in the political opportunity structure occurred. One was a change in GLFSA. The other was a change in membership of the Board of Trustees. Both changes had a significant impact on how this issue was managed during the period leading up to the second Board of Trustees vote.

In 1996, two key leaders of GLFSA, Terry Stein and Chris Carmichael, left the University and moved out of state. John Huebler became the next president of GLFSA. Terry Stein had been an extremely outspoken advocate of domestic partner benefits on campus. Chris Carmichael noted that Terry Stein was seen at times as “combative” (personal communication, December 16, 1999). Terry Stein compared himself to John Huebler by saying that “I was just so connected to this and just so heavily involved at so many levels, as was John, but in a different way. I think sometimes my effectiveness was less because I was seen as such an advocate”. Terry Stein noted that John Huebler’s style was more behind the scenes, and that John Huebler was extremely effective in utilizing interorganizational linkages between GLFSA and members of the administration.

John Huebler noted a key shift in strategy that occurred because of some differences in affiliations with the University. John Huebler was a staff person, and Terry Stein had been a faculty member. John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1999) commented:

I want to be real careful that this doesn’t sound like one way was right or wrong, but there were some changes that happened at a good time. And, while they [Chris Carmichael and Terry Stein] were here the real push for domestic partner benefits, while it was coming from faculty and staff, the



highest level of conversation was happening with the Provost and the faculty. When they left... for better or for worse, the argument ended up with folks like Cheryl and Kate and myself who had worked for a long time, but had come from the staff side, and who talked and got in more discussion through Roger Wilkinson and Human Resources than it did through the Provost and academic council. That was right about the time that we worked on the trustee election and decided that we would lobby the trustees directly. And that was something that we were better equipped to do than some faculty because of the history that we come from off-campus political groups as opposed to parochial faculty communities... Now, I still believe the same thing would have happened. If we had gone into September '97 with that board had Terry and Chris still been here leading the charge, I think we would have gotten the same thing. It just felt like the debate shifted to a different place and possibly some slightly different tactics.

John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) saw a key difference between his philosophy as a staff person and of the philosophy of Terry Stein and Chris Carmichael who had held academic positions.

If I could summarize all of that, I would say the faculty position was always 'we will continue to talk about this is the right thing and of course, the provost and trustees will realize it is the right thing.' The staff organizer side of it was always 'we have to win votes.' We have to win 5 of 8 votes. Those votes may not always come because it is the right thing to do. They



may come for political reasons. There may be political compromises in there. That is the way we will win the issue.

Huebler also noted that this was a good time to make the shift from faculty organizing to staff organizing, because by this point Academic Governance, a key faculty organization, was solidly behind the effort.

Before Chris Carmichael and Terry Stein left, GLFSA held a reception on their behalf. Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that this had the effect of bringing together key people from all over campus, such as Human Resources staff and administrators, and reinforcing interorganizational linkages. This provided an opportunity, both formally and informally, for the issue to be discussed with people that had been involved from the beginning and who were going to help it through to the end.

The other key change in the political opportunity structure came in the form of an election for Board of Trustees positions. Two positions were open in the fall of 1996. In Michigan, state-funded universities have boards of trustees that are publicly elected by the voters of the entire state. Two MSU Board members were trying to maintain their positions: Dee Cook and Russell Mawby. Both are Republicans. They were challenged by several other candidates. According to John Huebler (personal communication, December 16, 1997), GLFSA cooperated with the Lansing Area Human Rights Political Action Committee (LAHRPAC). LAHRPAC conducts surveys with candidates regarding their stances on gay and lesbian issues. According to John Huebler, they supplied LAHRPAC with the text of questions regarding candidates' positions on

domestic partner benefits at MSU. The results of the poll were given to the media and mailed to GLFSA members. In addition, GLFSA members attended public forums and asked candidates where they stood on domestic partner benefits. According to John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997), it was in the poll and the public forums that Democratic candidate Joel Ferguson publicly voiced support for domestic partner benefits. The November election resulted in the re-election of Trustee Dee Cook and the new appointment of Joel Ferguson. This election shifted the Board composition to a 5-3 Democratic majority. This was important because the Democratic Party had tended to be more open to gay and lesbian issues than the Republican Party. Brent Bilodeau (personal communication, March 18, 1998) noted that this was an important shift. "This is all about politics and power. This is all about political parties. It's the composition of the Board that is really going to be the determining factor". All Board of Trustees members were asked by The State News in April 1997 to state their positions on domestic partner benefits, with the results appearing in a front-page article (Machniak, 1997).

In the spring of 1997, Cheryllee Finney joined the GLFSA board in a newly created position as coordinator of domestic partner benefits. Cheryllee Finney brought added labor union experience to the GLFSA board and provided a personal focus to advocating for benefits. The discussion and activism began to happen almost solely behind closed doors (Cheryllee Finney, personal communication, December 15, 1997). ALGBTS activists met with GLFSA, were advised of the shift in strategy and were asked to join them in advocating behind



the scenes and to not involve the press in any way. Cheryllee Finney (personal communication, December 15, 1997) recalled that the students agreed with the GLFSA strategy and wanted to be supportive, but noted that she got the feeling from the students that if this didn't work the students were ready to try more drastic measures. She commented that "It sort of felt like if this doesn't go down this time, we're going to burn the President's house down..., major demonstrations, Administration Building sit-ins, take-overs..."

Many of those interviewed spoke about doing everything that they could to keep the media out of the discussion. Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1999) acknowledged that "we discouraged a member of our group who is affiliated with the media from attending meetings so he wouldn't be compromised as a journalist". John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that "there were times when The State News was clearly on the wrong path, and I did not correct them." This was a dilemma for him because "I wanted them to know what was going on, but I believed that if they knew what was going on they would print it, and printing it would be detrimental to our cause". Kate Murphy (personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that they had gotten advice from Trustees to stay away from the papers and to "not make this a media circus". John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) added that his perception of the advice they received from supportive Trustees was that "they did not want to read about it in the paper, hear about it on television, or receive letters from constituents." This shift in strategy with the media made him understand "how the political process compromises people a bit

in terms of total honesty.” Choosing to keep news coverage to a minimum eliminated the problem of concerns over actual media content and whether or not coverage was fair or objective. Many media scholars address the use of media coverage and how that can hurt or help campaigns. As early as 1922, Walter Lippmann (p. 32) addressed this by suggesting that activist groups control content in whatever ways that they can.

GLFSA continued to count votes and to communicate only with Board members who either had been publicly supportive or who were undecided, and avoided those who had been adamantly opposed. In early summer of 1998, GLFSA knew that the 24 month study period would be coming to a close. In early summer, GLFSA was alerted by members of the Board of Trustees and by some close to the Board that this issue was going to come up in the fall and probably sooner rather than later. John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1999) remembers being told that the votes were probably there, and that they should pay attention, make a few calls to key trustees, and to prepare. GLFSA gained the support that summer from the remaining Democrats on the Board and were alerted that Trustee Robert Weiss would call for a vote at the September 12 meeting. Kate Murphy and John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) recalled that during this period there had been no conversations between GLFSA and the President’s office or University administration, until they received a call on the weekend prior to the September meeting from the President’s office requesting a Monday morning meeting with GLFSA representatives to update them on some important developments. Kate Murphy

(personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that “they played dumb” and “went to the meeting, and we heard what we already knew”. They were given the text of the proposed resolution and were advised that the text could change before Friday’s meeting, but that this was the wording to which Trustee Weiss and President McPherson had agreed. John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) explained that the GLFSA representatives were given:

Some supporting information about partnership agreements that they would be likely to require. The proposed resolution included information about which benefits would be offered and to whom. They [the President’s office staff] spoke very frankly about collective bargaining in the unions. They spoke very frankly about implementation being likely to begin January 1, 1998, and they spoke very frankly about where they saw the votes coming in and about what we should do.

Kate Murphy and Cheryllee Finney (December 15, 1997) recalled having been advised to keep quiet and to keep this out of the papers until the Board wants it released. Ultimately, it did not appear in any media until Wednesday morning, which was the 48 hours required between the first public notice and the vote (John Huebler, personal communication, December 15, 1997).

The lack of media attention and the date of the vote were key to minimizing the opposition’s participation in the decision making process. The vote came just under 22 months after the original vote to study the issue for 24 months. John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) remembers that the opposition was caught by surprise. Cheryllee Finney



(personal communication, December 15, 1997) noted that the opposition was upset by the lack of warning. John Huebler (personal communication, December 15, 1997) empathized with the opposition but was pleased by the September vote that granted domestic partner benefits:

If I were them I would be upset as well. I am really happy that it worked out that way, but I think I would have been really pissed if it had been something that was supposed to happen in 24 months happened in 22. I guess it just feels different to be on the winning side.

The Board of Trustees voted to extend benefits to domestic partners of faculty and staff on September 12, 1998 (Board of Trustees' Minutes, September 12, 1998). MSU administrator "Alex" described the vote and the lack of opposition:

This time it went really quite smoothly without a huge amount of public outcry. I'm pleased about that because I think that there was less anguish over it for the organizations involved in that... I think it had to do with the process... It didn't evolve into the polarized issue that it had been.

The resolution extended benefits to same sex partners with some exceptions. Benefits were immediately granted to all faculty, academic staff, and graduate students with assistantships. Benefits were also granted to staff pending the approval of the various unions, all of which eventually endorsed the benefits. Benefits were not extended to any undergraduate students or to graduate students without assistantships. In addition, the policy did not, and still does not, cover employees under other circumstances. For example, residence

hall directors who have live-in positions can have spouses reside with them, but can not have their domestic partners reside with them. There was an initial open enrollment period for registering domestic partners in November and health benefits were extended beginning January 1, 1998. The open enrollment period ended with 19 employees choosing to enroll spouses and/or children (John Huebler, personal communication, December 15, 1997). This number was similar to many estimates and the experience of other universities (Fried, Ferejohn, Franklin, Greely et al., 1994).

Chapter 4

PUBLIC OPINION AND MEDIA ANALYSIS

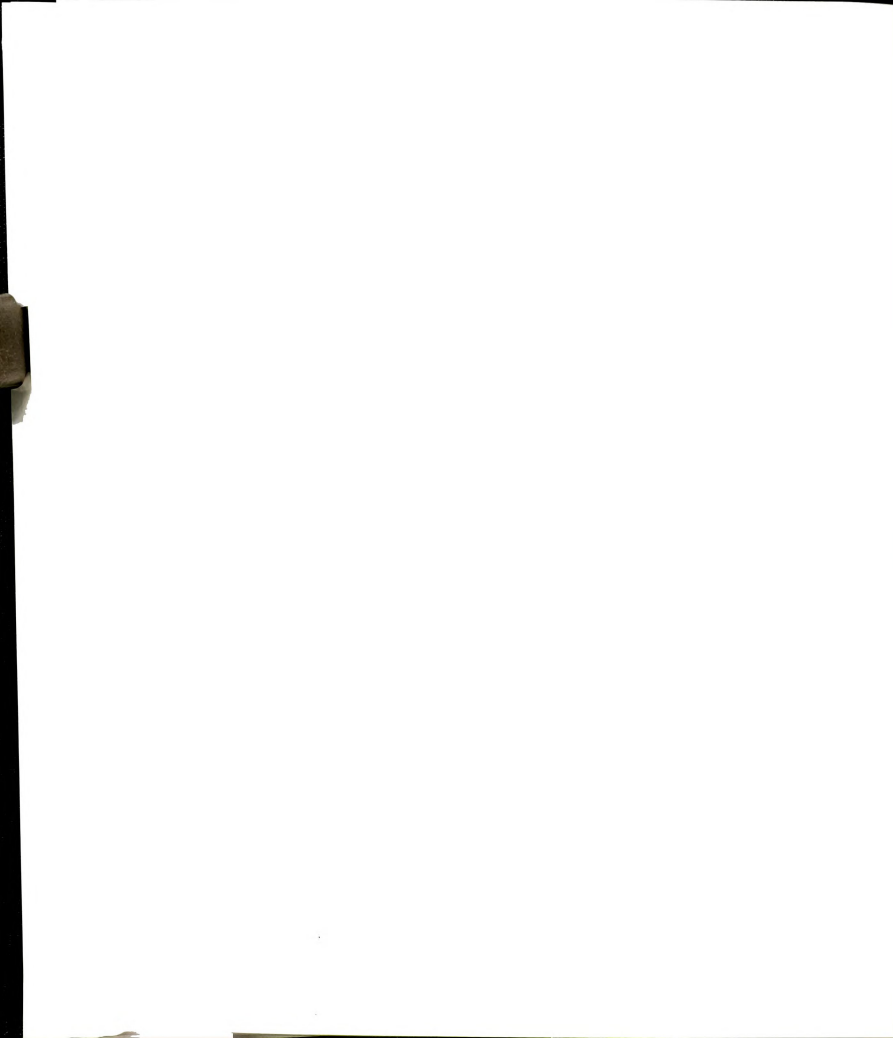
An overview of the results from the poll and media data are presented in this chapter. First, the poll results are described. Second, the content analysis of newspaper coverage is presented. Last, the arguments supporting positions given in the poll and the media data are described and compared.

Poll Results

Response rates. Poll participants were representative of the University as a whole. Participants in all categories were difficult to reach, despite multiple attempts. Students were much more willing than others to participate in the poll, although overall there was a response rate of 31.3%. The sample and the response rates for each group are reported in the Table 1 below along with the number of people actually reached by phone.

Table 1: Poll Response Rates by University Affiliation

<u>Group</u>	<u>Sample</u>	<u>Number Reached</u>	<u>Number Participating</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>
Undergraduates	120	43	38	31.7%
Graduate students	120	42	39	32.5%
Staff	120	58	36	30.0%
Faculty	120	66	38	31.7%
Administrators	60	32	18	30.0%
OVERALL	540	261	169	31.3%



Poll demographics. Survey participants represented a variety of groups and backgrounds. Respondents represented a cross-section of affiliation with the University. Twenty-two and a half percent of the respondents were faculty, 21.3% were staff, 23.1% were graduate students, 22.5% were undergraduate students, and 10.7% were administrators. There was a wide range of ages represented, from 17 to 73, with a mean age of 38 (SD=14). Approximately 43% were male and 57% were female. Most respondents were Caucasian (86.1%), which is consistent with the overall population of the campus. Most survey participants identified as Protestant (38.2%), Catholic (29.1%) or with no religious identification (21.3%). The respondents, as expected, were well-educated. Approximately 1.2% of them had no college education, and 26% held a doctorate. When asked which political party, if any, they belonged to, respondents were most likely to identify as independent (57.5%), followed by Democrat (29.3%) or Republican (12.6%).

Knowledge Questions

When asked in an open-ended question what were some of the major issues on campus that the MSU Board of Trustees had acted upon recently, 29% of the respondents named the passage of domestic partner benefits. When asked what are the major issues on campus that the MSU board of trustees should consider in the near future, 20% named parking.

In a series of questions, respondents were asked which, if any, of several public universities in Michigan have granted domestic partner benefits to their employees. Only 12% knew that Wayne State University has them, 8.5% knew

that Eastern University has them, and 39.8% of respondents knew that the University of Michigan has them. Very few correctly answered “no” to whether or not Western Michigan University, Central Michigan University, Northern Michigan University, and Grand Valley State University have domestic partner benefits (from 6.7% to 8.5%). Most people responded that they did not know whether or not those universities had benefits.

Most respondents, 63.7%, did know that MSU had granted these benefits and of those, 88.9% were able to identify correctly that the benefits were recent (within the last year). Most respondents had learned about MSU’s decision to grant domestic partner benefits from local newspapers, including the campus paper, The State News (65%), and the local city paper, The Lansing State Journal (22%). Most of the remaining people learned about the decision through interpersonal channels, including friends (13%) or co-workers (14%). Most respondents knew that benefits had been extended to faculty (94.5%), but many did not know that the benefits were not extended to undergraduate students’ families. A little less than half, or 41.3%, of the respondents who knew MSU extended benefits to domestic partners were aware that the benefits were not extended to undergraduate students.

