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Social Cognition: The Impact of Gender and Leadership Surrounding Groupthink in Conjunction with Foreign Policy Decision-Making

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SOCIAL COGNITION: THE IMPACT OF
GENDER AND LEADERSHIP SURROUNDING
GROUPTHINK IN CONJUNCTION WITH
FOREIGN POLICY DECISION - MAKING

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Abstract

This thesis surrounds social cognition seen within group dynamics. Specifically, focusing on the study of decision – making and the impact gender and leadership styles has upon groups under risk involved decision – making. This type of decision – making is generally seen with corporate committees and members involved in the formation of foreign policy.

Research has attributed to reprehensible historical fiascoes to faulty group decision - making. Due to this notion, it is imperative to hone in on the cognitive process and the possible factors that act as antecedents to errors in judgement seen in groups.

Many results remain inconclusive when dealing with gender and the effect it has on group cognition. Although, there has been interesting finds concerning faulty group decisions for the overall population, in exclusion of gender. Some theorists believe there may be differences in the way males and females solve problems in a group setting; others disagree. However, over the years evidence has surfaced supporting notions that leadership variances effect a group's decision - making process, while many researchers concede to this, there are still others who remain ambivalent.

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the possibility that within a group setting, males and females may use different strategies and interpretations when faced with a possible risky decision and leadership variances when attempting to resolve ethical and financial dilemmas. Specifically, it is hypothesized that an individual's gender will serve as a

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catalyst to errors in group decision – making, contingent upon the group's leadership style.

One hundred and twenty graduate and undergraduate students participated in the study, sixty – one females and fifty – nine males were placed in thirty groups, each consisting of four members. Half of the groups were in the nondisclosure condition, and the other was in the disclosure condition. The participants were administered 'A Scenario' for the purpose of measuring the differences between male and female group decision – making as well as the leadership conditions. Frequencies, crosstabulations, and two – way analysis of variance, analyzed data.

Results of analysis produced considerable evidence that, within this sample pool, male and female decision – making varied to some extent, and leadership styles certainly had a highly significant effect on group decision – making, in that they differ. However, results prompt the researcher to refine the hypothesis, particularly when looking at the leadership enhanced questions, where little gender differences exist, as opposed to risk taking enhanced questions.

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Preface

Throughout time, their have been faulty decision making as seen within historical accounts of poorly construed decision making groups. For example, January 28, 1986 was destined to be an unforgettable day in NASA history because NASA was sending a civilian into space on the shuttle Challenger. However, this historic day did not unfold as was planned. Just seconds after the shuttle lifted off from the Space Center, its journey abruptly ended in a horrible explosion, killing all seven passengers aboard. In the investigations that followed, the Presidential Commission reached two conclusions. One, the explosion was caused by the failure of the O-ring in the Solid Rocket Booster to seal correctly due to cold temperatures. Two, the decision-making process, form the earliest stage years prior to the launch and all the way through the night before the launch was seriously flawed. A crucial decision was made that day, a decision that overlooked, and misconstrued the available facts.

Therefore, this thesis will focus on study of Janis's groupthink and gender and leadership styles. It will commence with a general briefing of information – processing, and will then proceed to discuss errors within decision - making. These errors are finely tuned and highlighted subsequently via the variables of interest (gender and leadership). In addition, supplemental alternatives and critiques to the variables are examined. Additional causes of the phenomenon are included as well as

critiques of the theory itself. Finally, one can see the applicability in a cumulative effort of the literature review, the devastating effects of error – laden decision making as it pertains to foreign policies seen throughout time. In addition, counterpoints to the phenomenon will be addressed.

Specifically, this thesis will focus on the intricacies of the decision making process. There are quite a few variables that contribute to groupthink. In this paper, I have proposed a revision to the list of antecedents to groupthink. I have asserted that when groups are trying to reach a decision, the leadership style of a group will indeed have some effect on a group, the revision, having gender be an indicator of the phenomenon. Thus, this effect thereby causes a faulty decision making process.

The very man who coined the term, Irving Janis, and elaborated upon by his colleagues notes the origin of groupthink best. Several theorists, such as Philip Tetlock provide a critical eye in refuting his work, along with many other theorists and researchers alike. In concert with these discussions, the goal will focus on the differences (if any) in risk – taking of males and females when exposed to leadership styles.

All in all, this paper demonstrates how groupthink is indeed a complex social system, displaying a microcosm of powerful interpersonal forces that significantly shape its members actions. Its potential effects alone demonstrate a profound impact and need for future awareness, and groups undoubtedly, must warrant inclusion.

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Groups as Information Processors

Throughout an individual's lifetime that individual will undoubtedly make countless decisions. These decisions often elicit various inferences, not just on an individual's life or situation, but on others as well. This inevitability certainly is augmented when decisions are made within groups. Groups, teams, committees, and the like are all subjected to the intricacies that decision making entails. When making decisions, people must choose between alternatives, and by making judgments, they weigh the relative merits of opportunities that are available to them. When obstacles prevent them from attaining their goals, groups will engage in problem solving to identify ways to overcome these barriers. Groups will use their combined reasoning skills to draw upon conclusions from evidence.

People often perform these cognitive activities as isolated individuals, but when the information to be processed is considerable or the potential consequences monumental, they do this cognitive work in groups. Indeed, a collective information-processing model of decision-making assumes that groups, like individuals, seek and process

information both cognitively and socially. Hinz, Tindale, and Vollrath expressed that "group members not only retrieve their personal memories, but also use one another as informational resources" (44). In addition, group members process information at the individual level by reviewing information, evaluating solutions, and generating alternative solutions, but they also process information at the group level through group discussion. "Decision making, when a collaborative activity, involves generating information and processing that information through discussion" (50).

Clark, Stephenson, and Kniveton state, "a single person may know a great deal, but few of us can compete with the collective memory of a group of people" (73). It appears that in many instances, informational demands can overwhelm a lone individual, but the group's greater memory resources tend to be more sufficient for policy-making purposes. Additional persons allow the group itself to refresh, or to even create a memory from time to time.

It is not necessarily true that groups have more information in general, however, they do tend to process the information they have more thoroughly through discussion. Most policy makers adhere to similar deliberation patterns, whereupon a decision is finally made. Application of this principle is discussed by researchers Ellis and Fisher, as seen in their book <u>Small Group Decision Making.</u> They state that during the initial orientation stage, the group identifies the problem

to be solved, the choice that must be made, or the conflict that requires resolution. Next, during the discussion stage, the group gathers information about the situation and, if a decision must be made, identifies and considers options. In the decision stage, the group chooses its solution by reaching a consensus, bargaining, voting, or using some other social decision process. Lastly, implementation must occur, and the impact of the decision is assessed.

Lord and Alliger discussed steps because they represented major points at which information is filtered or changed by social information processing. Information input involves a "selective step in which relevant information is selected from a complex social environment, in part through the process by which it is comprehended or recognized; a step in which noticed information is encoded and simplified into a form more easily stored in long-term memory. Storage and retention steps are altered via integration with subsequent information concerning the stimulus prism" (88). Information output involves the retrieval of relevant information and translation into necessary judgments. "It will be argued that the net effect of these input and output steps is a systematic distortion of social information" (89).

As table 1 suggests, decision-making groups do more than share information, evaluate, monitor their progress, and plan. They also encourage each other, express commitment to the group, and help each other.

Table 1

Group Processes that Influence the Effectiveness
of a Discussion Group's Performance

Component	Definition
Information Sharing	Talking a great deal, willing to discuss; free expression of ideas, thoughts, and feelings.
Planning	Formulating actions regarding time and function that will lead to specific goals.
Critical Evaluation	Critically evaluating each other's ideas or works; differences of opinion; disagreement on the decision made by group members; disagreements on whom should do what or how something should be done.
Positive communication	Encouraging better performance and positive reactions about a member's or a group's performance.
Commitment to group	Attachment to the group; wanting to stay and do things with the group; tending to things; making sure everyone gets things done.
Task monitoring	Assessing the performance and the likelihood that the group will reach its goal.
Cooperation	Behavior that aids the performance of another group member or contributes to the ease with which group members coordinate their efforts; mutual helping.

SOURCE: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. Summarized from "Interpersonal Relationships and Task Performance: An Examination of Mediating Processes in Friendship and Acquaintance Groups," by Jehn & Shah, 1997.