Opinions

Actual opinions. Opinions about domestic partner benefits included people who were highly opposed (6.5%; N=11), opposed (13.6%; N=23), neutral (24.9%; N=42), in favor (37.3%; N=63), highly in favor (11.8%; N=20), or didn’t care (5.9%; N=10). Those who didn’t care were later collapsed with those that were

neutral in opinion. On this Likert-type scale which ranged from 1=highly opposed to 5=highly in favor, the mean was a 3.36 with a standard deviation of 1.09. Regardless of university affiliation, all mean opinions fell between neutral and in favor, and were not significantly different from each other. These means are reported in Table 2. In addition, self-reports indicate that opinions have been stable. When asked if their opinion about domestic partner benefits had changed at any time, 88.4% of respondents indicated that it had not.

Perceived opinions. The means for respondents' perceptions of other groups' opinions were also between neutral and in favor for undergraduate and graduate students, faculty, and staff (see Table 2). Administrators were perceived to be less favorable, although in reality this belief was unwarranted. In addition, the average person in Michigan was believed to be opposed to MSU granting domestic partner benefits, although actual numbers are not known.

However, t-tests revealed some differences in people's perception of what other groups thought. The perception that Michigan citizens would be less favorable was statistically different from all of the others. This mean was considerably lower than the means for other groups. The perception was that opinions of undergraduates, faculty, and staff were not different from each other, and that graduate students were more in favor than all other groups.



Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Opinions and Perceptions of Others'
Opinions by Affiliation

	Actual Opinion Mean (SD)	Perceived Opinion* Mean (SD)
Undergraduate Students	3.26 (1.08)	3.38 ^c (0.80)
<i>Graduate Students**</i>	3.49 (0.99)	3.77 ^d (0.56)
Faculty	3.46 (1.04)	3.35 ^c (0.84)
Staff	3.24 (1.26)	3.16 ^c (0.89)
<i>Administrators</i>	3.35 (1.17)	2.91 ^b (0.86)
Michigan Citizens	Unknown	2.24 ^a (0.66)

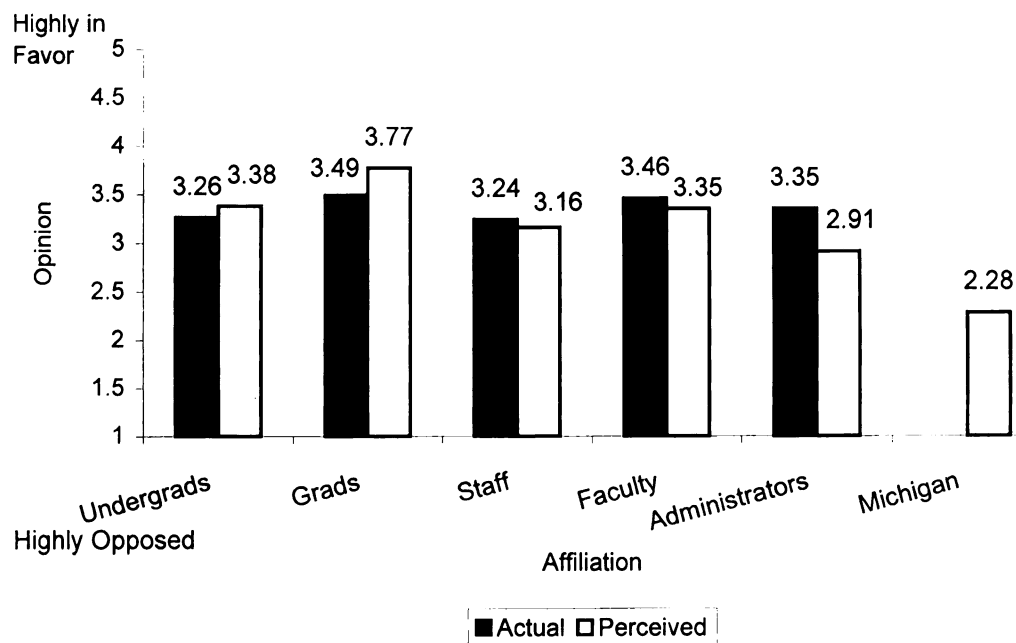
* Different letters imply significant difference between perceived opinion means (p<.05).

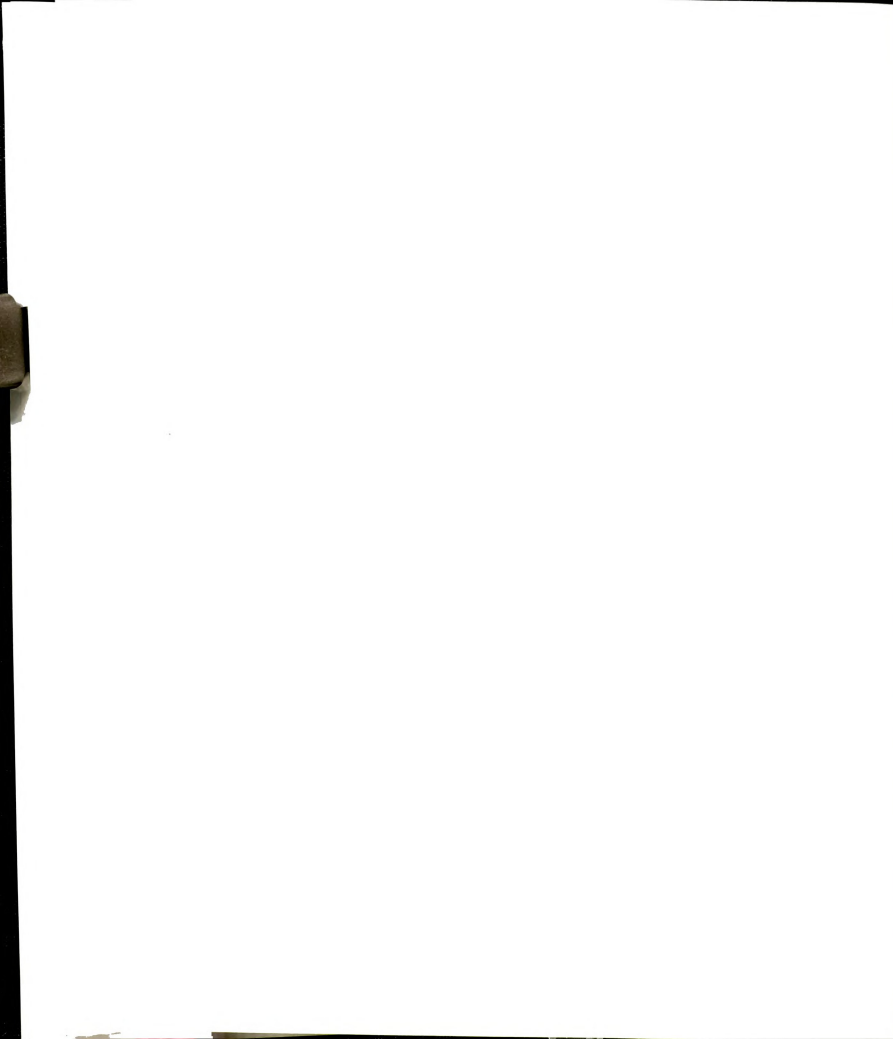
** The groups that appear in italics, graduate students and administrators, are the ones where actual means are statistically different from perceived means (p<.000).

Actual versus perceived opinions. The trend was that respondents slightly overestimated how favorable students were, but underestimated how favorable faculty, staff, and administrators were toward MSU granting domestic partner benefits as reported in Figure 4 below. In only two cases were the means of the actual opinions and of the perceptions of others' opinions different. Although still favorable, actual graduate student opinion was significantly less favorable than the perception of their opinion (t=5.525; p<.000). Administrators were perceived

to be on the side of opposed, but in reality were on the side of in-favor of granting domestic partner benefits ($t=-5.694$; $p<.000$). In addition, correlations between one's own opinion and the perception of other's opinions were extremely low. When asked what most people in each affiliated group thought (faculty, staff, etc.), many respondents stated that they had no idea what others thought as a whole. The only case where there seemed to be a slight trend of pluralistic ignorance was in the case of administrator's perceptions of other administrators, faculty and staff where the correlations between individual opinions and the perceptions of others' opinions ranged from .452 to .730. There was no relationship found with student opinions. The sample sizes in these subgroups were extremely low, and therefore, these findings should be interpreted with caution.

Figure 4: Actual and Perceived Opinions by Affiliation





Media use of poll respondents. When asked which newspapers they read at least once per week, respondents indicated the State News (57.4%), the Lansing State Journal (54.4%), the Detroit Free Press (16%), and the Detroit News (8.9%). When asked which types of television stations they watched most frequently, respondents indicated network television (53.6%), cable television (34.9%), and public broadcasting (12.7%).

Content Analysis of Newspaper Results

General information. All news articles and features were obtained from 1992 through 1997. In 1992, the University-Wide Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Issues published their report recommending the University adopt domestic partner benefits. On January 1, 1998, implementation began of domestic partner benefits for same sex couples. Only news and feature stories were included in the analysis. In total, 51 articles were located. Of these, 34 were from the State News, nine from the Lansing State Journal, seven from the Detroit Free Press, and one from the Detroit News. In addition, the number of articles per year varied (see Figure 5). In 1992, three articles appeared. In 1994, four appeared. In 1995, there were 15 articles. In 1996 there were six, and in 1997, there were 23 articles. Of these articles, 56.9% were front-page stories, and 19.6% included photographs. Nearly one half of these stories (49%) appeared within one week before or after a Board of Trustees meeting in which domestic partner benefits were considered.

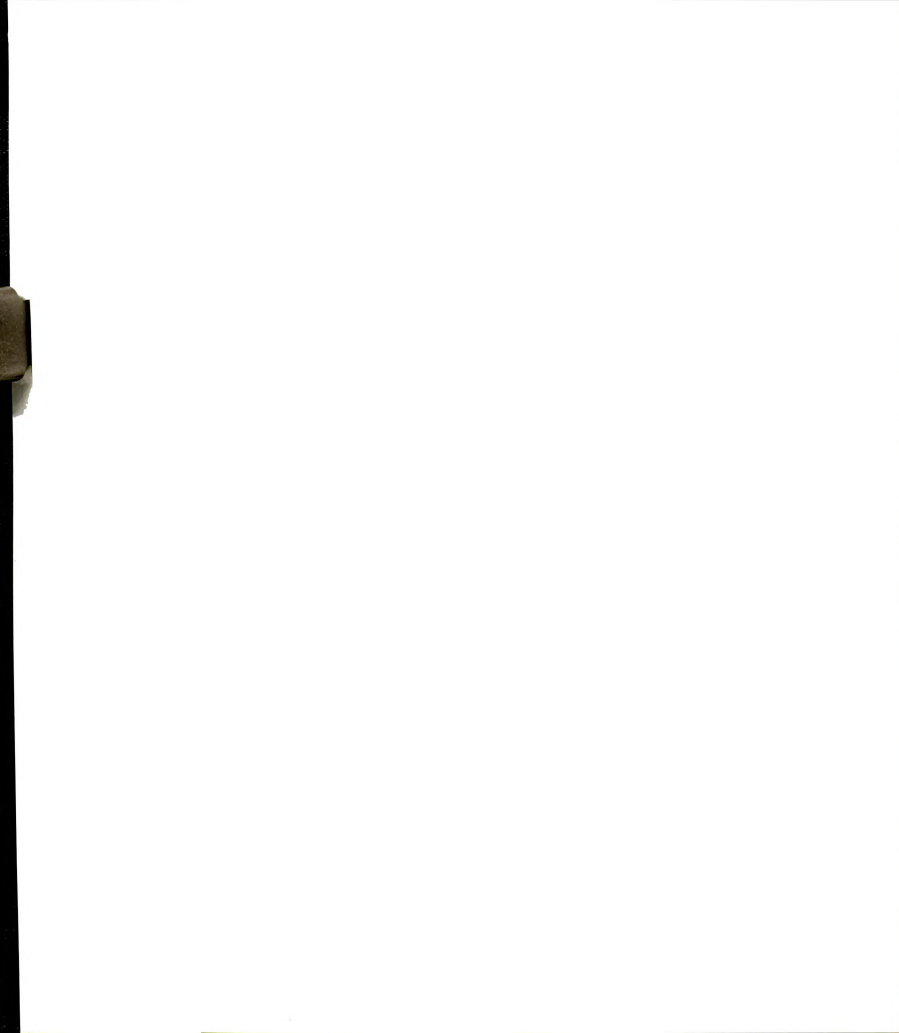
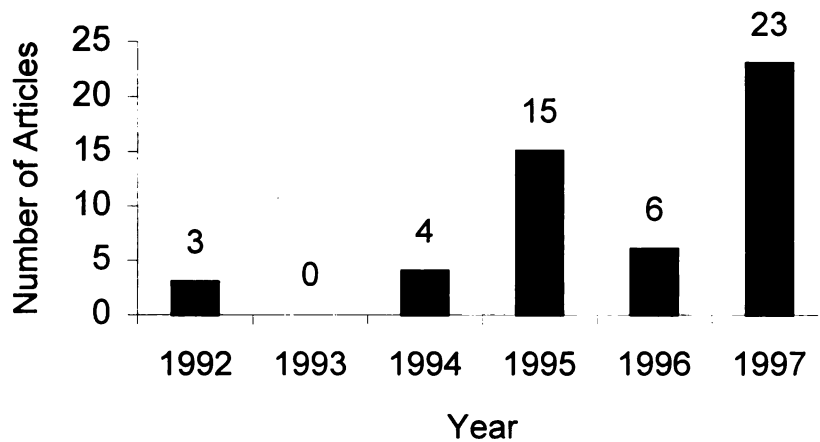
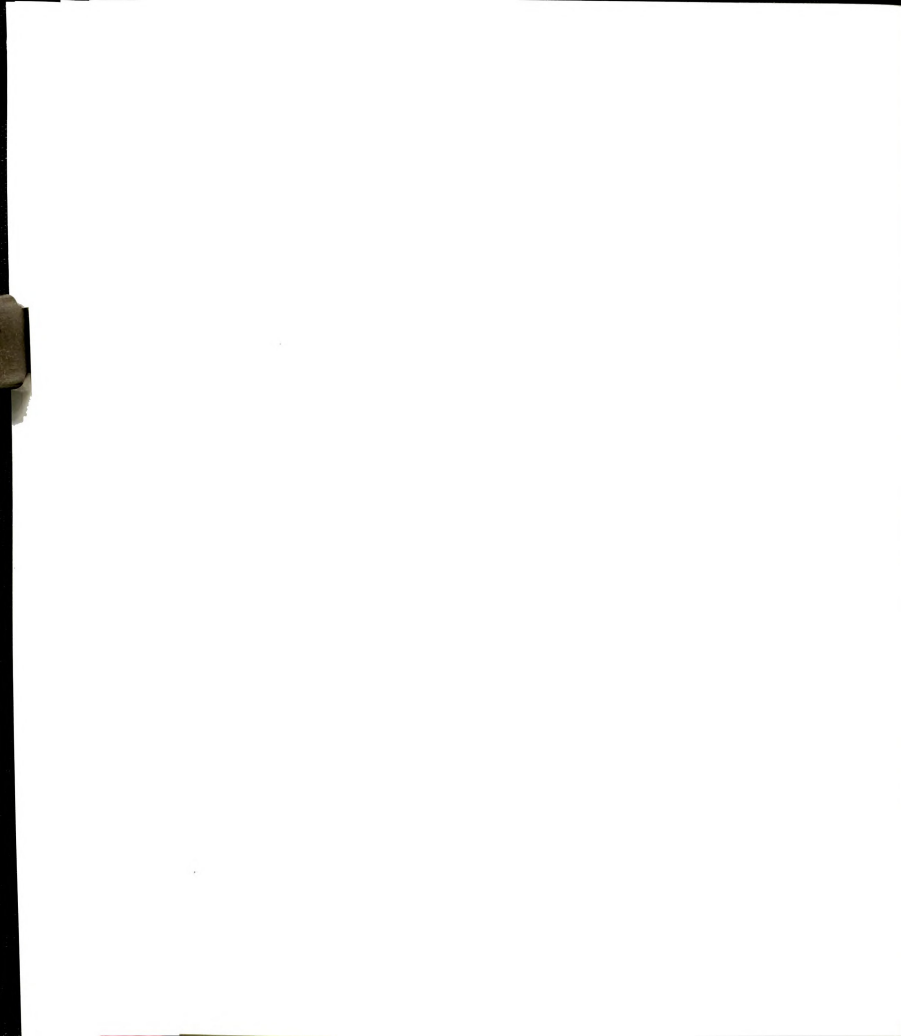


Figure 5: Number of News Articles, Stories and Features By Year



Content. The themes of the articles varied. Thirteen announced an upcoming board meeting, nine were reports of reactions to a board decision, eight were about Michigan legislation, three were in relation to other universities in the state granting benefits, and three were about MSU's decision to pass them. The Board of Trustees' decision to postpone action was reported in one article and the ruling about a staff member being denied a spousal ID card for her partner also received one story. In addition eight other miscellaneous topics were covered.

Media sources. Members of the MSU Board of Trustees were the most frequently used sources. Approximately 43% of the stories cited at least one board member. MSU President McPherson was also a common source, with nearly 16% of the articles citing him. GLFSA President John Huebler was also cited frequently (29% of the stories). In addition, other members of GLFSA, who were identified as such, were also cited commonly (22% of the stories).



Arguments from the Media and Polling Data

In the poll, respondents were asked to provide reasons why they held the opinion that they did about domestic partner benefits. They were also asked to name the reasons that most people who were opposed would give to support their opinions, and the reasons that most people in favor would give to support their opinions. These arguments were coded using the same coding scheme that was developed for the content analysis of media (see Tables 3 and 4 below). As expected, morality was the most common argument in opposition to domestic partner benefits, whereas equity was the most common argument given to support domestic partner benefits. Rank orders were created for in-favor and opposed arguments, and the resulting data were analyzed using Spearman's rank order correlation (see Table 5). Results were consistent for in-favor and opposed arguments. Arguments from the poll (own and others' reasons) were significantly correlated ($r=.875^{**}$ for opposing arguments, $r=.964^{**}$ for in-favor arguments, $p<.001$). Nevertheless, for both opposing and in-favor arguments, neither category of arguments (own or others' opinion) were significantly correlated with the media's rank ordering of arguments, and were actually fairly low with correlations ranging from .179 though .515.

Table 3: Arguments in Opposition to Partner Benefits

Arguments	Media <i>Rank (N)</i>	Poll (own opinion) <i>Rank (N)</i>	Poll (perceptions of others' opinions) <i>Rank (N)</i>
Morality	1 (12)	1 (25)	1 (131)
Illegal	2 (9)	5 (3)	4 (29)
Cost	3 (8)	4 (6)	2 (43)
Anti-democratic	4 (3)	8 (1)	8 (22)
Not fair	4 (3)	2 (8)	3 (30)
Other	4 (3)	10 (0)	10 (0)
Don't have to offer just because others do	7 (2)	7 (2)	9 (20)
Shouldn't encourage/let them work elsewhere	8 (1)	8 (1)	6 (23)
Not part of MSU anti- discrimination policy	9 (0)	5 (3)	6 (23)
People will lie	9 (0)	3 (7)	5 (27)

Table 4: Arguments in Favor of Partner Benefits

Arguments	Media <i>Rank (N)</i>	Poll (own opinion) <i>Rank (N)</i>	Poll (perceptions of others' opinions) <i>Rank (N)</i>
Equity/equality/fair	1 (25)	1 (90)	1 (138)
Cost	2 (16)	6 (8)	4 (35)
Others offer	3 (14)	7 (3)	6 (30)
Part of anti-discrimination policy at MSU	4 (11)	2 (18)	2 (53)
Other	5 (8)	7 (0)	7 (0)
Retain/recruit	6 (6)	4 (9)	5 (34)
Entitled	7 (1)	3 (10)	3 (40)



Table 5: Spearman Rank Order Correlations*

	Media	Poll (own)	Poll (perceived)
Media	1.00	.179	.321
Poll (own)	.269	1.00	.964**
Poll (other)	.515	.875**	1.00

* The top of the matrix represents correlations for arguments in favor of domestic partner benefits, and the bottom represents correlations for arguments against.

** $p < .01$

Summary of Key Findings

As was predicted, the poll data revealed that knowledge of the issue of domestic partner benefits was quite low. Very few respondents (29%) remembered that domestic partner benefits had been an issue that the MSU Board of Trustees had recently acted upon. However, nearly two-thirds responded that MSU had domestic partner benefits from a list of Michigan universities. Less than half knew that benefits had not been extended to all of the campus community.

Actual opinions by affiliation and the perception that other's have of those opinions were relatively close. In two groups the differences were statistically significant. However, there were differences between what the expected opinion of other groups were. For example, administrators were expected to be less favorable than many other types of campus affiliates. In reality, there were no differences between the various affiliates in their favor toward domestic partner benefits. All were slightly above the mean, on the side of being in favor, of the

University granting domestic partner benefits. These results do not provide a great deal of support for a false consensus effect that was predicted. This may be due to the relative closeness and interaction that many of these groups have on campus compared to other false consensus research that examined groups that rarely to never have contact with each other.

Results from the poll revealed that morality and equity were the most commonly given arguments against or for domestic partner benefits. Although these were the most common arguments presented in the newspapers analyzed, they did not dominate the other arguments in the same way. Arguments that respondents had and those they expected others to have were highly correlated (.964 and .875). The media content was not highly correlated with the arguments given in the poll. This was not expected and suggests that respondents formed their opinions from sources other than these newspapers or the media in general.

Chapter 5

INTERVIEW RESULTS

The results that follow are from the interview data. Response rate information and demographics of interview respondents are provided, followed by specific results comparing domestic partner benefits with parking for each section of the interview protocol in the order in which the questions were asked. A copy of the protocol can be found in Appendix A.

Response Rate Information

Eighty people were contacted either by telephone, email or both and asked to participate in an interview about their opinions regarding domestic partner benefits and parking. Fifty-two people agreed to be interviewed, 14 refused, and 14 never responded to requests. Overall, there was a 65% participation rate. It was determined that two of the respondents were outliers based on their reported levels of cognitive complexity and were excluded from analyses. The outliers were one undergraduate and one graduate student. As a result, all interview analyses are based on N=50.

Demographic Information

Argumentation interview respondents included staff (N=15), administrators (N=14), faculty (N=16), graduate students (N=2), and undergraduate students (N=3). The average age was approximately 46 years old (SD=9.84). Fifty-six percent were female, 42% male, and the remaining 2% identified as transgendered. The respondents were mostly Caucasian (N=45). The 90%

majority of whites is consistent with the University population as a whole.

Religious background varied. Forty-four percent identified as Protestant, 10% Catholic, 6% Jewish, and 2% other. The remaining 38% did not identify with any organized religion.

Level of education was atypical of the University population. Nearly half of the respondents held a doctorate (46%), 2% had a medical degree, 10% were currently pursuing a doctorate, 18% had a master's degree, 4% had a law degree, 2% were currently pursuing a master's, 12% had a bachelor's degree, and 6% had some undergraduate education or were currently pursuing a bachelor's degree. In terms of field, 38% had a background in the social sciences, 24% in the sciences, 22% in humanities, and 16% in a combination of sciences, humanities, and social sciences.

Sexual orientation of respondents was not at all representative of the University population as a whole, but is reasonable considering the large numbers of domestic partner activists involved. Forty-four percent identified as heterosexual or straight, 50% lesbian or gay, and 6% bisexual.

All of the respondents that were eligible (94%) claimed to be registered voters, while the remainder were non-US citizens. An overwhelming majority identified as Democrats (60%), while 4% identified as Republicans, 10% as independents and 6% were non-US citizens.

Analysis Information

Interview results were analyzed using several methods, including descriptive analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, correlational analysis, and path

analysis. In addition, all open-ended items were coded by two raters: the author and one other. Intercoder reliabilities were extremely high (most between .90 and 1.00 with a few falling as low as .86). All subsequent analyses are based on the coding results of the non-author.

Activism Results

Based on responses to the interviews, 64% said that they would call themselves activists. Forty-two percent identified as being active on gay issues (40% pro and 2% con), 40% on liberal issues (not including gay-related issues), and 2% on conservative issues (not including gay-related issues), and 30% on issues that could not be clearly identified as liberal or conservative, such as environmental activism. Although 64% identified as an activist, only 30% expected that others who knew him/her would also label her/him an activist.

When asked in an open-ended question to define what an activist was, 66% included ideology or holding a strong or passionate belief about something, 18% included having to hold a leadership position in a community, and 98% identified some kind of behavioral component. The behavioral component varied dramatically from working behind the scenes to violence. The following definitions taken from the interview transcripts illustrate some of the differences:

I guess the first thing that comes to mind is that they are active. They actually do something about a stand or an issue that they feel is important to them. That could be as simple as letter writing, or phoning, or protesting, or letter bombs, going to the extreme.

Someone that works to better the situation of the community no matter what it is. I think some people think of activism as being active resistance to authority, but I don't. I think you can be an activist and be a passive resistor, or to work behind the scenes and not put yourself out at all.

Someone who is aware of what's going on in the community and perceives needs, and actually does things to investigate, to find out additional information, to get other people interested, and to be some kind of an agent of change whether they themselves directly cause change or are convincing other people to work for change.

In addition, Kerpelman's Activity Scale was administered to measure actual activist behavior. Confirmatory factor analysis was employed to test the 10 items related to actual behavior. Based on tests of internal consistency and parallelism, items were eliminated and an index was formed. Six items were retained (see Table 6).

Table 6: Means, Standard Deviations, and Factor Loadings for Kerpelman's Activity Scale Items ($\alpha = .78$; N=50)

Item	Mean (SD)	Factor Loading
How many times in the past 3 years have you organized a group to support, advocate or protest a political or social issue?	2.08 (3.91)	.44
How many times in the past 3 years have you participated in a group supporting, advocating or protesting a political or social issue?	6.35 (5.22)	.65
How many times in the past 3 years have you engaged in an extended argument with anyone over a political or social issue?	8.33 (3.98)	.47
Approximately how much time during the average day do you spend trying to convince others to support or protest a political or social issue? (hours)	0.81 (1.48)	.48
How many times in the past 3 years have you written something (pamphlet, handout, email, etc.) designed specifically to either inform or convince other people concerning a political or social issue?	6.20 (4.68)	.87
During the past 3 years, how many times have you participated in demonstrations, marches or rallies?	3.51 (3.68)	.78

It is interesting to note that the correlations among the various measurements of activism from self-reports (Self-Report), their perceptions of whether others would call him/her an activist (Others), and the Kerpelman Scale

(Kerpelman), although correlated significantly, with the exception of others perceptions with the scale, did not approach $r=1.0$ (see Table 7 below). This finding is not novel and is consistent with studies looking at levels of political participation. Key (1961) found that those who identify as being active in a group to which they belong are “far less numerous than those who merely belong” (p. 504). This difference in identification can be explained, in part, based on the open-ended responses probing why people consider themselves to be activists or non-activists. In some cases, those who tested fairly high on the Kerpelman’s activity scale did not consider themselves to be activists, either because of a negative association with the word “activism” or more likely because they felt they were not nearly as active or as publicly active as other people they knew. Consequently, Kerpelman’s Scale is used in all subsequent analyses as the measure of activism because it measures behavior and not perception per se.

Table 7: Correlations Between Activism Measures

	Kerpelman	Self-Report	Others
Kerpelman	1.00		
Self-Report	.465*	1.00	
Others	.279	.345*	1.00

* $p<.05$

Verbal Aggression, Argumentativeness, and Cognitive Complexity

Confirmatory factor analyses were performed for the verbal aggression scale and the argumentativeness scale (see Tables 8 and 9 below). Based on tests of internal consistency and parallelism, items were eliminated and an index



for each scale was formed. In addition, four indices for cognitive complexity of arguments were created for respondents' own positions and alternative positions on domestic partner benefits, and for respondents' own and alternative positions on parking. Cognitive complexity was a sum of the average length of a causal chain and the total amount of integration between argument chains. Initially, it was hoped that the total number of causal argument chains would also be included in this index, but the correlations between this item and the others were negligible.

Table 8: Means, Standard Deviations, and Factor Loadings for Verbal Aggression Items ($\alpha = .67$; N=50)

Item	Mean* (SD)	Factor Loading
I am extremely careful to avoid attacking individuals' intelligence when I attack their idea.	2.06 (1.17)	.68
I try to make people feel good about themselves even when their ideas are stupid.	2.76 (1.12)	.69
When I attack another person's' ideas, I try not to damage their self-concepts.	1.98 (0.98)	.53

*1 = *rarely true*, "5" = *almost always true*

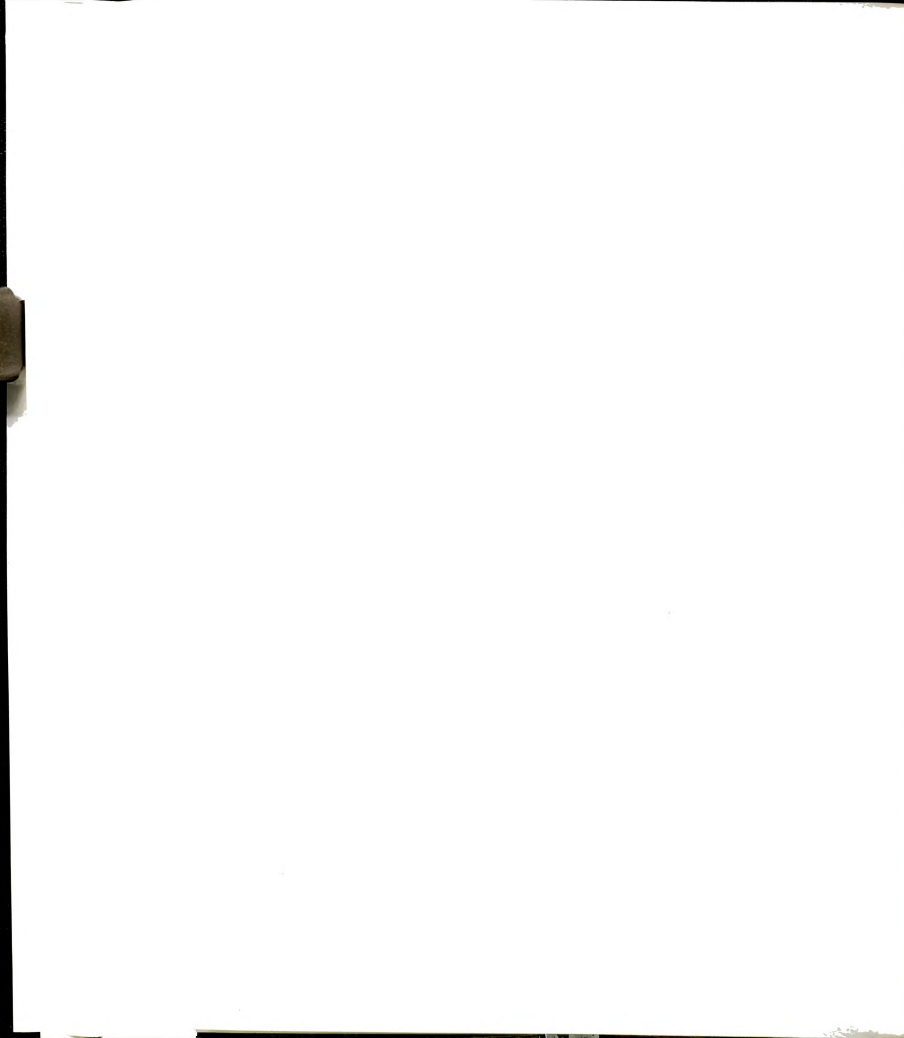


Table 9: Means, Standard Deviations, and Factor Loadings for
Argumentativeness Items ($\alpha = .79$; N=50)

Item	Mean* (SD)	Factor Loading
Once I finish an argument I promise myself that I will not get into another.	4.18 (1.12)	.70
Arguing with a person creates more problems for me than it solves.	3.64 (1.21)	.67
When I finish arguing with someone I feel nervous and upset.	3.42 (1.14)	.89
I am happy when I keep an argument from happening.	3.24 (1.15)	.55
I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge.	3.24 (1.29)	.50

*1 = *rarely true*, "5" = *almost always true*

Causal Theory, Justification, and Contradictory Positions

A vast majority of those interviewed were in favor of domestic partner benefits. On a scale from strongly opposed=1 to strongly in favor=5, the mean was 4.56 (SD=.97). When asked if they could remember when they began to hold this view, 92% responded yes to domestic partner benefits and 98% responded yes to parking. The majority of those asked about their memory of the origin of their view on parking linked it to a specific event that they were able to describe (60%), and 36% linked their view on domestic partner benefits to a specific event.