Groups as Imperfect Decision Makers

If there is a methodology within the information processing of groups, then socially shared cognition simply applies these principles to policy makers. If these principles do not govern the decision-making process, errors in judgement will arise. Consequently, these errors will not be confined to the boardroom. This, in effect, could lead to disastrous complications that will inadvertently touch the lives of many.

Members frequently complain about time wasted in groups. On a positive note, as stated earlier, Stasser also claims that "groups can pool their individual resources to make a decision that takes into account far more information than might any one individual's decision" (49). On a more discerning note, "groups spend too much of their discussion time examining shared information - details that two or more group members know in common - rather than unshared information" (64). Gigone and Hastie's experiments on conditions facilitating group (relative to individual) judgement accuracy suggest, "a group's tendency to spend more time discussing shared information does not always undermine the quality of the group's decision" (162). Futhermore, even though they may discuss shared information more thoroughly, what occurs is that members often base their final decision on pooled unshared information rather than on pooled shared information. Shared information influences judgements, but only because groups over-sample that

information during their discussions. Basically, the group must have access to the unshared information if it is going to make a good decision.

Within groups, it seems as if misunderstandings arise when dealing with communication that is necessary for decision-making. Collins and Guetkow report that inaccuracies also arise from both the simple information-processing limitations of human beings and their faulty listening habits. "Listeners tend to level (simplify and shorten), sharpen (embellish distinctions made by the speaker), and assimilate (interpret messages so that they match personal expectations and beliefs) information offered by others during a discussion" (183).

Groups also sometimes use discussion to avoid making a decision rather than facilitate making a decision. As Irving Janis and Leon Mann suggest, most people are reluctant decision makers, and they use a variety of tactics during discussion to avoid having to face the decision. These tactics include the following:

- *Procrastination*. Rather than spending its time studying alternatives and arguing their relative merits, the group postpones the decision.
- *Bolstering*. The group quickly but arbitrarily formulates a decision without thinking things through completely and then bolsters the preferred solution by exaggerating the favorable consequences and minimizing the importance and likelihood of unfavorable consequences.

- *Avoiding responsibility.* The group denies responsibility by delegating the decision to a subcommittee or by diffusing accountability throughout the entire assemblage.

- *Ignoring alternatives.* The group engages in the fine art of muddling through by considering "only a very narrow range of policy alternatives that differ to only a small degree from the existing policy" (33).

- *"Satisficing."* Members accept as satisfactory any solution that meets only a minimal set of criteria instead of working to find the best solution. Although superior solutions to the problem may exist, the "satisficer" (35) is content with any alternative that surpasses the minimal cutoff point.

- *Trivializing the discussion.* The group avoids dealing with larger issues by focusing on minor issues, says Janis and Mann. "In many cases, the law of triviality holds: The time a group spends discussing any issue will be in inverse proportion to the consequentiality of the issue" (paraphrased in Parkinson 24).

Groups generate decisions through processes that are both active and complex. People's judgments in such cognitively demanding situations are often systematically distorted by cognitive and motivational biases. Arkes suggests, "people overestimate their judgmental accuracy because they remember all the times their decisions were confirmed and forget the times their predictions were disconfirmed" (11). "People simply make mistakes" (13).

Thus, people often inappropriately use the information they have available to them, putting too much emphasis on vivid, interesting information while ignoring the implications of statistical information.

Unfortunately, for many members of groups investing their services when devising a decision surrounding policy issues, decisions actually tend to be more extreme than individuals' decisions. Groups do not urge restraint; instead, they polarize opinions. A group of researchers studied people's willingness to take risks by asking individuals and groups to read over 12 hypothetical situations involving a choice between one of two possible courses of action (Wallach et al., 1962). In all the situations, the more rewarding outcome was also the riskier one. Subjects were asked, "What would the probability of success have to be before you would advise the character in the story to choose the riskier course of action?" The first item from this Choice Dilemmas Questionnaire, along with the format used to measure the participants' responses, follows (Pruitt, 1971, p. 359):

Mr. A, an electrical engineer, who is married and has one child, has been working for a large electronics corporation since graduating from college five years ago. He is assured of a lifetime job with a modest, though adequate, salary and liberal pension benefits upon retirement. On the other hand, it is very unlikely that his salary will increase much before he retires. While attending a convention, Mr. A is offered a job with a small, newly founded company, which has a highly uncertain future. The new job would pay more to start and would offer the possibility of a share in the ownership if the company survived the competition of the larger firms.

Imagine that you are advising Mr. A. Listed below are several probabilities or odds of the new company proving financially sound. Please check the lowest probability that you would consider acceptable to make it worthwhile for Mr. A to take the new job.

_____ The chances are 1 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound.

_____ The chances are 3 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound.

_____ The chances are 5 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound.

_____ The chances are 7 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound.

_____ The chances are 9 in 10 that the company will prove financially sound.

_____ Place a check here if you think Mr. A should not take the new job no matter what the probabilities.

SOURCE: Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. Questionnaire from "Choice Shifts in Group Discussion: An Introductory Review," by D.G. Pruitt (1971).

These researchers documented an increase in risk taking when people made their choices in groups. When they added together choices from all 12 items, the investigators found that the mean of pre-discussion individual decisions was 66.9 for men and 65.6 for women. The mean of the group's consensual decision, however, was 57.5 for men and 56.2 for women, a shift of 9.4 points in the direction of greater risk. The shift also occurred when individual post discussion measures were delayed two to six weeks (the delayed posttests were collected from male subjects only). Participants in a control condition shifted very little.

Victims of Groupthink

One of the most cumulative approaches conducive to decision making fiascoes is the examination of information processing via the

onset of the phenomena of groupthink. Why do these errors within groups occur? Better put, what goes on here during instances where socially shared cognition becomes ill conceived? Can groups overcome these fallacies? It is understood that when people must make important decisions, they turn to groups. Group decisions are often superior to an individual's, for groups can process more information more thoroughly. But groups do not always make good decisions. The strengths of groups are sometimes undermined by their liabilities, and group decisions are at times calamitous.

In the 1940's, social psychologist, Kurt Lewin, in his analysis of the behavior of small groups emphasized the importance of group cohesiveness. His findings suggest that within groups, members often view their group and its tasks in a positive light and have a tendency to display great motivation in continuing to belong to the group. Furthermore, when group cohesion is high all members express solidarity, mutual liking, and positive feelings about attending meetings and carrying out the routine tasks of their group (Janis, 4).

Lewin's pioneering efforts laid a foundation for other theorists to follow. Of Lewin's students, Leon Festinger is one whose work has had the broadest impact on social psychology, notably his theory of the process of social comparison and his theory of cognitive dissonance. (62). His greatest contributions to dynamics within groups are that people strive to find out if their opinions and judgements are correct.

Secondly, when objective means are unavailable, people evaluate their opinions and judgements by comparing them with those of others whom are similar to themselves (e.g. members of face to face groups). Such comparison produces pressure toward uniformity.

Possibly the most integral theorist of group behavior is Irving Janis. Janis pursued this insight in a series of extensive case studies of groups, especially on those involving foreign policy decision-making. After studying these groups and their gross errors of judgment, he concluded that they suffered form groupthink: a distorted style of thinking that renders group members incapable of making a rational decision. According to Janis, groupthink is "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive ingroup, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of actions" (9).

"Year after year newscasts and newspapers inform us of collective miscalculations - companies that have unexpectedly gone bankrupt because of misjudging their market, federal agencies that have mistakenly authorized the use of chemical insecticides that poison our environment, and White House executive committees that have made ill-conceived foreign policy decisions that inadvertently bring the major powers to the brink of war" (2).

Janis' book, Groupthink, examined several disastrous historical accounts, summarized in Table 2, that were believed to have fallen prey

to groupthink. In actuality, he wondered if something more than such common group difficulties as faulty communication and judgmental biases were to blame.

Table 2

Four Fiascoes in U. S. History: Was Groupthink to Blame?

Occurrence	Fiasco
Pearl Harbor	In 1941, this group concentrated on Pearl Harbor's importance as a training base to such an extent that the base was left unprotected.
Korean War	When this group authorized the crossing of the 38th parallel during the Korean War, China joined the conflagration.
Bay of Pigs	This group backed an ill-conceived plan to invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs in 1961.
Vietnam War	During lunch meetings held from 1965 to 1968, this group recommended the escalation of the Vietnam War.

During groupthink, members try so hard to agree with one another that they make mistakes and commit errors that could easily be avoided. Janis has identified a number of symptoms that occur in groupthink situations: interpersonal pressure, self-censorship, mindguards, apparent unanimity, illusions of invulnerability, illusions of morality, biased perceptions of the outgroup, and defective decision-making strategies.

Interpersonal pressures elude notions that tolerance for any sort of nonconformity seems virtually nil, and groups may use harsh measures to bring those who dissent into line. Basically, these pressures make agreeing too easy and disagreeing too difficult. When making decisions, groups have a tendency to become doubting Thomases, simply sitting in silence, in an attempt to contain self-censorship. Janis also coined the term mindguard to refer to self-appointed vigilantes who protect group members from information that will disrupt the group. Janis notes, "a mindguard protects them from thoughts that might damage their confidence in the soundness of the policies to which they are committed or to which they are about to commit themselves" (41). Apparent unanimity suggests that members feel that it would be better to share a pleasant, balmy group atmosphere than be surrounded by conflict.

Illusory thinking becomes so extreme during groupthink that Janis called it an illusion of invulnerability, "shared by most or all the members, which creates excessive optimism and encourages taking extreme risks" (174).

This best describes feelings of assurance and confidence that engulf the group. As history has proven, there are other overestimations of groups in regards to their power and morality. Decision makers suffering from illusions of morality, seem to lose their principles in the group's desire to reach its desired objective. "An

unquestioned belief in the group's inherent morality, inclining the members to ignore the ethical or moral consequences of their decisions" (174). Janis believed that biased perceptions of the outgroup can lead to groupthink. In fact, the ingroup/outgroup bias is really two biases combined: "a tendency to favor our own group, its members, and its products and a tendency to derogate another group its members, and its products" (Hinkle & Schopler, 197). Lastly, inadequate decisions prompted via groupthink ultimately promote defective decision-making strategies. During these instances, potential alternatives are ignored, and/or imperative contingency plans fail to be made.

Janis suggests that these faulty processes undoubtedly contributed to faulty judgements, but he labels them symptoms of the problem rather than actual causes. The causes of groupthink, which will be considered here include, cohesiveness, isolation of the group, leadership style, and stress on the group to reach a good decision.

The first and most integral cause of groupthink is cohesion. Only in a cohesive group do the members refrain from speaking out against decisions, avoid arguing with others, and strive to maintain friendly, cordial relations at all costs. Janis reports, "the members make little or no attempt to obtain information form experts who can supply sound estimates of losses and gains to be expected from alternative courses of actions" (10). Specifically, isolation within a group means

that very few outsiders ever come into the group to participate in a discussion, thus, the group becomes insulated from criticisms.

Leadership and Gender Variances

Anthropological evidence indicates "there are no known societies without leadership in at least some aspects of their social life" (Lewis, 4). With this being said, does gender itself in effect have any influence upon one's gender when construing policies within groups?

Leadership styles, or a lack of impartial leadership can also pose a threat to the onset of groupthink. "As a result of this structural fault, the leader is unconstrained in pushing for his own pet solutions to whatever problems the group discusses and does not discourage the members from mindlessly concurring on whatever course of action the leader happens to prefer" (234).

Conversely, Sankowsky reports that leadership is a form of power, but power with people rather than over people-a reciprocal relationship between the leader and the led. Nor do leaders hoard their power. A leader may control the sources of power within the group, but he or she identifies this power to other members. Futhermore, "the power of symbolic status gains its strength from the followers' perceptions of a leader's knowledge, values, and personal qualities. Charismatic leaders, especially, have the ability to acquire this form of power. When a charismatic leader also has narcissistic traits, the vision he or she promotes tends toward grandiosity, and the leader's attempt to

influence can lead to abuse of power –information is distorted and critical feedback rejected" (69).

Alice H. Eagly and her colleagues reviewed dozens of studies before concluding that women conform more than men-but only when group members are sitting face-to-face and they must state their opinions aloud. Women seem to conform more in face-to-face groups because groups traditionally reward men for acting in dominant nonconforming ways and women for acting in cooperative, communal ways. As demonstrated in Eagly's meta-analysis, ….."popular explanation of why females appear to be more influenceable than males is based in the assumption ……that focuses on the dependency and submissiveness of the female sex role" (2-3).

Levanthal and Lane report "men who contribute less to the group often argue in favor of the equality norm, whereas those who contribute more favor the equity norm. Women prefer equality over equity even when they outperform their co-workers" (314). Moreover, with gender differences bearing light, researchers Snodgrass and Rosenthal simply state, "both leaders and subordinates perceive females leaders to be less dominant than male leaders" (369). This proposes curiosity in the tie between gender and the possibility of its influence under autocratic leadership.

Hypothesis

Irving Janis' Groupthink Phenomenon has generated a considerable amount of research contrasting symptomatic causes within group decision making. In addition to its adverse effects on foreign policies, as seen throughout historical accounts. Subsequent studies surrounding causes have emerged and have brought about significant findings, however, others have produced inconclusive results. The purpose of the present study is to investigate the possibility that within a group setting, male and female members may be affected by leadership styles, wherein ones gender gives the propensity towards risk - taking. Futhermore, this fusion may inadvertently act as catalysts to the groupthink phenomenon. Specifically, it is hypothesized that an individual's gender will serve as a catalyst to errors in group decision-making, contingent upon the group's leadership style.

Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Information Processing

Many of the committees mentioned later, for example, established

their memories about the morale of the invasion team(s) during their

initial briefings by the CIA. During that briefing, the group built a

shared mental model, or schema, that they relied on throughout the rest

of their meetings. Whenever they wondered if the troops would be able

to capture the beachhead successfully, they recalled that the troops (so

they were told) were well-trained freedom fighters and patriots who

wanted to free their country from the grips of a dictator. In reality, the

troops were poorly trained and disillusioned, but the committee's

mental model was more positive. Like folklore, fable, and legends,

groups develop collective memories that they review repeatedly and

even pass on to new members.

Groups also enhance their collective memories by creating

transactive memory systems that effectively divide up information

among the members. In the committee for example, the CIA was

recognized as the source of all information about the invasion force,

and so other group members spent little effort deliberately storing

information on that topic. When anyone needed to check a fact

pertaining to commandos, they turned to the CIA and their memory

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stores. Moreland, Argote, and Krishnan report that "training methods also influence transactive memories, for team members who are trained together rather than separately develop transactive memories more rapidly and so more accurately recall aspects of their training" (57).

A committee's deliberation styles generally maintain similar processes, first of which begin with an orientation. Kennedy had just taken over the office of president, so his staff of advisers needed to take some time to develop orientation to the group and to the problem.

The second stage of processing information is the discussion stage. During this stage, the committee gathered and processed the information it needed to make its final decision. Members asked questions, and others offered answers. Harper and Askling saw that project groups in a college class were more successful when members more actively discussed their task. Also, when Jehn and Shah researched watching groups making a decision, they looked for each of the components of group discussion listed in Table 1. They discovered that six of seven were correlated with accuracy; only positive communication failed to covary with performance.

The third component of the pattern involves making the decision. By early April, the committee was ready to make its decision. The members had spent months examining the CIA's plan, and even though many questions remained unanswered, the group could delay no longer. Word of the plan had leaked to the press, and the group worried that

Castro would shore up his defenses if he suspected anything. They needed to make up their minds. Discussion pertaining to the ways in which a decision is made has been observed by Davis, Stasson, Ono, and Zimmerman in 1988. Their focus was on groups working together to reach a consensus on a unitary decision. A decision in which considerable data must be processed among the members, prior to a group response.

The petit jury is a familiar example among many such social groups. The mechanism utilized for assessment was the straw poll. What was deduced was that a straw poll suggests notions "inasmuch as discussion is likely to increase the salience of social norms, early voting sequences would seem more likely to be effective in counternormative directions than would later polls; the more effective sequences in later polls should be in normatively consistent directions" (920). Futhermore, voting can also lead to internal politics as members get together before meetings to apply pressure, form coalitions, and trade favors to ensure the passage of proposals that they favor. Also, if the vote is taken publicly, individuals may conform to previously stated opinions rather than expressing their personal views. Voting methods, as seen in the petit jury, leads us to believe how important a leaders role is when construing deliberations, thus emphasizing the importance of leadership style, which is elaborated on later.