Commitment of Beliefs. People strongly held their views, and the majority did not think that they would be able to prove someone else wrong for either issue. Strength of commitment regarding domestic partner benefits was even more extreme than parking, as illustrated in Table 10.

Table 10: Ability to Be Proven Wrong or Prove Someone Else Wrong (N=50)

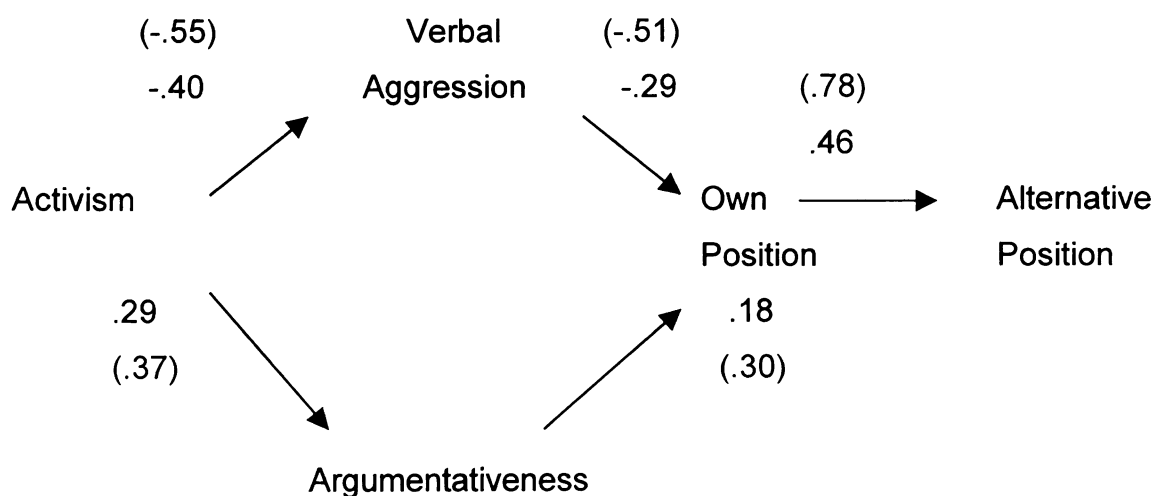
Question	Partner Benefits	Parking
Is there any fact or evidence, which if it were true, would show your view to be wrong?	67% No 20% Maybe 13% Yes	34% No 17% Maybe 49% Yes
Could someone prove that you were wrong?	82% No 10% Maybe 8% Yes	28%No 17% Maybe 55% Yes
Would you be able to prove this person (someone who disagreed with you) wrong?	60% No 19% Maybe 9% Yes	33.3% No 17.9% Maybe 41% Yes

Path analysis results. An indirect effect was found for the impact of level of activism on people's abilities to make complex arguments (see Figures 4 and 5). As expected, level of activism was found to be positively related to argumentativeness and negatively related to verbal aggression. In addition, argumentativeness was positively related to making complex arguments for one's own opinion, and both positively and directly related to making complex arguments about an alternative position. Verbal aggression was found to be negatively related to making complex arguments for one's own position. These data were consistent with these models for both domestic partner benefits and



for parking. The chi-square goodness of fit test using ordinary least squares estimates was significant using both uncorrected and corrected (for error of measurement) correlations. The path coefficients were stronger for the path model related to domestic partner benefits than for parking. Most of the path coefficients were moderate in strength even for the uncorrected model ranging from $\beta=.18$ to $r=-.40$. The corrected path coefficients ranged from $\beta=-.25$ to $r=.78$. The corrected coefficients are represented in parentheses in Figures 6 and 7.

Figure 6: Path Model for Ability to Argue about Domestic Partner Benefits

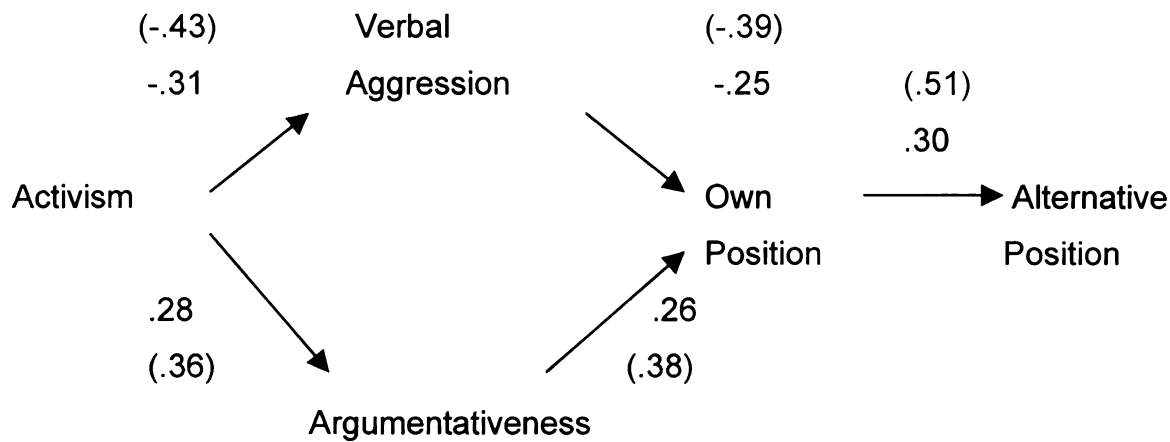


$$\chi^2(s) = 1.77, p > .05$$

$$\chi^{2'}(s) = .89, p > .05$$



Figure 7: Path Model for Ability to Argue about Parking on Campus



$$\chi^2(s) = 3.43, p > .05$$

$$\chi^2(s) = 1.52, p > .05$$

Instrumental Reasoning

Respondents had various beliefs about whether or not there were viable solutions to the issues of domestic partner benefits and parking that would satisfy everyone. For domestic partner benefits, 62.5% of the respondents felt it was impossible, 22.9% thought it might be possible, and 14.6% felt it was possible. When pushed for a solution as to what might be agreeable to everyone, very few could generate a response. The most common solution given was a sort of “cafeteria plan” in which employees would be provided a certain number of dollars toward insuring themselves and others of their choice.

Regarding the issue of parking, 50% thought it would be impossible to satisfy everyone, 38% felt it might be possible, and 12% felt it would definitely be

possible. Again, very few were able to suggest solutions, but the most common solution given was a vastly improved, low-cost, public transportation system.

Epistemological Reasoning

Again, the certainty of their views, the certainty of their views compared to an expert, the likelihood of reconsidering their positions, their perception of the importance of the issues, and their knowledge of the issues differed depending on the issue. Table 11 below illustrates the results of the epistemological reasoning questions. Some questions were coded on Likert-type scales from low=1 to high=5. Other questions solicited yes or no responses.

Perceptions of Media Coverage

Nearly 100% of the interview participants felt that the media had covered the issues of domestic partner benefits and parking at MSU specifically (98% for domestic partner benefits and 96% for parking). The State News (66% for domestic partner benefits and 80% for parking) and the Lansing State Journal (61% for both domestic partner benefits and parking) were the most commonly identified sources of media attention to these issues.

The amount of attention given was considered to be either too little (26% for domestic partner benefits and 33% for parking), about right (55% for domestic partner benefits and 50% for parking), too much (9% for domestic partner benefits and 14% for parking), or depended on the media source (11% for domestic partner benefits and 2% for parking). About 49% of the respondents felt that the media attention for domestic partner benefits had been objective and balanced compared with 61% for parking. Approximately 77% of the respondents

Table 11: Comparisons of Responses Related to Epistemological Reasoning

(N=50)

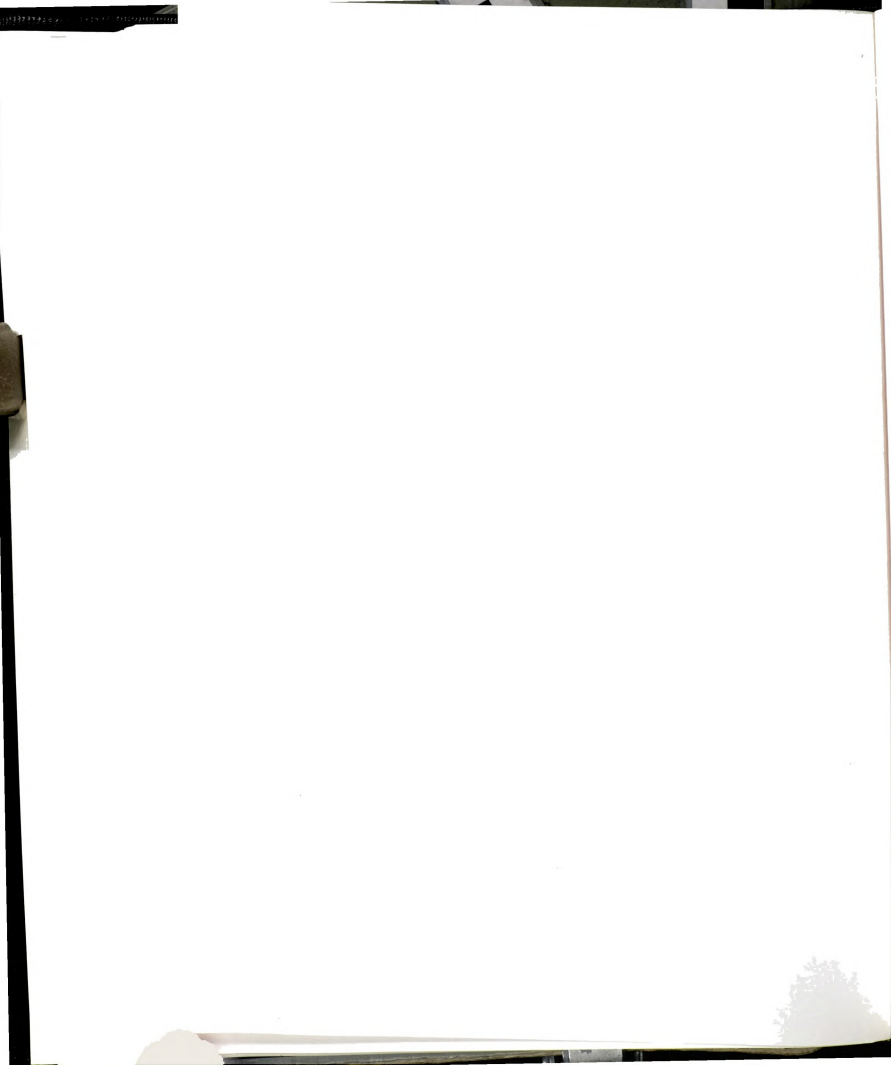
Question	Partner Benefits	Parking
How sure are you (1) that MSU's policy on partner benefits is in the best interests of MSU or (2) about what causes parking problems on campus?	Mean= 4.13 SD= .98	Mean=3.36 SD=1.14
Are there any experts on this issue?	14% No 17% Maybe 69% Yes	4% No 8% Maybe 88% Yes
How sure are you of your view compared to an expert?	Mean=4.03 SD=.88	Mean=3.14 SD=.97
Could more than one point of view be right?	16% No 54% Maybe/ Right To Them 30% Yes	2% No 16% Maybe 82% Yes
Is there anyone who could change your mind on your position?	78% No 12% Maybe 10% Yes	12% No 16% Maybe 72% Yes
Is there anyone you respect who, if s/he changed his/her mind on this issue, it would cause you to reconsider?	72% No 11% Maybe 17% Yes	46% No 6% Maybe 48% Yes
How much would you say you know about this topic compared to the average person?	Mean=4.25 SD=.69	Mean=2.14 SD=.97
How important is this issue to MSU?	Mean=3.61 SD=1.34	Mean=3.80 SD=.99
How important is this issue to you personally?	Mean=4.06 SD=1.13	Mean=2.80 SD=1.10

felt the coverage they had seen or read had not been thorough for both domestic partner benefits and for parking. The majority felt that the media coverage had been timely (69% for domestic partner benefits and 59% for parking).

In terms of remembering specific arguments that had been presented in the media regarding these issues, about 56% recalled specific arguments surrounding domestic partner benefits and 33% recalled specific arguments surrounding parking on campus.

Summary of Key Findings

Finding activists working against the passage of domestic partner benefits proved to be extremely difficult. Few were listed in archival records and those that spoke out publicly were not involved in an organized effort. This lack of an organized countermovement is atypical of social issues. It may be that those who were opposed were not comfortable speaking out and they had difficulty in finding each other to organize a collective effort. Some of those interviewed suggested that the climate had shifted, making it uncomfortable for those opposed to speak publicly. It was clear from the poll that there were people opposed to this effort. However, the difficulty in finding activists against domestic partner benefits limited the inclusion of those with opposing viewpoints in the argumentation interviews and made testing some of the hypotheses impossible. For example, it was impossible to test whether or not those working toward changing the status quo were better at generating alternative arguments than those who were fighting to maintain the status quo.



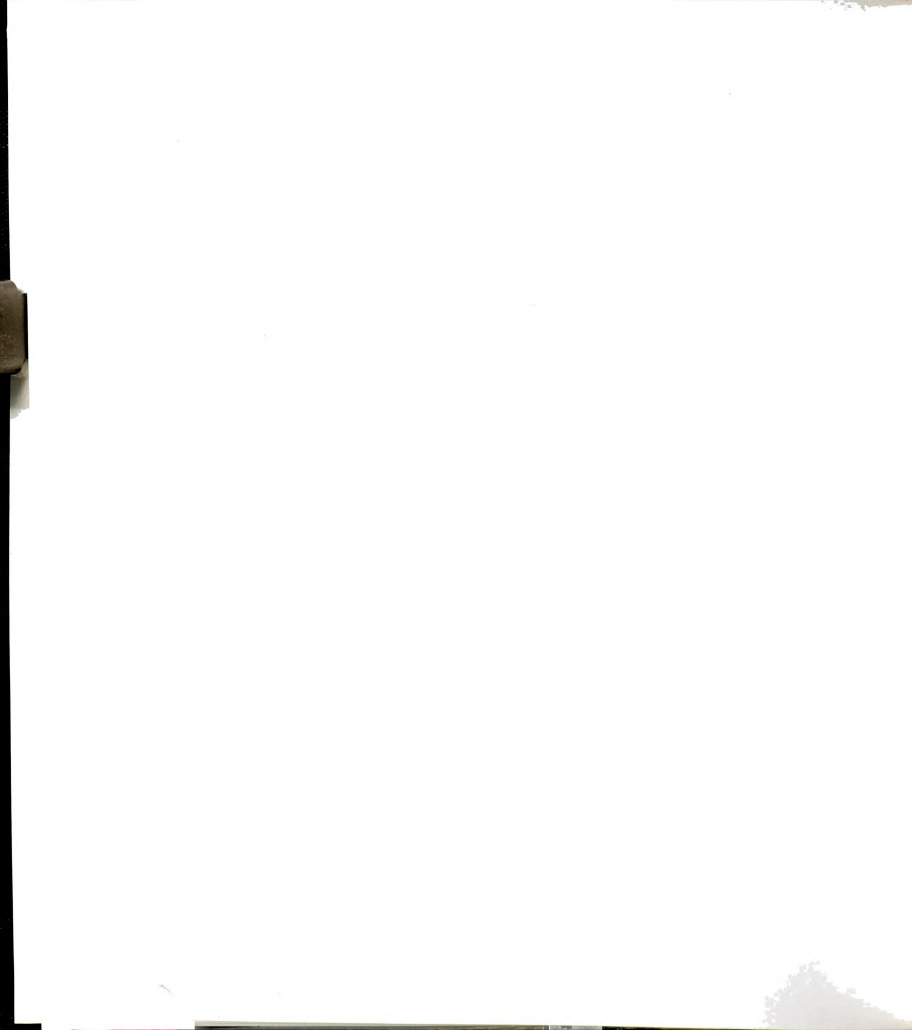
Another interesting finding from the analysis of the argumentation interviews was the social comparison on the part of activists choosing whether or not to define themselves that way based on their peer groups. Despite testing high on Kerpelman's Activity Scale, many still did not see themselves as activists because compared to their peers, they felt they did not qualify. This was also reflected in the vast range of definitions participants provided for activism. In some cases, for example, if a subject's definition of activism included public demonstrations, and s/he did not participate in any in the past few years, the subject excluded her or himself as an activist.