Other researchers tied in conformity and its relationship to a directive, influencing manner of reaching consensus by noting the

classic conformity experiment facilitated by Asch in 1956. Showing

that a unanimous majority (of at least three) significantly influenced

simple judgments of line length by a minority of one. "The effect is

weakened by nonunanimous or disagreeing majorities, and when

minorities are larger than one" (919). If the vote is taken publicly,

individuals may conform to previously stated opinions rather than

expressing their personal views. The discussed committees fell into

this similar crisis-laden trap, reason being, they tended to vote publicly

in order to reach consensus.

Lastly, the committee needs to implement the plan. In the case of

Kennedy's committee, they approved the invasion plan, and mobilized

the necessary military forces. Implementation proceeds more smoothly

when members have an active role in the decision-making process. In

1948, Lester Coch and John R.P. French Jr. documented this tendency

in their classic analysis of procedural changes in a clothing mill.

Management modified production methods frequently as a result of

engineering advances and product alterations, and line workers reacted

to each modification with protests. Turnover was high, productivity

was down, and the amount of time needed for retraining after each

production change was excessive.

Coch and French suspected that employees would be more willing

to implement the recommended changes if they were involved more in

planning them, and so they devised three different training programs.

Employees in the no-participation program were not involved in the planning and implementation of the changes but were instead then given an explanation for the innovations. Those in the participation-through-representation program attended group meetings where the need for change was discussed openly and an informal decision was reached. A subgroup was chosen to become the "special" operators who would serve as the first training group. Employees in the third program, total participation, followed much of the same procedures as those in the second method, but here all the employees, not a select group, were transferred to the training system.

Just as Coch and French predicted, the no-participation group improved very little; hostility, turnover, and inefficiency remained high. In fact, 17% of these workers quit rather than learn the new procedure, and those who remained never reached the goals set by management. The two participation conditions, in contrast, responded well. These workers learned their new tasks quickly, and their productivity soon surpassed prechange levels and management goals. Morale was high, only one hostile action was recorded, and none of the employees quit in the forty days following the change. Futhermore, when the members of a control condition were run through a participation program several months later, they too, reached appropriate production levels.

Whether one is attempting to reach desired production levels or to make a policy decision, their research supports that in groups, its members participation promote a higher level of quality.

As psychology has moved into the 21st century, many individuals whom are active within the field have seen a revolutionary change surrounding organizational culture. In fact, today, much of the work that results in a product, service, or decision is now done in temporary or permanent 'people systems'. Systems whose members have the authority to manage their own task and interpersonal processes as they carry out their work. [Quality circles, autonomous work groups, and self-directed teams are the modern-day counterparts to the former groups] (Taken from OD Network Membership Journal, Orbin;12).

Groups as Imperfect Decision Makers

As you will see, Kennedy's committee spent much time talking about how U.S. citizens would react to the invasion and the incompetence of Castro's forces. They did not spend as much time talking about the weapons the troops would carry, the political climate in Cuba, the terrain of the area where the invasion would take place, or the type of communication system used by Cuban military forces. Only the CIA representatives knew that the morale of the invasion force was very low, but they never mentioned that information during the discussion.

DeRiveria mentions more instances of bolstering and trivializing the discussion seen throughout the Korean War. "It is interesting to note what was not discussed during vital meetings that lead up to the escalation. For example, while there was an obvious concern about

there any consideration of Korean deaths or international ramifications"
(220). Futhermore, this was thought to not reach the discussion board
because "the discussion did not occur because it was nobody's job to
represent the concerns of the Korean people or of international law"
(220). This information processing hurts decision making, which may
result in groupthink tendencies.

In 1985, Garold Stasser and William Titus reported that "if a group
is working on a problem where the shared information favors
Alternative A is correct, but the unshared information favors
Alternative B, then the group will only discover this so-called hidden
profile if it pools the unshared information" (1469).

Stasser and Titus examined this type of problem by giving
members of four-person groups 16 pieces of information about three
candidates for student body president. Candidate A was the best choice
for the post, for he possessed 8 positive qualities, 4 neutral qualities,
and 4 negative qualities. The other two candidates had 4 positive
qualities, 8 neutral qualities, and four negative qualities. When group
members were given all the available information about the candidates,
83% of the groups favored Candidate A- a slight improvement over the
67% rate reported by the subjects before they joined their group. But
groups did not fair so well when Stasser and Titus manipulated the
distribution of the positive and negative information among the
members to create a hidden profile. Candidate A still had 8 positive

qualities, but the researchers made certain that each group member received information about only two of these qualities. Person 1, for example, knew that Candidate A had positive qualities P1 and P2; Person 2 knew that he had positive qualities P3 and P4; Person 3 knew that he had positive qualities P5 and P6; and Person 4 knew that he had positive qualities P7 and P8. But they all knew that Candidate A had negative qualities N1, N2, N3, and N4. Had they pooled their information carefully, they would have discovered that Candidate A had positive qualities P1 to P8 and only four negative qualities. But they oversampled the shared negative qualities and chose the less qualified candidate 76% of the time.

When subsequent researchers Disalvo, Nikkel, and Monroe, asked 569 full-time employees who worked in jobs ranging from clerical positions to upper-management to describe "in their own words what happens during a meeting that limits its effectiveness," (553). They received nearly 2,500 answers by using a Critical Incident Technique (CIT), "a self-report by individuals who actually experienced the situations- a process aiding with qualitative, descriptive data" (553). The problems were summarized into seven basic categories in relation to frequency. Poor listening skills, ineffective voice, poor non-verbals, lack of effective visual aids, misunderstood or do not clearly identify topic, and receptive jargon made up 10% of the participants description of poor communication skills. 8% noted egocentric behavior, that is, the conversation becomes dominated in some form or another. This

also makes up instances where intimidation, filibustering, brownnosers, and clowns exist. Nonparticipation occurred 7% of the time, wherein members appeared to remain silent, or passive. 6.5% appeared to be sidetracked, whereas 6% of the time members experienced interruptions or negative leader behavior. Lastly, 5% reported that attitudes and emotions interfered with efficacy. The participants in this research suggested that their groups fail more frequently than they succeed at solving problems.

People's judgments in such cognitively demanding situations tend to be distorted by cognitive and motivational biases. When people cannot easily imagine an outcome, they assume that such an outcome is less likely to occur than one that springs easily to mind. Just as individuals tend to let initial investments of resources in a project bias their decision to continue investing in the project (the sunk-cost effect), so groups will recommend pouring money into failing projects to justify their initial investment.

"It matters whether a decision is framed in terms of gains or in terms of losses, because people usually prefer risky options when choosing between losses but avoid risky options otherwise" (433). A choice between losses refers to a choice between a certain loss on one hand and potentially even greater losses combined with the chance of avoiding those losses on the other. For example, "a preference for risk in a choice between losses would be the avoidance of a $50 loss in favor of a gamble with an even chance of a $100 loss or no loss at all.

In contrast, most people would accept $50 in lieu of a gamble with an even chance of $100 or nothing" (433).

Whyte utilized a 6 x 3 x 2 (scenario x decision frame x performing unit) mixed factorial design, n = 325. Decision frames refer to no sunk cost [control], sunk cost [SC], and accepting personal responsibility for sunk costs [SC + PR]. The performing unit refers to individual responses versus group responses. Six hypothetical investment decision scenarios were written that requested participation to make decisions under risk in the role of investment administration. The participants role was to take charge in the allocations of resources to a failing project with the option of withdrawing from or increasing the commitment of funds to the original course of action. The primary dependent variable is whether or not to make the investment choices, "Yes", "No", and "Can't Decide". The second dependent variable concerned the degree of risk where subjects were assigned to quantify how much risk they had exposed themselves to in an effort to rectify failure.

In regards to a decision to invest, the decision frame had a significant effect on the frequency of escalation "and a more pronounced effect on frequency of escalation in group decision-making than in individual decision-making, [$F(2, 59) = 11.8; p < .0001$]" (442).

The chance of losing an additional investment variable provided a mean maximum percentage (n = 55 for each scenario) of chances taken

by individuals in control, SC, and SC + PR conditions are 57.1, 73.8, and 77.6, respectively. The corresponding percentages for groups are 59.7, 80.7, and 84.2 respectively.

The decision frame and the group itself had a significant effect of chance taken on losing an additional investment. However, "group polarization cannot occur unless individual group members possess a sufficiently strong preference in one direction or the other when group discussion begins. Consistent with group polarization, group decision-making in the SC + PR condition led to a moderate increase in the amount of resources dedicated to the losing cause of action" (447).

Earlier studies during the 1960's appeared to be quite bivercated. Some suggested that groups made conservative decisions while others suggested groups made riskier decisions. When people discuss issues in groups, there is a tendency for them to decide on a more extreme course of action than would be suggested by the average of their individual judgments, but the direction of this shift depends on what was initially the dominant point of view. Thus, stressing the possible interference of a leader's opinion(s) when introducing a dilemma that is in need of resolution.

Nonetheless, in congruence with Whyte's research, President Kennedy and his committee chose the riskier alternative of invading Cuba instead of a more moderate alternative such as using diplomatic means to influence Cuba. Unfortunately, for Kennedy, for his advisors, and for the members of the attack force, groups' decisions

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actually tend to be more extreme than individuals' decisions. As stated earlier, groups do not urge restraint; instead they polarize opinions.

David Myers and Helmut Lamm summarized this tendency with their group polarization hypothesis: The "average postgroup response will tend to be more extreme in the same direction as the average of the pregroup responses" (603). Imagine two groups of four individuals whose opinions vary in terms of preference for risk. When the average choice of the group members before discussion is closer to the risky pole of the continuum than to the cautious (as would be the case in a group composed of Persons A, B, C, and D), a risky shift will occur, If, in contrast, the group is composed of Persons C, D,E, and F, a cautious shift will take place, because the pregroup mean of 6.5 falls closer to the cautious pole. As Myers and Lamm note, on choice dilemmas, an "initial pregroup mean of 6 or smaller is usually sufficient to produce a risky shift, whereas a mean of 7 or greater is necessary to produce a cautious shift. If the pregroup mean falls between 6 and 7, shifting is unlikely" (617).

In accordance with Myers and Lamm's hypothesis it is important to incorporate the effects, if any, of one's gender. Specifically, if gender acts as a substantial component to the decision making process when exposed to a decision that involves risk.

Whyte asserts, "In many cases the difficulty in deciding whether to invest additional resources in a losing course of action leads to a process of escalation of commitment. Examples of such behavior have

been observed in interpersonal relations, waiting situations, gambling, economic investment, and policy-making" (430). Call it sunk cost effect or entrapment, the most important component to this is 'self justification'. "The need to demonstrate the rationality of previous decisions results in escalating commitment as a means to make earlier failing decisions pay off" (431). In order to conjugate the degree of risk involved in making a decision, it is important to know if gender may play an intricate role.

The Gender Factor

Morgenthau asserts: "international politics (or foreign affairs) is about conflicting nation – states locked in a power struggle where the minimum requirement of a nation – state's foreign policy is the survival of the nation – state itself" (38). As a result of a decision's significance, the ranks of the foreign policy elite have come to be seen as more dominant, prestigious, and exclusive than ever before. Consequently, the issue of whether to what degree women have a role in the process of foreign policy formulation has also become more crucial.

Evidence of gender differences and risky situations was noted by DeRiveria's examination of Cohen's prediction of risk-taking behavior. DeRiveria notes that there are wide individual differences in risk-taking shown by the naturalistic data gathered by Cohen. While an observer is stationed near a dangerous corner he noted 1,189 instances in which a

pedestrian looked up at approaching traffic and then decided to cross the street or wait for a safer moment. The data is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1

The Percentage of Pedestrians Who Crossed
a Street When an Approaching Vehicle Was
X Seconds Away

Seconds Which Vehicle Took To Reach Crossing	Percentage Who Crossed
1	0.0
2	0.5
3	11.5
4	25.7
5	21.4
6	21.8
7	11.2
8	0.4
9	4.6
10	1.5

What was concluded was that some pedestrians were more cautious than other pedestrians. His findings indicated, "persons whose ages ranged from 16-30 took greater risks than those from 31-45, and that men took greater risks than women" (172).

Similar findings surrounding subsequent studies where researchers asked questions such as, "estimate the likelihood that various events would occur" (174). The estimates were noted as well as how confident the individual was in their judgment. Evidently, when a person's confidence was high, his/her judgments were more extreme. Futhermore, investigations showed that young persons were more extreme than older persons and young men had more confidence than

the younger women. Based on this brief information, one could formulate the idea that risk may be irrelevant to those who share an illusion of invulnerability. The rationale is that gender may increase the likelihood of risk taking, thus to add a potential antecedent of groupthink.

Eagly and Karau discovered "that men may be thought to have certain life-style advantages over women (e.g., less burdened by family obligations) or to possess greater resources (e.g., money, influential friends); such beliefs rather than men's ways of behaving in organizational settings may be responsible for leadership roles" (685). However, the "gender role perspective suggests that the tendency for men to lead should diminish to some extent over time because as interaction progresses group members obtain detailed information about attributes other than gender. Specifically, members become more knowledgeable about each other's task relevant competence" (687).

Their findings appeared to be inconclusive in regards to gender and the emergence of leaders. However, what was significant was that men focused more than women on the task-oriented aspects of group process and women focus somewhat more than men on the interpersonally oriented aspects. This may in fact contradict what DeRiveria was noting about task and process leaders. If women pay more attention to the interpersonal aspects within the group, this may suggest that they do not want to rock the boat, arguably trying to sustain cohesiveness. This focus would then discredit the idea of men

predominately scoring high on this groupthink symptom, in addition, it would refute the hypothesis of gender difference, however, this may not necessarily be the case when coupled by the leadership variable.

Basically, the hypothetical rationale is that there is a high dependency upon cohesive groups for social support. In a study by Gentry, Chesney, Gary, Hall, and Harburg, the researchers examined the effects of race, sex, socio - ecological stress, and habitual anger-coping styles on systolic / diastolic blood pressure levels. Relevant results indicated that race and sex influenced systolic pressure and anger expression was related to systolic pressure, but only for female respondents. This confirmed that sex is an important socio-demographic determinant of elevated blood pressure, whereupon males have more evidence of hypertension than did females. The evidence can be inferred that foreign policy sessions have a high degree of stress involved, which is comparable to socio – ecological instances the researchers present. In fact, it argues for the viability......."in predisposing individuals to stress – related disorders by virtue of the fact that those persons living in high stress areas both experience a greater number of anger – provoking situations, and evidence in the difference in gender coping patterns, (i.e.,....a greater tendency toward anger inhibition) than do persons in less stress arenas" (200). Evidently this research suggests that women are more prone to suppressed anger – thus, less likely to be subject to initializing possible risk.

Critically speaking, McGlen and Sarkees contrast the preceding evidence: there has been discussion between representatives from the two sides of feminism. The two sides being the "maximizers and the minimizers, over whether we should include more women in the foreign policy arena because women are more peaceful than men, or because women have a right as citizens to participate. This debate is grounded in the fundamental argument of whether women are indeed different from men" (10). Debate ponders over women's genetic programming and cultural inculcations, "those who adopt the position that women are indeed different include in addition to the maximizer feminists, a disparate collection of male chauvinists, conservatives, and some social scientists. All of which believing simply that men are better equipped for the decisional task, where the majority of scientists contend to biological factors stressing sex difference".....identifying such traits as aggression, math, and spatial skills as being sex linked" (11).

"Maximizer feminists reject the negative implication of any gender differences arguing that these differences, rather than making women less suited to manage foreign affairs, make them more qualified than men. In contrast, the minimizer feminists dismiss the existence of differences, arguing that women (and men) both have a right to make quality foreign policy decisions, and should not expect women to necessarily approach these issues differently than men" (11).

Researchers have investigated a gender gap concerning voting

patterns and the use of foreign policies involving force. Baxter and Lansing in <u>Women in Foreign Policy</u> reported that "surveys asking men and women's views on WWII, the Korean conflict, and the Vietnam War consistently found women to be more likely than men to have seen these conflicts as mistakes and to have opposed them earlier and more strongly than men....the public's evaluation of war in the Persian Gulf are typical of the gender gap in foreign conflicts. In December 1990, women's opposition to the war was labeled the "gender gulf" with polls showing women 25% less likely to favor going to war" (191). Commentators cited this gap between males and females as evidence of women's greater peacefulness.