Relationships between activism, verbal aggression, and cognitive complexity were found, and in the expected directions. However, not all of the relationships were direct. In addition, as stated earlier, activism and verbal aggression were found to be negatively related which was not at all expected. However, the most parsimonious explanation is that it is not advantageous for an activist to be verbally aggressive and still expect to get the time and attention of decision makers. This strategy may help get media attention, but is likely to dissuade a policy maker from spending time with the activist. In addition, the idea that activism is positively related to activists' ability to make complex arguments for their own position and for an alternative one was supported. This held for both issues, suggesting that the ability to argue is a transferable skill.

Many interview participants also felt that although they held their own views very strongly about domestic partner benefits, that they could not change another's opinions about this topic. This was consistent with the data from the



history interviews. The interviews revealed a change in strategy on the part of GLFSA between 1995 and 1997 from efforts to elicit media attention and to gain public support to efforts to sway policy makers. In addition, GLFSA was careful to continue to work with only those policy makers who were either already in support or were vacillating or undecided on the issue.



Chapter 6

DISCUSSION AND SYNTHESIS

There are many implications of this study, both theoretical and practical. As with all studies, there are also limitations. Findings from this study have implications for issues management, public opinion, and framing. In addition, there are implications for literature related to argumentation. This chapter examines implications in those areas and discusses implications of this study for activists. First, however, limitations are also discussed.

Limitations

Is thought and reasoning supreme? This study examined levels of thought based on people's abilities to construct causal arguments by linking theory and evidence. There are quite likely to be other equally valid ways of conceptualizing thought. This study is limited in that it examined people's abilities to construct arguments and to voice them. It may be that the thoughts people had were not well articulated, but that the thought was much more complex than that which was verbalized (Olson & Torrance, 1996). However, in terms of winning over politicians and judicial bodies, the ability to articulate arguments is essential. Anderson and Dovre (1968) note that "argumentation emphasizes the use of reasoned discourse and provides a method to resolve conflicts, secure decisions, and affect attitude and behavior by rational analysis and logical appeal" (p. 3). Similarly, Mills (1968, p. 2) states that argumentation is an essential tenet of social order in that individuals will participate in making decisions if there is to be



self-government and democracy, so long as an argument is sufficiently well informed. Mills (1968) believes well-constructed arguments and debates can facilitate the process of solving social problems. In addition, O'Keefe (1997), in a meta-analysis of explicitness, found that more explicit arguments were more persuasive.

The methods for testing individuals' abilities to construct arguments were also biased toward those who reasoned by causal argument rather than simply by sign or analogy. Reasoning by sign involves giving reasons for which a proposition is true without attempting to explain why it is true. This is often the case with reasoning by analogy. However, reasoning by causal argument must include an explanation for why the proposition is true in addition to providing evidence or examples. The use of causal arguments is likely to result in more integration between arguments and more argument chains. For the purposes of this study, those were the key variables in determining complex arguments. However, in most cases, causal arguments are considered to be superior to other types of arguments when they are used in a debate (McBurney & Mills, 1968).

It should also be pointed out that the sample of activists is not representative of the population of activists on a number of demographic characteristics such as political affiliation and level of education, which were clearly skewed in this study. It will be important in future studies to determine if the findings would be similar for other populations and for other issues.



The argumentation interviews and the public opinion poll were also limited in that they were not longitudinal. A future study should examine how activists' abilities to argue change over time. The ability may be gained with past activism and remain consistent if there is a decrease in activism or be positively correlated with a given level of activism over time. Similarly, it would be interesting to know how public opinion changed with this social issue and how it corresponded with public activism and media content over the life of the issue. Lippman (1922, p. 29) wrote "The pictures inside the heads of these human beings, the pictures of themselves, of others, of their needs, purposes, and relationship, are their public opinions." These pictures have been found to form in part as a result of media content. However, when the MSU Board of Trustees voted on the issue of domestic partner benefits the second time, the amount of coverage had been much less because the "publicness" of this issue, of in-your-face and public strategies on the part of GLFSA, was less. It would have been interesting to have a better understanding of how this altered the "pictures in people's heads" or the issue salience.

Issues Management, Public Opinion, and Framing Findings

Often, media researchers and social movement theorists focus on the presence of media attention and media content as useful in advocating and advancing a social issue (e.g. Gamson & Wolfsfeld, 1993; Kielbowicz & Scherer, 1986; Snow & Benford, 1988; Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986; Tichenor, Donohue, & Olien, 1980). Rupp and Taylor (1987) and Taylor (1989) wrote of the women's movement as being in a period of abeyance between the



1930's and the 1950's. However, this abeyance may have been a period of fewer public displays and decreased media attention. Rupp and Taylor (1987) and Taylor (1989) felt it was still a period of activism and may have represented a strategic shift in tactics. The period between 1995 and 1997 could also be characterized for domestic partner benefits at MSU as a period of a movement in abeyance. The movement was not dormant, despite the lack of media attention and public display. GLFSA was just as active but strategically shifted its approach. GLFSA leadership believed, and was advised, that media attention was not in their best interests. This is counter to previous studies that suggest that media attention helps in influencing policy decisions (e.g. Protess, Cook, Doppelt, Ettema, et al., 1991; Protess & McCombs, 1991). Studies need to be conducted to understand under what conditions media attention helps or hinders an issue being advanced. Similarly, the lack of media attention should not signal the lack of a movement or the lack of interest in an issue. Downs (1972) describes issues as going through attention cycles that represent drops in media attention that may reflect a decline in interest. However, the lack of media attention may be strategic and not represent a drop in attention or interest on the part of activist groups. A decline in media coverage may lead to a lack of issue salience among the general public, but not necessarily a lack of activity of a social movement or of issue salience for policy decision makers. Media attention is also not always in the best interests of a group advocating an issue because the media tend to dichotomize public issues instead of representing the breadth



of an issue (Condit, 1994; Tuchman, 1978). This can have the effect of making people believe that they are further apart than they actually are on some issues.

The finding that arguments portrayed in the media are not significantly correlated with the poll arguments is particularly striking, because it is not consistent with recent literature that suggests that framing is the second level of agenda-setting and works in the same way (e.g. McCombs, 1992; McCombs, Shaw, & Weaver, 1997). This idea has recently been explored by the pioneers of the agenda-setting hypothesis, McCombs and Shaw, and their colleague, David Weaver (1997), in an edited volume largely devoted to this issue. That is, in agenda-setting research, the guiding hypothesis is that the rank ordering of issues (how many times something get covered) within the media is consistent with the rank order of how important the public view that issue. However, the lack of a significant correlation between media data and poll data for these data does not support this idea. This suggests that one of the following may be the case: (1) this is not an issue for which people look to the mass media to form their opinion, (2) that people are looking to media other than newspapers to draw their opinion, or (3) that framing is not a second level of agenda-setting, but an independent factor. Further research should explore these alternative explanations.

Argumentation Findings

Group norms and ideas and reasoning are not uniform (Key, 1961). These data support that conclusion. Interviewees had very different ideas about why benefits should or should not be given, to whom they should be given, and how they should be implemented. The key to a group's success may be managing to



deal with these differences in order to work toward a common solution regardless of reasoning. This is not to say that the differences weren't important or did not come up in debate. For example, many would have preferred that domestic partner benefits pass for both same sex and opposite sex partners because that was more equitable. Others felt that every person should be given a flat amount of money toward benefits and allowed to divide them up and provide them to whomever they wished because this was the only fair thing for those who were single and without children. However, despite the differences, group conflict did not drastically impede the effort on the part of the GLFSA membership to get benefits passed. A future study should also examine why some groups can negotiate these differences successfully and work toward a common goal while others fall apart.

The interview data are consistent with Kuhn's (1991) assumption that some people actually do make very complex arguments, rather than Billig's (1996) suggestion that people are unskilled at making arguments. Further, these data support the notion that it is more likely that either thought and/or practice, and not age per se, contributes to the ability to make complex arguments. The interview data were also consonant with the idea that activism, argumentation, and verbal aggression all impact the ability to create complex arguments. However, a direct relationship between activism and the ability to create complex arguments is not supported here. Also not supported was the idea that activism was unrelated to verbal aggression as originally thought. However, this finding actually seems extremely reasonable when you consider how verbal aggression



typically affects dialogic or other more public arguments. When it is apparent that the speaker cares little about your opinion or is extremely attacking or harsh in presenting an argument, a typical reaction from the listener is to attack back, to not listen, to discount the speaker and perhaps to even flee from the situation. None of these responses are advantageous to the activist who needs the listener to be open to her or his arguments in order to gain support.

Arguments versus Opportunities

Are activists any more successful in affecting policy outcomes because they make better arguments, or is their success due largely to changes in what political process theorists would call “political opportunity structures” or key political events or changes that allow activists and others more entry into influencing the system (e.g. Jenkins & Perrow, 1977; McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996; Tilly, 1978; Tarrow, 1983)? Key (1961, p. 531) suggests that “group success may be governed more by the general balance of partisan strength than by the results of group endeavors to win friends in the mass public.” There is little doubt that the change in the balance of partisanship between November 1995 and September 1997 of the MSU Board of Trustees facilitated the decision to grant domestic partner benefits. Newly elected board member Joel Ferguson publicly stated in his election platform that he would support granting these benefits. Ferguson, a Democrat, had responded to a survey of all candidates and their stances on gay issues, including this one, conducted by Lansing Area Human Rights (LAHR). However, like other candidates who were asked, Ferguson could have chosen not to respond. Not all Democrats back this issue,

which was supported by the polling data, and there is no clear party line on this issue. For example, when the MSU Board of Trustees was asked by the State News in April 1997, Democrats Joel Ferguson, Dorothy Gonzales and Colleen McNamara supported this issue, Republicans Don Nugent and Jack Shingleton opposed them, Democrats Bob Weiss and Bob Traxler were undecided, and the remaining Republican, Dee Cook, provided no comment (Machniak, 1997).

Domestic partner benefits has by no means been a platform issue of the Democratic Party. However, there is little doubt that Democrats support this issue more frequently than Republicans do, not just in Michigan but around the United States. Partisanship, and a change in the political opportunity structure, are not enough to account for the change. Consider, for example, that fifteen years ago this would never have been an issue raised by either political party. Somehow, this had to become an issue and people had to be convinced it was a valid one, that there was an inequity, and that to alleviate the inequity, domestic partner benefits needed to be passed. Arguments and argumentation played a key role in the issue formation and in the management of this issue by GLFSA and similar organizations around the country. There were other changes in the political opportunity structure as well. Many additional universities and employers around the country had passed these benefits between the board votes of 1995 and 1997, including the University of Michigan, another state-funded university. These additional employers provided more evidence that passing these benefits would not be costly, would not bankrupt the system, that donors would not pull away, that not everyone would lie and say they were gay in order to get benefits

for friends or roommates. Many of these arguments had been commonly given before 1995 by those opposed, but they could not be supported by the evidence. Proponents were able to systematically erode many of the opposition's arguments (Condit & Condit, 1992).

If it is arguments that allow political changes to occur, or at least help in this process, this suggests that teaching activists how to make arguments might make them more powerful in influencing social processes. However, it is also unknown whether or not certain kinds of arguments might be more persuasive than others. Further research is needed in this area.

More research is clearly needed in the area of the ability of publics, such as social movements, to influence the political process, media, and public opinion. Better understanding and empirical support is needed to determine under what conditions activist groups need to shift their campaigns to a different target audience. Replication of this research is also needed to determine whether the effects found here are issue-specific, and whether they can be found at various levels of politics, from local to international politics.

Implications for Activists

These data suggest several implications for activists. Activism was found to be related to the ability to make arguments. This finding supports Kuhn's (1991) assertion that practice is key. Argumentation is something that can be learned. Therefore, one implication is that those wishing to engage in activism should consider practicing on each other and to consider formal training in argumentation. This may shorten the time frame for becoming a skilled and more



effective arguer. Activists also need to keep in mind that some arguments are easier to counter than others. It is much easier to counter a practical argument, such as a policy being too expensive to implement, than a moral argument based on religious teachings. Those with deeply held religious beliefs are not likely to be persuaded. A number of people who participated in the argumentation interviews felt that no one could convince them they were wrong. Therefore, another implication of this study is to spend resources countering practical arguments and direct attention to those who either already agree with you or who have not decided their stance on an issue. Accept that some people will never have their opinions changed.

The ability to be flexible was another important strategy used by GLFSA activists. When one plan didn't work, they shifted their attention to another. For example, when attempts to influence the ADJB were unsuccessful, GLFSA turned its attention to the Board of Trustees. GLFSA always had a plan, but shifted strategies, arguments, and attention toward new targets as needed.

Interorganizational linkages are important to develop and to maintain. In the case of GLFSA these linkages became more or less important at various stages. For example, linkages to the union officials and to members of the University Faculty Affairs Committee were important in garnering official support from these groups at critical times.

Perhaps the most interesting implications of this study are that media attention and favorable public opinion are not always needed. Ultimately, policy makers are the most important target of influence. An implication from this

current study for activist groups trying to decide how to best involve the media is that no media involvement is sometimes a better choice. Similarly, eliciting public involvement is extremely time-consuming and may not be necessary. The better use of time may be to target policy makers directly first and then decide what pressure is needed, if any, from what other sources, to most favorably influence decision making. Using the media may only be a good idea if the decision making body opposes the activist groups' proposed policies.

Another implication for activists is that compromise is often necessary. On a personal level, many were opposed to misleading the media prior to the September 1997 Board of Trustees' meeting. In addition, the final policy adopted by the University did not extend benefits to all graduate students, to any undergraduates, or to opposite sex domestic partners, which many would like to have seen included.

On a final note, an implication for activists is to expect that the experience of being an activist is likely to result in personal change that is not always seen as completely positive. For example, Brent Bilodeau, one of the activists who participated in a history interview for this study, noted that having been involved with this issue of domestic partner benefits and with efforts by GLFSA to change this policy at MSU led him to "feel like I was personally changed forever". He went on to say that, "I think we all were [changed]. I don't think, anybody who went through what we went through in '95... you just can't go through something like that and be the same person afterwards" (personal communication, March 18, 1998). Bilodeau expressed that as a result of this meeting, he began to label

himself as an activist and to help others, particularly students, to become activists. However, he also expressed the belief that the experience made him more skeptical as a person.



APPENDICES



APPENDIX A

INSTRUMENTS

Argumentation Interview Protocol

After participant signs the consent form and we turn on the audio recorder, we begin.

ACTIVISM IN GENERAL

Let me first ask you in general about activism.

- 1) In your mind, what is an activist?
- 2) Currently, would you call yourself an activist? Yes No
 - 2a) In general or on specific issues?
 - 2b) On what issues?
 - 2c) For each, for how long and when were you involved?
- 3) Currently, would other people who know you call you an activist? Yes No
 - 3a) Why?
- 4) (if no to #2) At any time in the past, would you have called yourself an activist? Yes No
 - (if yes to #2) At any in the past, would you have called yourself an activist for any issue other than the ones you already mentioned? Yes No
- 4a) In general or on specific issues?
- 4b) On what issues?



4c) For each, for how long and when were you involved?

5) At any time in the past, would other people who would have know you have called you an activist? Yes No

5b) why?

PARTNER BENEFITS INTERVIEW

CAUSAL THEORY AND JUSTIFICATION

1. Are you for or against partner benefits being offered at MSU to employees who are gay or lesbian?

1a. (*Probe, when subject completes initial response*) How strongly do you hold it?