Interestingly, Georgia Duerst – Lahti discusses gender power relations by stating, "An important by product of men's dominant institutional power is their ability to allocate social values and aggression as many would argue, a 'self – justifying ideology'" (64). Her statement leads one to believe that men have an innate propensity to concoct decisions based on their illusions of invulnerability, or morality. According to Janis' <u>Victims of Groupthink</u>, "these men were prone to the illusion of invulnerability, to some extent the major risks were being minimized on the basis of a preconscious assumption that everything is going to be alright because we are a special group" (282). This belief certainly coincides with Janis' symptoms of groupthink, thus questioning if gender is once again a possible antecedent to the phenomenon.

Futhermore, "it is because of the male influence that male hegemonic position has enabled them to structure institutions, create laws, establish moral codes, and shape culture in ways which perpetuate their power over women" (36). A vital factor in making a high quality decision is the power of dissent. The Duerst – Lahti statement poses the question, who would really listen to a dissenting woman? Bear in mind, Janis' comment, "Underlying motivation of groupthink tendency appears to be a strong desire to avoid spoiling the harmonious atmosphere of the group upon which each member has become dependent for maintaining self – esteem and for coping with the stresses of policymaking" (Taken from Crucial Decisions, 56-57).

Duerst - Lahti suggests alternatives in dealing with gender power relations. Here she discussed the ecological element of sex ratio that is reinforced by three structural elements: hierarchy, leadership, and policy type. In terms of hierarchy, it has been found that some types of decision-making structures are more conducive to women's power than others. Accordingly, "decision structures which (1) have non – rigid procedures that downplay rightful participation based on positions include individuals by expertise: (2) tend to de – emphasize and personalize the power of the leader: (3) are least centralized and hierarchical: and (4) have more women involved in communication surrounding decision making: can be expected to produce more favorable gender ethos for women and improve women's overall power capacity in decision – making" (197).

Her suggestions are congruent with earlier participation – related research findings by Coch and French (see page 22). However, these findings of 'quality' were not limited to women. Comparatively speaking, her findings are a bit redundant, in that it simply confines the notion explicitly to one's gender. Nonetheless, what her suggestions do indeed present is the need for a leader's open style of leadership when dealing with the onset of a deliberation. If her notions are more palatable for women, per se, perhaps within decision - making, there will be significant findings in the way gender plays a role when exposed to the two leadership styles, as hypothesized in this thesis.

Powell investigated some of the most arguable evidence surrounding aggression and risk in his 1988 book, Women and Men in Management. The notion of women as being less risk taking or more conservative approaching was disputed by Powell by noting that in at least one study, "women had no advantage over men in sensitivity to others. Instead, he argued that individuals in the subordinate role, regardless of sex, were more sensitive to leaders than leaders were to subordinates (106). He reasoned, "that because women have been in the subordinate role in our society more frequently than men, what has been called "women's intuition" might more appropriately be called "subordinate intuition" (106). Powell is completely eradicating any belief that women are less risk taking than men, instead, stressing the role of the subordinate, regardless of any gender affect.

Most recently, researchers Holsti and Rosenau asked respondents

to give their opinions toward contemporary issues in foreign policy; to classify general views in political matters, they were to indicate their gender as well as their partisan affiliation. Figures represent percentages in categories, including male, and female categories, ranging from far left to far right, (Hulsti, and Rosenau, 1988, p. 258):

Figure 2

Political Ideology	Overall			State		Defense	
	All	M	F	M	F	M	F
Far Left	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Very Liberal	1.4	2.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	6.3	0.0
Somewhat Liberal	18.9	27.8	10.5	20.0	20.0	37.5	4.3
Middle of the Road	43.2	41.7	44.7	55.0	40.0	25.0	47.8
Somewhat Conservative	27.9	22.2	31.6	25.0	33.3	18.8	30.4
Very Conservative	9.5	5.6	13.2	0.0	6.7	12.5	17.4

SOURCE: Journal of Conflict and Resolution. Table from "The Domestic and Foreign Policy Beliefs of American Leaders," by O.R. Hulsti, and J.N.Rosenau (1988).

Looking first at the general political orientation of the respondents, it was found that the women in the sample were generally more conservative than men. Among the women, 44.8% indicated they saw themselves as very or somewhat conservative, while only 27.8% of men chose either these two categories. These figures contrast with those of the general public mentioned earlier. Allison Cowan reported on a 1989 New York Times opinion poll which found that 32% of the women and 37% of the men considered themselves to be conservatives. Significant differences were seen in the Defense Department whereas the State Department was not showing much of a difference, making it

more complex to generalize. Cowan asserts, "women coming into the Defense Department may in their attempt to fit in to an overwhelmingly male dominated organization, may overcompensate and become too conservative" (6, Sec.A). However, if there was a pattern, it finds women taking the more conservative position.

With such conflicting evidence it is important to investigate the gender component because research results do not completely confirm or vitiate either position.

Origins of Groupthink

Janis uses the term 'groupthink' "as a term of the same order as the words in the newspeak vocabulary George Orwell presents in his dismaying 1984—a vocabulary with terms such as 'doublethink' and 'crimethink'" (9). Hence, the Orwellian word groupthink "refers to a deterioration of mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment that results from in-group pressures" (9).

There are several symptoms that were briefly introduced last chapter and will be further elaborated upon in actual historical accounts. Interpersonal pressure was evident within the president's committee. There, criticism was taboo and members who broke this norm were pressured to conform.

Self censorship is an extremely prevalent symptom in groups that have fallen prey to groupthink. Many of the member's in Kennedy's

committee privately felt uncertain about the plan, but they kept their doubts to themselves. As Schlesinger wrote in his book A Thousand Days, "In the months after the Bay of Pigs I bitterly reproached myself for having kept so silent during those crucial discussions in the Cabinet Room, though my feelings of guilt were tempered by the knowledge that a course of objection would have accomplished little save to gain me a name as a nuisance. I can only explain my failure to do more than raise a few timid questions by reporting that one's impulse to blow the whistle on this nonsense was simply undone by the circumstances of the discussion" (225). There is a great deal of pressure to reach consensus within policy-making groups. According to Janis, "this pressure often takes the form of urging the dissident member to remain silent if he cannot match up his own beliefs with those of the rest of the group" (40).

President Kennedy, Rusk, and the president's brother, Robert, all acted as mindguards. Kennedy, for example, withheld memorandums condemning the plan from both Schlesinger and Fulbright. Rusk suppressed information that his own staff had given him. One extreme example of this occurred when Rusk, unable to attend a meeting, sent Undersecretary of State Chester Bowles. Although Bowles was "horrified" by the plan under discussion, President Kennedy never gave him the opportunity to speak during the meeting. Bowles followed bureaucratic channels to voice his critical misgivings, but his superior, Rusk, did not transmit those concerns to the committee, and he told

Bowles that the plan had been revised. Ironically, Bowles was fired several weeks after the Bay of Pigs defeat!

Apparent unanimity hovered over the committee's discussion of the plan to invade Cuba. Under this symptom, the members seemed to agree that the basic plan presented by the CIA was the only solution to the problem and in later discussions appeared to just be "going through the motions" of debate. Retrospective revelations revealed that many of the members objected to the plan, but these objections never surfaced during the meetings. Instead, Schlesinger notes a "curious atmosphere of assumed consensus" (250) characterized discussion, as each person wrongly concluded that everyone else liked the plan. As Janis reports in his earlier book, Victims of Groupthink, he explains that the group members played up "areas of convergence in their thinking, at the expense of fully exploring divergences that might disrupt the apparent unity of the group" (39).

Illusions of invulnerability or illusory thinking was so prevalent within the Korean War committee, the group consensus was that the attack would probably be contained. In general, there was a complete overestimation of South Korean strength and a complete underestimation of North Korean strength.

In regards to illusions of morality, this was evident in Kennedy's committee. The plan to invade Cuba could unsympathetically be described as an unprovoked sneak attack by a major world power on a virtually defenseless country. But the decision makers, suffering from

illusions of morality, seemed to lose their principles in the group's desire to bravely end Castro's regime. Although the means used to defeat the spread of communism may have been considered questionable, the group felt that the ends certainly justified them; the cause to democracy was offered as justification enough for the planned attack.