2. For what reasons do you hold that position?

3. How do you know this supports your position?

3a. (*Probe, if necessary*) Just to be sure I understand, can you explain exactly how your arguments support your position?

4. If you were trying to convince someone else that your view is right what *evidence* [verbal emphasis] would you give to try to show this?

4a. (*Probe, if necessary*) Can you be very specific, and tell me some particular facts that you could mention to try to convince the person?

5. Is there anything further you could say to help show that what you've said is correct?

6. Can you remember when you began to hold this view?

6a. *(If yes)* Can you remember what it was that led you to believe what you do?

CONTRADICTIONARY POSITIONS

1. Suppose now that someone disagreed with your view. What might *they* say to try to convince you that you were wrong?

2. What evidence might this person give to try to convince you that you were wrong?

2a. *(Probe, if necessary)* Just to be sure I understand, can you explain exactly how they would think this would show that you were wrong?

2b. *(Probe, if necessary)* In order to support his/her view, what arguments might this person give?

3. *(If not already indicated)* Is there any fact or evidence which, if it were true, would show your view to be wrong?

4. Could someone prove that you were wrong?

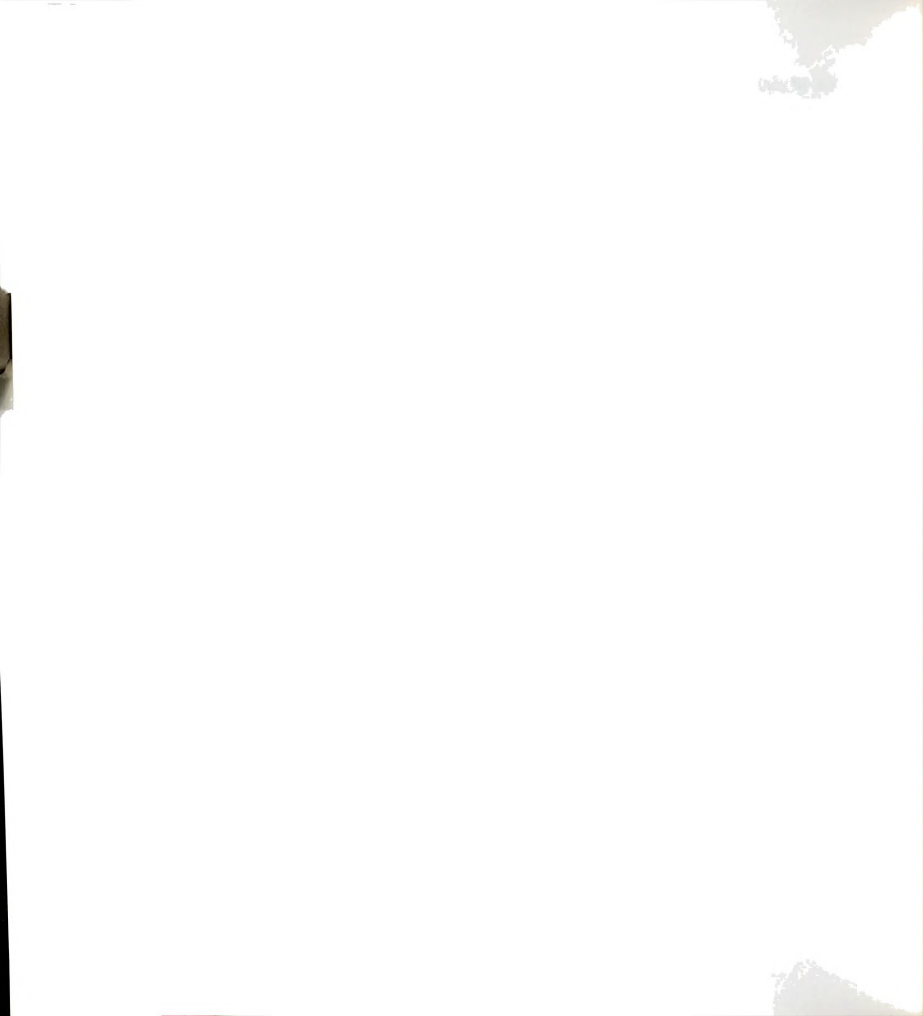
4a. *(If yes)* How?

5. *(Omit if alternative theory already generated)* A person like we've been talking about whose view is very different from yours-- what might s/he say *is* their view?

6. *(Include if no alternative theory is generated)* How would you respond? What would you say to try to convince them?

6a. *(Probe, if necessary)* Just to be sure I understand, can you explain exactly how this would show the person was wrong?

7. Would you be able to prove this person wrong?



7a. *(If yes)* How?

8. *(If not already indicated)* What could you say to show that your own view is the correct one?

9. Describe what people on the other side of this issue are like.

INSTRUMENTAL REASONING

1. Could a policy be developed at MSU that would satisfy both those who favor and those who oppose domestic partner benefits?

1a. *(If not already indicated)* If so, what is it?

1b. *(If no)* Why?

EPISTEMOLOGICAL REASONING

1. How sure are you that MSU's policy on partner benefits is in the best interests of MSU?

2. Are there any experts on this issue?

2a. Who are they?

2b. How sure are you of your view, compared to an expert?

3. Is more than one point of view possible regarding partner benefits at MSU?

4. *(If yes)* Could more than one point of view be right?

5. Is there any one who could change your mind about your position?

5a. *(If yes)* Who?

6. Is there anyone you respect who, if s/he changed his/her mind on this issue, would cause you to reconsider?



6a. (If yes) Who?

7. How much would you say you know about this topic, compared to the average person?

8. How important is this issue to Michigan State University?

9. How important is this topic to society as a whole?

10. How important is this topic to you personally?

MEDIA QUESTIONS

Let me ask you a few questions about the media coverage of this issue.

1. Have the media covered this issue?

1a. (If yes) When?

1b. (If yes) Which media?

2. Have they given this issue the right amount of attention, too much or too little attention?

2a. Why?

3. Has the attention been objective and balanced?

3a. Why?

4. Did media coverage answer all questions about this issue?

4a. Was it thorough?

4b. Why?

5. Do you think media coverage about this issue has been timely?

6. What arguments did the media provide for each sides' view?

Before we do the second part of the interview, why don't you take a couple of minutes and fill out these scales. (Give them: verbal aggression, argumentativeness, and activism scales)

PARKING INTERVIEW

CAUSAL THEORY AND JUSTIFICATION

1. What causes parking problems on MSU's campus?
 - 1a. *(Probe, when subject completes initial response)* Anything else?
2. *(If multiple cases mentioned)* Which of these would you say is the major cause of parking problems on campus?
3. How do you know this is the cause?
 - 3a. *(Probe, if necessary)* Just to be sure I understand, can you explain exactly how this shows that this is the cause.
4. If you were trying to convince someone else that your view [that this is the cause] is right what *evidence* [verbal emphasis] would you give to try to show this?
 - 4a. *(Probe, if necessary)* Can you be very specific, and tell me some particular facts that you could mention to try to convince the person?
5. Is there anything further you could say to help show that what you've said is correct?
6. Is there anything someone could say or do to *prove* that this is what causes parking problems on campus?

7. Can you remember when you began to hold this view?

7a. (*If yes*) Can you remember what it was that led you to believe that this is the cause?

CONTRADICTIONARY POSITIONS

1. Suppose now that someone disagreed with your view that this is the cause of parking problems at MSU. What might *they* say to show that you were wrong?

2. What evidence might this person give to try to show that you were wrong?

2a. (*Probe, if necessary*) Just to be sure I understand, can you explain exactly how this would show that you were wrong?

2b. (*Probe, if necessary*) In order to support his/her view, what arguments might this person give?

3. (*If not already indicated*) Is there any fact or evidence which, if it were true, would show your view to be wrong?

4. Could someone prove that you were wrong?

4a. (*If yes*) How?

5. (*Omit if alternative theory already generated*) A person like we've been talking about whose view is very different from yours--what might s/he say *is* the major cause?

6. What could you say to show that this other person was wrong?

6a. (*Probe, if necessary*) Just to be sure I understand, can you explain exactly how this would show the person was wrong?

7. Would you be able to prove this person wrong?

7a. *(If yes)* How?

8. *(If not already indicated)* What could you say to show that our own view is the correct one?

9. Describe what people on the other side of this issue are like.

INSTRUMENTAL REASONING

1. Is there any one important thing which, if it could be done, would alleviate the parking problem and satisfy everyone?

1a. *(If yes)* If so, what is it?

1b. *(If no)* Why?

2. Why would this lessen it?

EPISTEMOLOGICAL REASONING

1. How sure are you about what causes parking problems on the MSU campus?

2. Are there any experts on this issue?

2a. Who are they?

2b. How sure are you of your view, compared to an expert?

2c. Would it be possible for experts to find out for sure the cause, if they studied this problem carefully enough?

3. Is more than one point of view possible regarding what causes parking problems on MSU's campus?

4. *(If yes)* Could more than one point of view be right?

5. Is there any one who could change your mind about your position?

5a. (If yes) Who?

6. Is there anyone you respect who, if s/he changed his/her mind on this issue,
would cause you to reconsider?

6a. (If yes) Who?

7. How much would you say you know about this topic, compared to the average
person at MSU?

8. How important is this issue to Michigan State University?

9. How important is this topic to you personally?

MEDIA QUESTIONS

Let me ask you a few questions about the media coverage of this issue.

1. Have the media covered this issue?

1a. (If yes) When?

1b. (If yes) Which media?

2. Have they given this issue the right amount of attention, too much or too little
attention?

2a. Why?

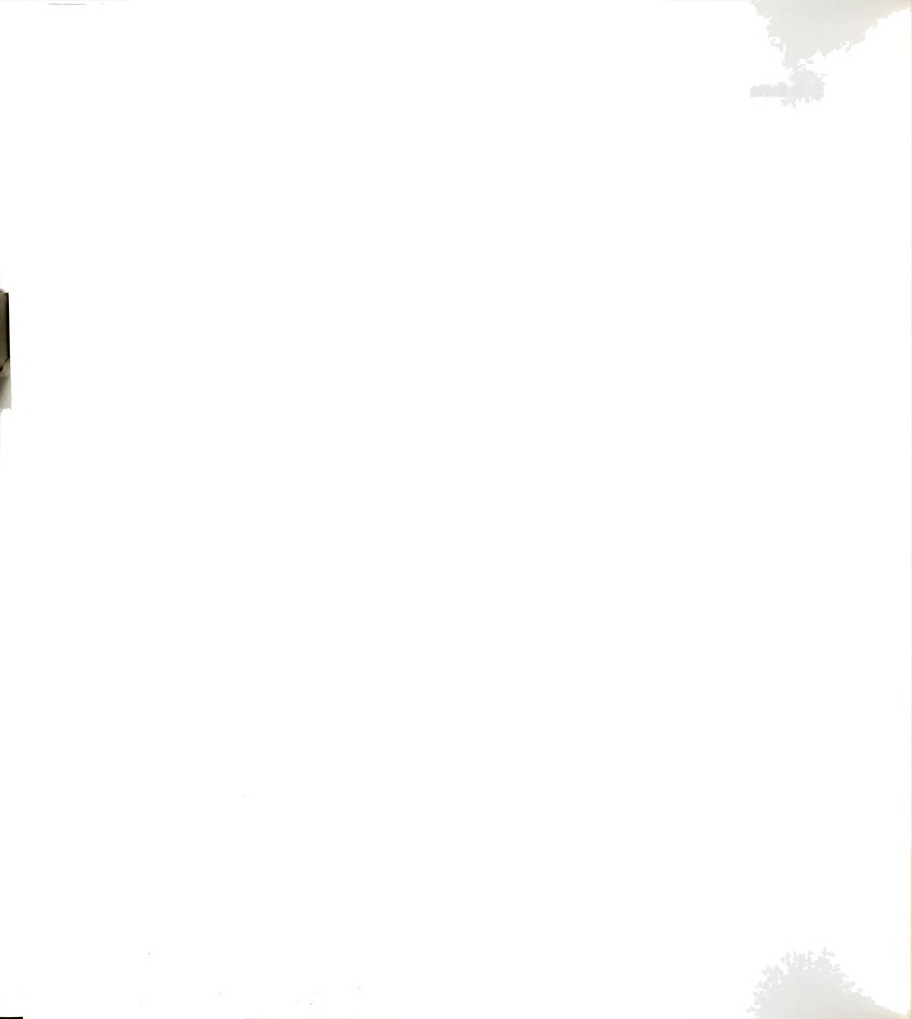
3. Has the attention been objective and balanced?

3a. Why?

4. Did media coverage answer all questions about this issue?

4a. Was it thorough?

4b. Why?



5. Do you think media coverage about this issue has been timely?
6. What arguments did the media provide for each sides' view?

DEMOGRAPHICS

Let me end by asking you a few quick demographic questions.

1. Are you a staff member, administrator, faculty, graduate student or undergraduate student at MSU?)
 - 1a. *(If they indicated they were staff)* which union do they belong to?
2. What year were you born?
3. Are you male or female? (Fill in for them)
4. What is your race or ethnicity?
5. With what religion, if any, do you identify?
6. What is your sexual orientation?
7. What is the highest level of education you have finished?
8. Are you a registered voter? Yes No
- 8a. *(If yes)* Which political party are you affiliated with?

(Turn Tape Recorder Off)

Thank you very much for your time. After having participated in this interview do you have any ideas for us of other people we should speak to?

(If yes) Can we use your name?

Here is my card. Please feel free to contact XXX in the Department of

Communication if you have any questions later about this study. Thanks again.

Kerpelman's Activity Scale

This is a survey for research purposes only, and as such, there are no right or wrong answers. We are seeking to measure your experiences and expectations concerning certain general issues. Please read each question carefully and indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the right of the statement that is closest to your actual experiences and expectations. In the following questions the word "issues" refers solely to broad political or social issues on or off the Michigan State University campus. A broad social issue is one that has the potential to impact policy decisions and/or individuals' behavior at the campus, local, state, federal or global level.

- 1) How many times in the past 3 years have you organized a group to support, advocate or protest a political or social issue? _____
- 2) How many times in the past 3 years have you led, or directly assisted in leading, an already organized group supporting, advocating or protesting a political or social issue? _____
- 3) How many times in the past 3 years have you participated in a group supporting, advocating or protesting a political or social issue? _____
- 4) How many times in the past 3 years have you engaged in an extended argument with anyone over a political or social issue? _____
- 5) Approximately how much time during the average day do you spend trying to convince others to support or protest a political or social issue? _____

6) How many times in the past 3 years have you written something (pamphlet, handout, email, etc.) designed specifically to either inform or convince other people concerning a political or social issue? _____

7) How much time during the average day do you spend reading , watching or listening to news, opinions, editorials, or factual information on political or social issues? _____

8) How many times in an average month do you go to hear scheduled speakers talking about political or social issues? _____

9) During the past 3 years, how many times have you participated in demonstrations, marches or rallies? _____

10) During the past 3 years, how many times have you contributed money to a social or political cause? _____

Imagine yourself as having been free from all financial, social, academic, etc., responsibilities or any other commitments on your time during the past three years. Answer the following questions in terms of *what you would have liked to have done* if that were the case.

11) How many times in the past 3 years would you have liked to organized a group to support, advocate or protest a political or social issue? _____

12) How many times in the past 3 years would you have liked to have led, or directly assisted in leading, an already organized group supporting, advocating or protesting a political or social issue? _____



13) How many times in the past 3 years would you have liked to have participated in a group supporting, advocating or protesting a political or social issue? _____

14) How many times in the past 3 years would you have liked to have engaged in an extended argument with anyone over a political or social issue?

15) Approximately how much time during the average day would you like to spend discussing political or social issues? _____

16) Approximately how many times in the past 3 years would you have liked to have written something (pamphlet, handout, email, etc.) designed specifically to either inform or convince other people concerning a political or social issue?