In 1990, Ervin Staub focused on this tendency to rationalize the harming of members of other groups, all of which have been variously termed dehumanization, delegitimization, and moral exclusion (48). The intricacies in the case of wars, aggressors denigrate the outgroup so completely that the outsiders are excluded from moral concern, for "it is difficult to harm people intensely whom one evaluates positively or strongly identifies with (53). Groups that have a history of devaluing segments of their society are more likely to engage in moral exclusion, as are groups whose norms stress respect for authority and obedience. "These groups, when they anticipate conflict with others groups, rapidly revise their opinions of their opponents so that they can take hostile actions against them" (64).

These biased perceptions of the outgroup seem to be precursors to many a failed group related decision, as seen when referring back again to the Bay of Pigs fiasco. The group wanted to believe that Castro was an ineffectual leader and military officer, but this oversimplified picture of the dictator turned out to be merely wishful thinking.

More evidence of the outgroup illusions are demonstrated by

researchers Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood, and Sherif. On two midsummer days in 1954, Sherif et. al drove through Oklahoma City picking up excited 11-year-old boys to take them off to camp. They were "normal, well-adjusted boys of the same age, educational level, from similar sociocultural backgrounds and with no unusual features in their personal backgrounds" (59). The parents knew that the camp was actually part of a group dynamics research project, but the boys themselves had no idea that they were subjects in the Robbers Cave Experiment.

The boys named their groups the Rattlers and the Eagles and stenciled these names on their shirts and painted them onto flags. The staff, who was the observers, noted clear increases in group-oriented behaviors, cohesiveness, and positive group attitudes. For example: At the hideout, Everett (a non-swimmer when camp started) began to swim a little. He was praised by all and for the first time the others called him by his preferred nickname. Simpson yelled, "Come on, dive off the board!" All members in the water formed a large protective circle into which Everett dived after a full two minutes of hesitation and reassurance form the others" (Sherif et al., 79). Futhermore, when each group realized another group was camping nearby, references to "those guys," "they," and "outsiders" became increasingly frequent. The boys at Robbers Cave displayed antipathy toward the other group even before the competitive tournament was mentioned. Indeed, the Rattlers and Eagles had not even seen each other when they began to

refer to "those guys" in a derogatory way: When the ingroup began to be clearly delineated, there was a tendency to consider all others as the outgroup...The Rattlers didn't know another group existed in the camp until they heard the Eagles on the ball diamond; but from that time on the outgroup figured prominently in their lives. Hill (Rattler) said, "They better not be in our swimming hole." The next day Simpson heard tourists on the trail just outside of camp and was convinced that "those guys" were down at "our diamond" again (94).

According to Sherif et al, "We do not, however, simply segment people into the categories "member of my group" and "member of another group" and then stop. Once people are categorized, we view people in our group (ingroup members) more favorably than those outside our group (outgroup members). At the group level, this tendency is called the ingroup/outgroup bias; among larger social groups, such as tribes, ethnic group, or nations, the bias is termed ethnocentrism. People judge actions that their own group performs positively, but they negatively evaluate these same actions when they are performed by the outgroup. At Robbers Cave, ingroup favoritism went hand in hand with outgroup rejection (112-115).

This deficiency in information – processing generally lead to defective decision-making strategies (groupthink) that are inherent within policy making fiascoes. Obviously, knowledge must be available for a decision to be taken into account, however, how an individual goes about making the decision also influences what is taken

into account. The committee, for example, discussed two extreme alternatives: either endorse the Bay of Pigs invasion plan or abandon Cuba to communism, while ignoring all other potential alternatives. In addition, the group lost sight of its overall objectives as it became caught up the minor details of the invasion plan, and shockingly, it failed to develop contingency plans.

Of the causes that contribute to the rise of groupthink, Janis emphasizes cohesiveness above all others. He admits that cohesive groups are not necessarily doomed to be victims of groupthink, but he points out that a "high degree of group cohesiveness is conducive to a high frequency of symptoms of groupthink, which, in turn, are conducive to a high frequency of defects in decision-making" (Janis, 1972, p.199). In fact evidence indicates that when someone does manage to disagree with the rest of the group, he or she is likely to be ostracized when group cohesiveness is high as seen during the Vietnam War escalation which is referenced later.

President Kennedy's committee was all close friends, all of which maintained a positive and proud attitude toward their membership. Guthman, in his book, We Band of Brothers, demonstrates this identification:

> It seemed that with John Kennedy leading *us* and with all the talent he had assembled, nothing could stop *us*. *We* believed that if *we* faced up to the nation's problems and applied bold, new ideas with common sense and hard work, *we* would overcome whatever challenged *us*. (88; italics added)

Janis mentioned how isolation is a cause of groupthink. Many experts on military questions and Cuban affairs were available and, if contacted, could have warned the group about the limitations of the plan. Unfortunately, the committee closed itself off from these valuable resources. Futhermore, they were not mandated to report its conclusions to anyone, including Congress, so there was no final review of the decision before putting it into action.

Leadership Styles

Janis reported in his first groupthink book that the lack of a tradition of impartial leadership could pose as an antecedent condition to groupthink. "The leader of a policy-making group will find it all too easy to use his or her power and prestige to influence the members of the group to approve of the policy alternative he or she prefers instead of encouraging them to engage in open inquiry and critical evaluation" (176).

DeRiveria brings the premise of what stance a leader chooses to take to our attention. He brings up an important fundamental concerning leadership which is noted in Bales and Slater's Role Differences in Small Decision-Making Groups. The researchers have shown different types of leaders, "a 'task leader' who concentrates on getting the group to solve the problem it is confronting, and a 'process leader' who concentrates on smoothing interpersonal relations and maintaining unity within the group" (221).

The distinction between a 'guiding suggestion' and an 'order' is not sophistry. An 'order' concerns only what the leader wants to do, whereas a 'guiding suggestion' also takes into account the purposes of the group member. Thus, in leading a group of boys who are carving wood, an order might be, "Now I want you to first sharpen the knives," Whereas the equivalent guiding suggestion would be, "That's a knife sharpener so that you can have sharp knives to carve with" (268). It is hypothesized, not solely emphasized on the leadership style, inasmuch as how simple framing could induce the quality of decision - making process.

In 1960, Fielder identified that there are two kinds of leaders: leaders who assume most and least preferred co-workers to be quite similar, and leaders who assume most and least preferred co-workers to be quite dissimilar. The latter kind of leader is "psychologically distant and rejecting to those with whom he cannot work easily," while the former kind of leader is "either more tolerant of poor coworkers, or he accepts or rejects individuals on bases other than their ability to work" with him" (591).

If a leader is accepted by his group members, (i.e., his activities influence their performances) then Fielder finds that the style of the leader's interpersonal relations influences the group's effectiveness, be it the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team, or a Pipefitters union crew. Those leaders who are distant probably tend to induce an "emphasis on the task" and therewith increase productivity. Those leaders who

regard followers as similar in their personal characteristics tend "toward warmer, psychologically closer interpersonal relations with their subordinates" and thereby are significantly less effective in promoting productivity in their task groups (602-604).

Conversely, researcher William Starbuck, believes that open, vigilant problem solving is not effective in reducing the chances of unsuccessful outcomes – which leads us to the opposite conclusion. He highlights methodical defects and biased self – reporting relied on by most investigators. Aligned with 'good – quality' decisions, Starbuck uses an example of the likelihood of successful outcomes in terms of profits:

"In 1975, Gringer and Norburn discovered the firms' profitability correlates.......weakly with the formality of actual planning ($r = .22$)......profitability correlates weakly but significantly with reliance on informal communication ($r = .40$) and moderately with the use of diverse information when evaluating performance ($r = .68$)" (371). He points out that the group's reports that are brought to the table typically contain "misrepresentations and inadvertent biases," (368) which in fact does not correspond to the desired hypothetical effects of open styles of leadership, instead, he states that these adverse effects contrived from the members of a group make their contributions highly undependable.

More evidence of the use of an open, vigilant problem – solving approach is seen in a systematic study by Herek, Janis, and Huth. The main function of the study was to "determine the extent to which

favorable outcomes in international crises affecting the United States are related to the quality of policymaking by the nation's leaders" (123). In doing so, they assessed the United States governments' management of each of the nineteen crises since WWII by making are related to the quality of policymaking by the nation's leaders" detailed ratings of presence or absence of each of the 'symptoms' of defective policymaking. Correlational data show that higher symptom scores are significantly related to more unfavorable outcomes for the United States vital interests, (r = .64, p = .002), and more unfavorable outcomes for international conflict (r = .62, p = .002). "These results clearly indicate that crisis outcomes tended to have more adverse effects on United States interests and were more likely to increase international conflict when the policymaking process was characterized by a large number of symptoms. The findings are consistent with the expectations "that when policymakers use open, vigilant problem – solving procedures they tend to make decisions that are likely to meet their goals" (127).