17) How much time during the average day would you like to spend reading, watching or listening to news, opinions, editorials, or factual information on political or social issues? _____

18) How many times in the average month would you like to go to hear a scheduled speaker talking about political or social issues? _____

19) How many times in the average year would you like to participate in demonstrations, marches or rallies? _____

20) How many times in the average year would you like to contribute money to a social or political cause? _____

Argumentativeness and Verbal Aggression Scales

This questionnaire contains statements about arguing controversial issues and is concerned with how we try to get people to comply with our wishes. Indicate how often each statement is true for you personally by placing the appropriate number in the blank to the left of the statement. If the statement is *almost never true* for you, place a "1" in the blank. If the statement is *rarely true* for you, place a "2" in the blank. If the statement is *occasionally true* for you, place a "3" in the blank. If the statement is *often true* for you, place "4" in the blank. If the statement is *almost always true* for you, place a "5" in the blank.

- _____ 1. While in an argument, I worry that the person I am arguing with will form a negative impression of me.
- _____ 2. I am energetic and enthusiastic when I argue.
- _____ 3. Once I finish an argument I promise myself that I will not get into another.
- _____ 4. Arguing with a person creates more problems for me than it solves.
- _____ 5. When I finish arguing with someone I feel nervous and upset.
- _____ 6. I enjoy a good argument over a controversial issue.
- _____ 7. I get an unpleasant feeling when I realize I am about to get into an argument.
- _____ 8. I am happy when I keep an argument from happening.
- _____ 9. I consider an argument an exciting intellectual challenge.
- _____ 10. I find myself unable to think of effective points during an argument.

- _____ 11. I am extremely careful to avoid attacking individual's intelligence when I attack their idea.
- _____ 12. When individuals are very stubborn, I use insults to soften the stubbornness.
- _____ 13. If individual I am trying to influence really deserve it, I attack their character.
- _____ 14. I try to make people feel good about themselves even when their ideas are stupid.
- _____ 15. When people simply will not budge on a matter of importance I lose my temper and say rather strong things to them.
- _____ 16. When individuals insult me, I get a lot of pleasure out of really telling them off.
- _____ 17. When I dislike individuals greatly, I try not to show it in what I say or how I say it.
- _____ 18. When I attack another person's' ideas, I try not to damage their self-concepts.
- _____ 19. I refuse to participate in arguments when they involve personal attacks.
- _____ 20. When nothing seems to work in trying to influence other, I yell and scream in order to help correct their behavior.

History Interview Protocol

1. Could you tell me how you became involved with the issue of domestic partner benefits at MSU?
1a. probe as necessary
2. Could you tell me to the best of your knowledge the history of this issue?
Please include any key events, dates, names, etc.
2a. probe as necessary
3. Could you tell me about your own personal contribution to the domestic partner benefit issue at MSU?
3a. probe as necessary
4. Do you have any records of this issue (meeting notes, media clippings, etc.) that you would be willing to share with me?
5. Who else do you think it is critical that I speak with in order to get a better picture of the history of this issue?

MSU Community Telephone Poll

Hi, I am calling for, X . Is s/he in?

I am calling from Department of Communication. In conjunction with Professor XXX, we are conducting a short survey to get your opinions about some University issues. It will take about 5 minutes of your time. Any answers you give us are completely confidential and will be used for research purposes only. Your participation is completely voluntary. You can stop at any time or you can choose not to answer any questions. We would really appreciate it if you would be willing to answer some questions. Can I take 5 approximately minutes of your time?

- 1) What are some major issues on campus that the MSU Board of Trustees has acted upon recently?

(If person asks, the board of trustees is a group of 8 elected people who make policy decisions for the university)

Probe 2 times: Is there anything else?

- 2) In your opinion, what are the major issues on campus that the MSU Board of Trustees *should* consider in the near future?

Probe 2 times: Is there anything else?

- 3) Some public Universities in the state of Michigan have considered or have granted domestic partner benefits to their employees in the past 5 years. These benefits include health benefits for gay and lesbian couples. To the best of your knowledge, does :

Wayne State University have domestic partner benefits?

Yes No Don't Know

Eastern Michigan University have domestic partner benefits?

Yes No Don't Know

Western Michigan University?

Yes No Don't Know

Central Michigan University?

Yes No Don't Know

Northern Michigan University have domestic partner benefits?

Yes No Don't Know

Ferris State University?

Yes No Don't Know

Grand Valley State University?

Yes No Don't Know

University of Michigan have domestic partner benefits?

Yes No Don't Know

MSU?

Yes (Go to 4) No (Go to 5) DK

4) (if they indicated that MSU does have benefits answer; if not skip to question

5)

4a) You indicated that MSU has domestic partner benefits. For how long has MSU had them?

4b) How did you hear about them? (pollster number from 1st to ...)

_____ Friend	_____ At work/co-worker
_____ State News	_____ Lansing State Journal
_____ On TV	_____ Overheard a conversation
_____ In Class	_____ Other, write in
_____ On radio	_____

4c) Did MSU grant domestic partner benefits to:

faculty?	Yes	No	Don't Know
staff?	Yes	No	Don't Know
graduate students?	Yes	No	Don't Know
undergraduate students?	Yes	No	Don't Know

5) What would you say your opinion is toward state universities granting their employees domestic partner benefits? Would you say your opinion is...

highly opposed	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly in favor	don't care
-------------------	---------	---------	----------	--------------------	------------

6) Has your opinion changed about domestic partner benefits at any time? Yes

(Go to 6a) No (Go to 7)

6a) When?

6b) Why?

Pollster-- DON'T READ "DON'T KNOW" FOR THE NEXT SET OF QUESTIONS

7) What would you say most MSU *faculty members'* view toward state

universities granting their employees domestic partner benefits is? Would you say they are...

highly	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly	don't know or
opposed				in favor	don't care

8) What would your say most MSU *administrators'* view toward state universities

granting their employees domestic partner benefits is? Would you say they are...

highly	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly	don't know or
opposed				in favor	don't care

9) How about most MSU *staff members'* opinions?

highly	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly	don't know or
opposed				in favor	don't care

10) Most MSU *graduate students'* opinions are?

highly	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly	don't know or
opposed				in favor	don't care

11) Most MSU *undergraduate students'* opinions are?

highly	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly	don't know or
opposed				in favor	don't care

12) How about *most people in Michigan's* view ?

highly	opposed	neutral	in favor	highly	don't know or
opposed				in favor	don't care

13) What are the major reasons that people in favor of domestic partner benefits give for their view? (*pollster, please number answers from 1st to ...*)

- _____ Economic/Financial/Cost
- _____ Equality/Equity/Not Fair
- _____ Other companies/universities give them
- _____ Part of anti-discrimination protection
- _____ Help retain/recruit good faculty/staff/students
- _____ Entitled
- _____ Other, _____
- _____ Other, _____

14) What are the major reasons that people who are opposed to domestic partner benefits give for their view? (*pollster, please # answers from 1st to ...*)

- _____ Economic/Financial/Cost
- _____ Not Fair
- _____ Other companies/universities give them, but we don't have to
- _____ Not part of anti-discrimination
- _____ Shouldn't encourage them/not good employees/let them work
somewhere else
- _____ Morality
- _____ Everyone will try to take advantage of them/lie about homosexuality
- _____ Illegal
- _____ Anti-Democratic
- _____ Other, _____

15) What is the major reason that you would give in support of your opinion about domestic partner benefits?

<i>In Favor:</i>	<i>Opposed:</i>
☐ Economic/Financial/Cost	☐ Economic/Financial/Cost
☐ Equality/Equity/Not Fair	☐ Not Fair
☐ Other companies/universities offer	☐ Others give them, but we don't have to
☐ Part of anti-discrimination protection	☐ Not part of anti-discrimination protection
☐ Help retain/recruit good faculty/staff/students	☐ Let them work somewhere else
☐ Entitled	☐ Morality
☐ Other, _____	☐ Everyone will try to take advantage/lie
	☐ Illegal
	☐ Anti-Democratic
	☐ Other, _____

16) How many times in the past 3 years have you participated in a group supporting, advocating, or protesting a political or social issue? _____ (If none skip to 17)

16a) If indicated, which issue or issues?

16b) For each, what is your position?



17) How many times in the past month have you engaged in an extended argument over a political or social issue?_____

18) How much time during the average day do you spend reading, listening to, or watching news, opinions, editorials or factual information about political or social issues?_____

19) Could you tell me which, if any, newspapers do you usually read at least once per week?

(Pollster-circle all that apply)

MSU State News

East Lansing Town Courier

NONE

Lansing State Journal

MSU Bulletin

Detroit Free Press

Other_____

Detroit News

Other_____

20) Which, if any, radio stations do you listen to the most? *(Please write in as many as they give in the order they give them)*

21) Which, if any TV stations, do you watch the most? *(Pollster-circle all that apply)*

WKAR (Public TV)

CBS

NBC

ABC

FOX

CABLE

NONE

Other_____



22) Are you an administrator, staff member, faculty, graduate student or undergraduate student at MSU? *(circle one)*

Faculty *(Go to 24)* Staff *(Go to 23)* Grad *(Go to 24)*

Undergrad *(Go to 24)* Admin *(Go to 24)*

23) *If staff:* Which union do you belong to? CTU APA APSA

1588 (cafeteria/custodians) 999 (skilled) 547 (engineers)

IATSE (stage)

24) What year were you born? _____

25) Are you male or female? *(pollster-circle the answer, don't ask if known)*

26) What is your race or ethnicity? *(pollster-circle one)*

African American Foreign, which country _____

Asian American /Pacific Islander Caucasian/Euro-American

Native American Multiracial

Hispanic/Latino(a) Other, _____

27) With what religion, if any, do you identify? *(pollster-circle one answer)*

Protestant, which _____ Agnostic

Catholic Jewish

Muslim Buddhist

NONE Other, _____

28) What is the highest level of education you have finished? (*pollster-circle one answer*)

some high school

high school diploma

some college

associates or technical degree

4 year college

some grad school

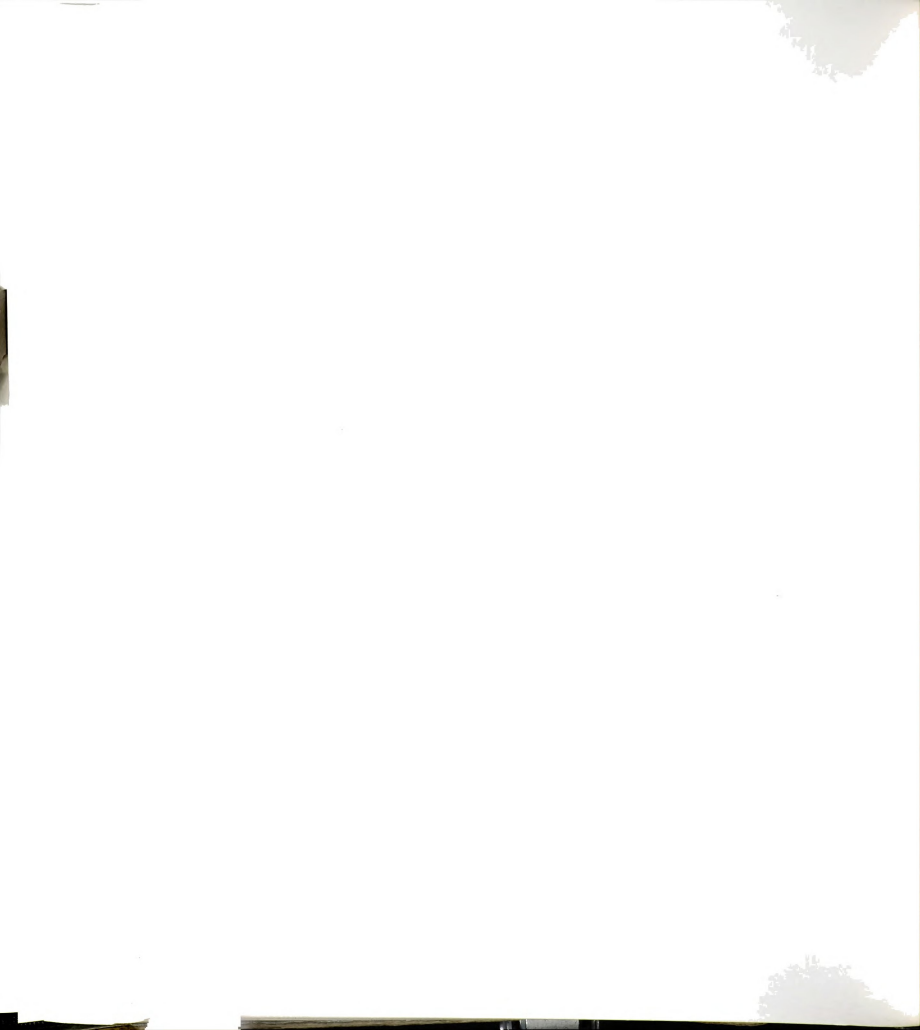
master's

doctorate

29) Which political party, if any, do you belong to? (*circle one*)

Republican Democratic Independent Libertarian Communist None

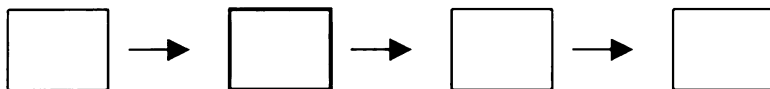
Thank you for your time. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact
XXX at XXX phone. We really appreciate your opinions!



APPENDIX B

SAMPLE CODING FOR ARGUMENTATION INTERVIEW

Example 1:

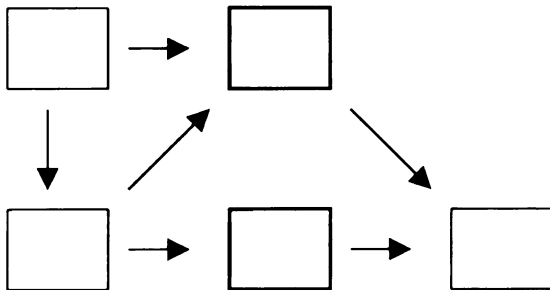


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Number = 2

Integration = 0

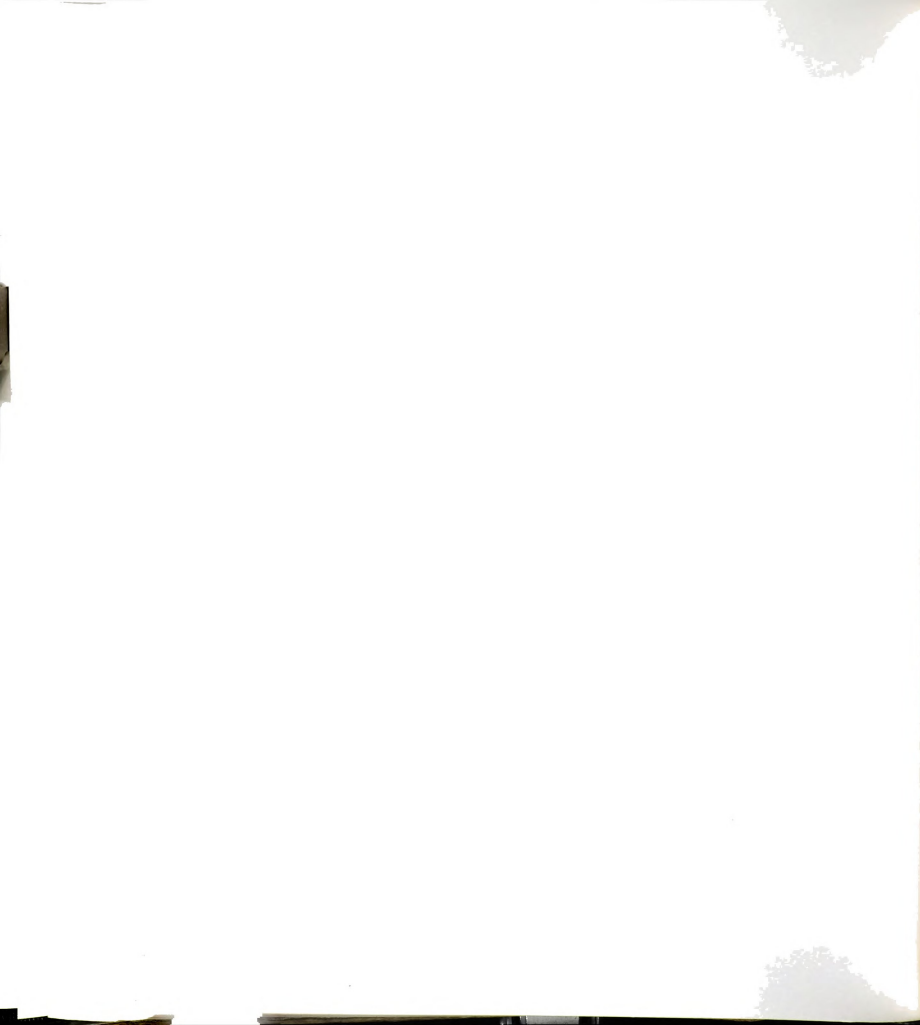
Example 2:



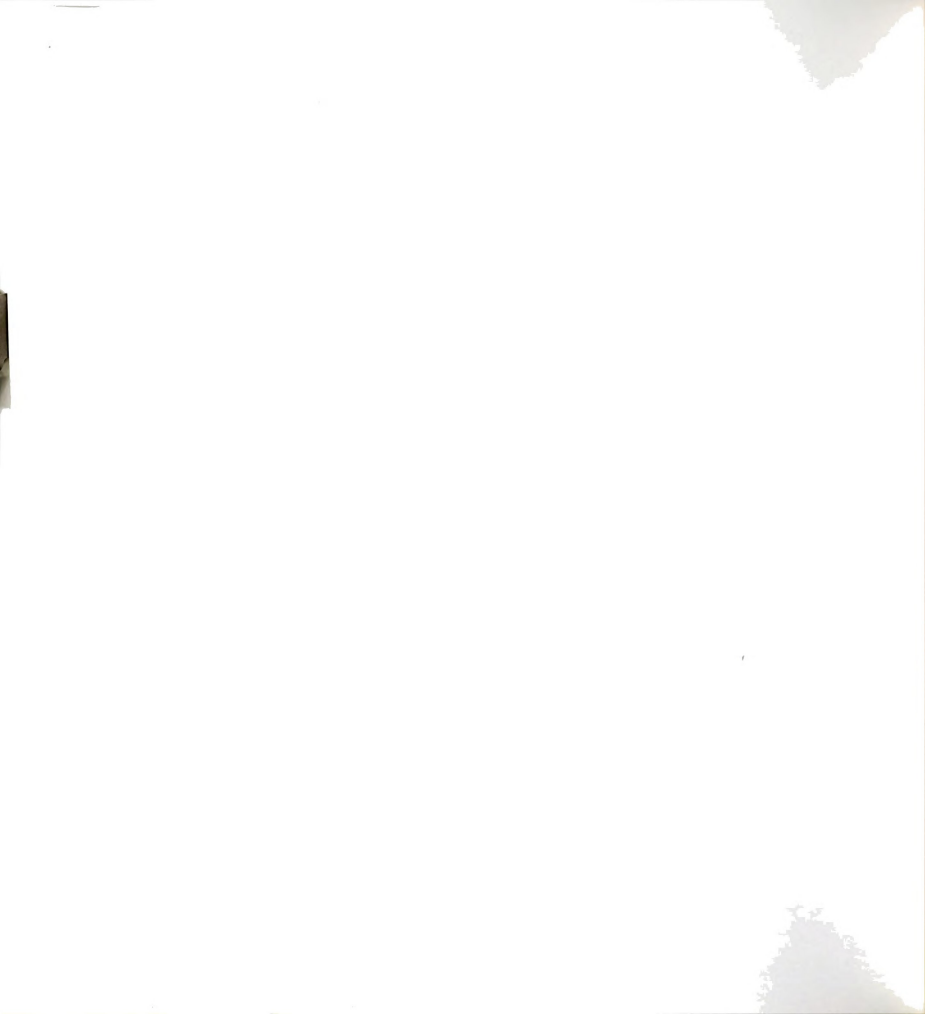
Length = 2, 3, 3

Number = 3

Integration = 3



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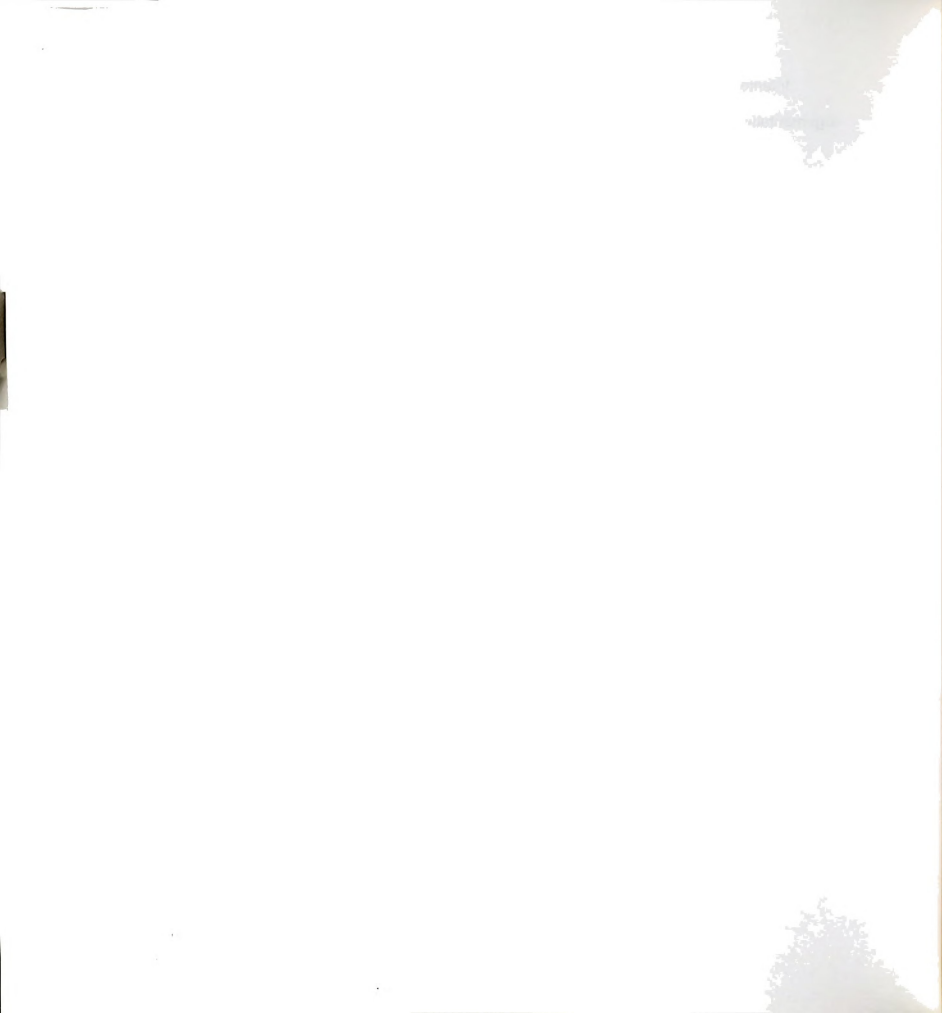
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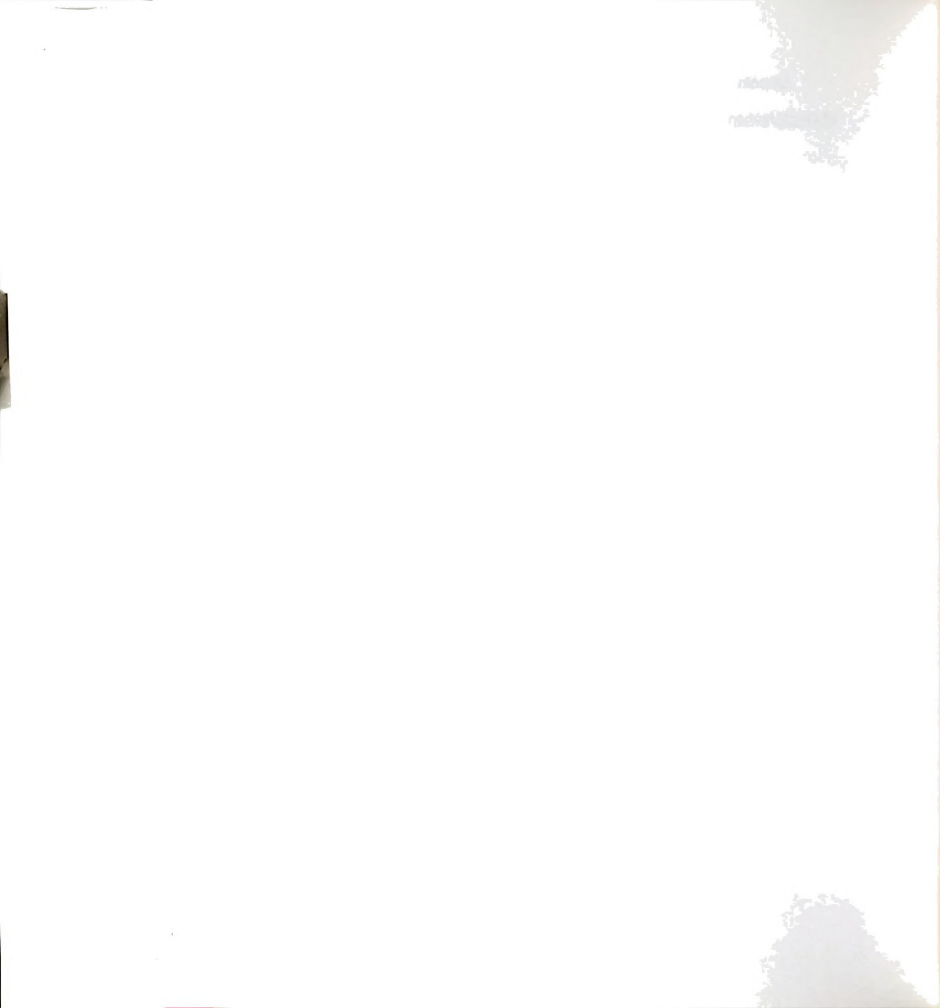
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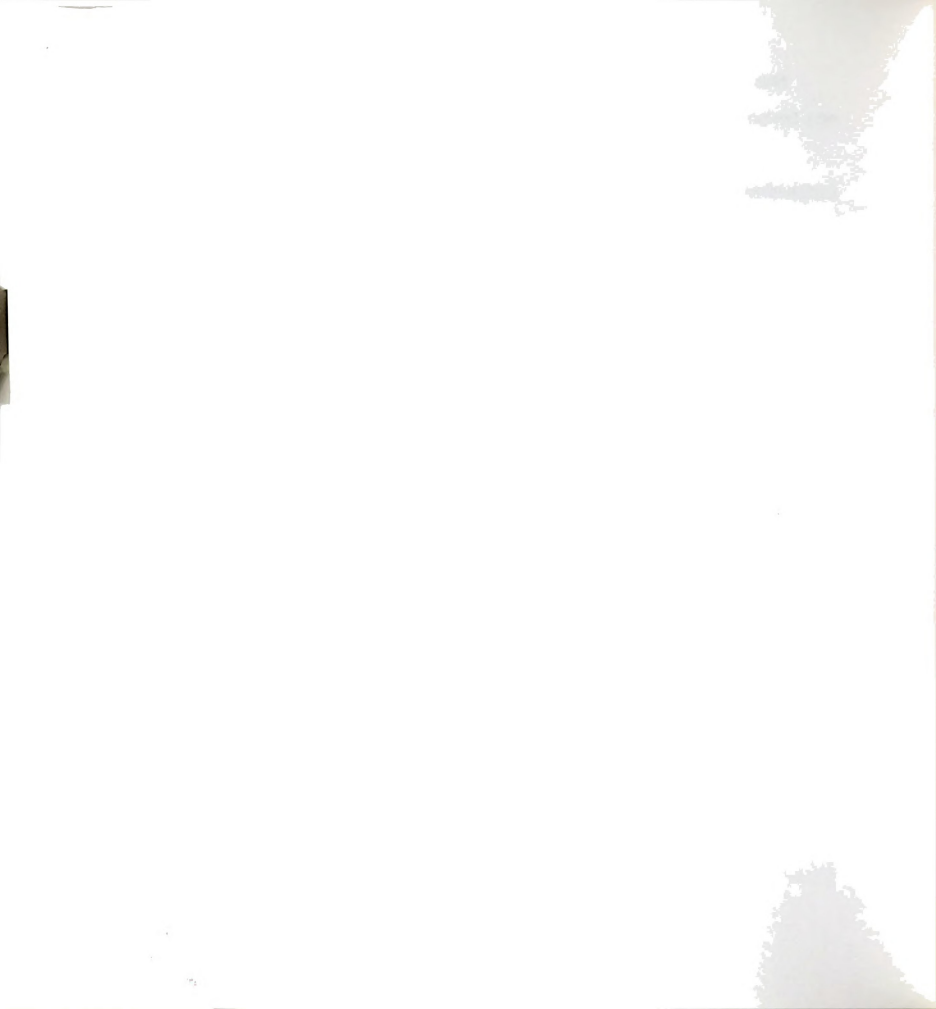
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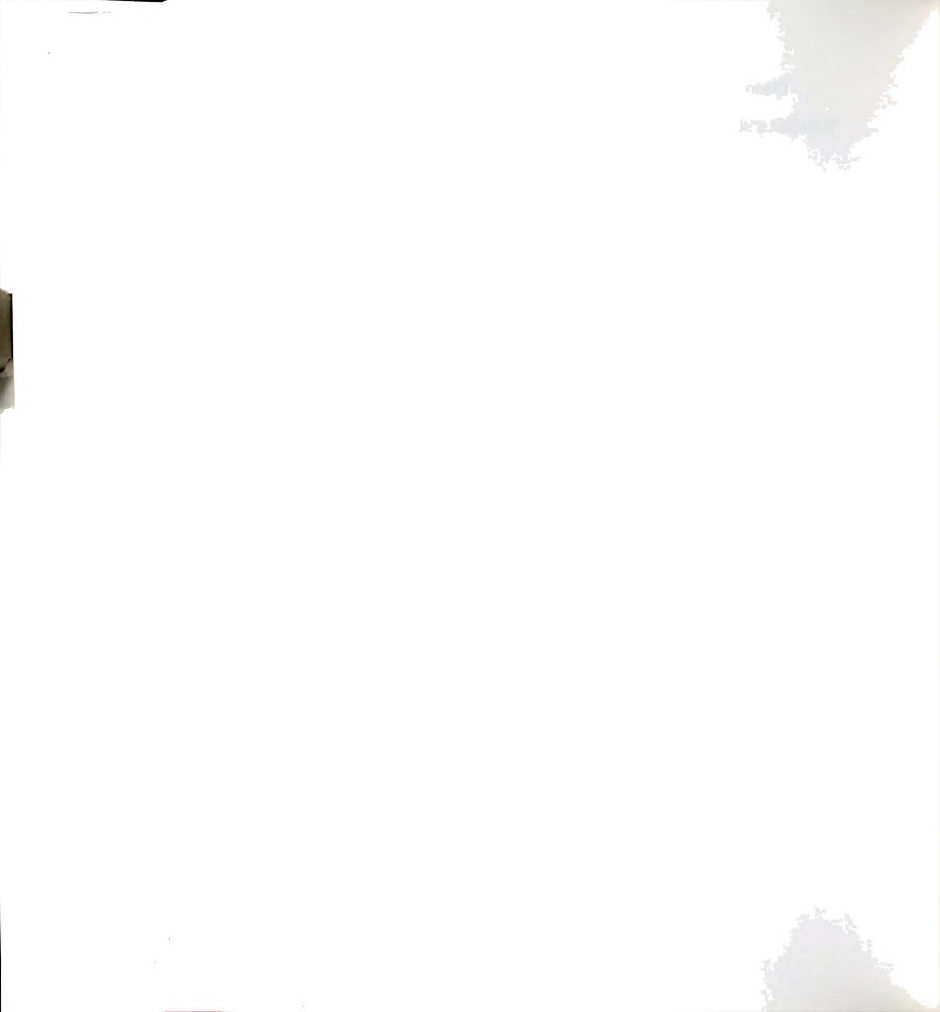
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