A fairly recent alternative in dealing with which type of leadership style would best suit a decision – making committee was ensued in 1988. Researchers Vroom and Jago developed a theoretical model that specifies when and how leaders of organizations should arrange for participation of subordinates when dealing with policy problems. Stating that a leader should ask several fundamental questions, (1) how important is it to arrive at a high quality decision? (2) how important is

it for subordinates to be committed to the decision? Then answer

additional questions that pertain to attributes of the problem all of

which are pertinent to making judgements about who in the

organization should participate, and in what ways:

1. The Probability of subordinate commitment if the leader makes the decision, if not, could you sell it to them?
2. Do I have enough information or expertise?
3. Adequate perception, (ramification's of problems, goals, alternatives.
4. Do my subordinates have sufficient information or expertise?
5. What are the costs of bringing in geographically dispersed subordinates?
6. Is it desirable to maximize opportunities for subordinate development of problem solving and related skills?
7. Time constraint issue
8. Possible conflict among subordinates
9. Shared goals without self – interests

SOURCE: Summarized from, The New Leadership: Managing Participation in Organizations, by Vroom & Jago, 1988.

Critiques

In 1977, Flowers facilitated an experiment based on the premise of

groupthink, specifically, to leadership variances. The experiment was

a 2 x 2 factorial design with 10 groups in each condition. 2 teams

consisted of all males and all females, then 6 teams were composed of 3

females and 1 male. It should be noted that contrary to the thought of

gender impacting groupthink, there were no differences found among

teams on the basis of sex. Nonetheless, college students were divided

into groups and presented with a crisis to solve. There were two levels

of group cohesion, both high and low, and half of the groups operated

with leaders trained to use either non-directive (open) or directive (closed) leadership style.

Flowers stresses leadership as a groupthink antecedent in that if the group, under the direction of a leader, adheres to an unspoken norm that apparent unanimity of the group should not be broken and if the leader promotes a favored solution to the problem. Her suggestions are as follows, "in all groups a pressure toward consensus prevails unless the leader deliberately counteracts such pressure by encouraging diversity of viewpoints" (889). Therefore, the manipulation of group norms was incorporated into the independent variables of leadership style.

Flowers trained and provided the leaders with separate instructions. Subsequently stating to the assigned groups "My interest is in discovering more about the process that groups went through to solve human relations problems" (890). Half of the teams under each type of leadership were low cohesive (strangers), and the other half were highly cohesive (friends). "Analyses of variance showed that open leadership style produced significantly more suggested solutions (p < .05) and usage of available facts (p < .01) than the closed style of leadership, regardless of the level of cohesion. This cohesion factor does not support Janis's assumption. However, partial confirmation goes to open leaders that produce more solutions and use information better" (894). The actual mean number of facts introduced before a decision was 15.1 and 15.9 for open and 7.1 and 9.3 for closed groups" (895).

According to Flower, "an open style, in line with prescriptive hypotheses about preventing groupthink, the leader avoided stating his own position on the issue until after the others in the group had discussed their own solutions continually encouraged free discussion of alternatives and explicitly conveyed the norm of airing all possible viewpoints. The second leadership style was closed-the leader stated his own position at the outset, and did not encourage free discussion of alternatives and explicitly conveyed the norm that the most important thing was for the team to agree on its decision" (889).

What was found as predicted, the teams exposed to the open leadership style offered significantly more solutions to the problem and during their discussions cited significantly more facts from the information made available to them before arriving at a consensus than teams exposed to the closed leadership style.

In 1980, Longley and Pruitt criticized Flower's study on the grounds that "the instructions to the directive leaders confounded another variable with the instructions to state their own opinions at the outset of the discussion: they were also encouraged to curtail the group discussion, which, in and of itself, could be responsible for the group producing fewer proposed solutions and introducing fewer facts to the discussion" (83).

In 1982, Janis suggested that contrary to leadership effects towards the groupthink phenomena, President Truman's committee during the Korean War may have dispelled the supposed presage.

It was noted that Truman on more than one occasion showed his "readiness to accept opposing views of his advisers and to be influenced by them" (69). For example, During the earliest of stages in the War, "Truman was responsive to his advisers' objections to his strong preference to accept an offer from Chiang Kai-shek to send 33,000 Chinese Nationalist ground troops to augment the United Nations forces in Korea" (69). Truman ran this by Acheson and remained unaffected by his opposition. However, when he brought up this issue to the entire group, he held on to his directive style.

Nevertheless, Janis brought up an interesting point, a point that is anything but congruent with the groupthink phenomenon. Ultimately, Truman finally gave in to his key advisors position: "I accepted the position taken by practically everyone else;...namely that the Chinese offer ought to be politely declined" (70). Here, the group displayed their capability of resisting pressures to conform to the leader's position. Possibly, Truman was subjected to conformity pressures as noted earlier via Asch's line experiment.

In 1979, Philip Tetlock provided a critique of Janis's 1972 work on the groupthink phenomenon. His focus surrounded psychological factors that influence political decision-making. The study, "consistent with Janis's theory, found that relative to non-groupthink decision-makers were more simplistic in their perceptions of policy issues and made more positive references to the United States and its allies [ingroup]" (1314).

An analysis of variance was used to test the groupthink

hypotheses, which involved three independent variables: type of crisis

(groupthink vs. non-groupthink), decision makers within crises, and the

random ordering of 12 passages of material selected from each decision

makers statements. For example, the sentence, "an aggressive North

Korea threatens freedom-loving South Korea" would be translated to

read:

> North Korea / is / aggressive
> North Korea / threatens / South Korea
> South Korea / is / freedom loving (1319).

Translating statements involved attitude objects that would elicit these

verbal connectors to a common meaning or category of domestic and

foreign opposition. In addition, to a category for groups with which the

speaker identifies.

The decision maker's mean ratings on the three dependent

variables consisted of integrative complexity which revealed that

decision makers in groupthink crises were significantly less complex

than their counterparts in non-groupthink crises, $p < 0.1$. The second

dependent variable dealt with the evaluations of the group with which

the speaker identifies. Decision makers, as predicted, in groupthink

crises evaluated groups in which they identified more positively than

those in non-groupthink crises, $p < .01$. The final dependent variable

represented decision makers mean evaluation of domestic and foreign

opponents that revealed, $p < .15$. Thus, indicating a significant

difference between groupthink and non-groupthink crises in negative evaluations of opponents.

Other noteworthy findings consisted of significantly low correlations: "more complex statements tended to include fewer positive evaluations of the political group with which the speaker identifies, $r(130) = -.27, p < .001$, and fewer negative evaluations of domestic and foreign opponents, $r(130) = .33, p < .001$" (1321).

Tetlock and other researchers some thirteen years later pursued more profound and complex experiments that explored the validity of groupthink analysis with a novel research instrument, the Group Dynamics Q Sort (GDQS). The GDQS allowed the researchers "to quantify and compare expert assessments of group dynamics in a wide range of historical settings under the conditions of several 'symptoms' of groupthink" (403).

GDQS consists of 100 pairs of bipolar statements, describing a broad range of attributes of political leaderships, assessors rate the degree to which one or the other statements in each pair is more descriptive of the group, for example:

> The group leader is insulated from criticism
> versus
> The group leader is exposed to a wide range
> of views and documents"(405).

"The 100-item GDQS covers diverse aspects of group functioning, many directly relevant to the groupthink model. These items allow us to assess virtually all the cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, and

organizational manifestations of groupthink that Janis (1982) poisted"
(405).

Seven items fall into clusters called process indicator scales. They
included: Leader strength, factionalism (cohesion), rigidity
(insulation), democratic accountability, pessimism, conformity, and
task orientation. The researchers theoretical expectations were that
readers of historical cases would assign groupthink episodes
substantially higher scores than vigilant episodes on the first three
process indicator scales. Conversely, it was expected that Q-sort
assessors would assign groupthink cases lower scores than vigilant
cases on the latter scales. In fact, the average alpha coefficient for the
seven process indicator scales was .72. Individual coefficients were
.66, .70, .88, .71, .57, .91, and .61 respectively.

The Janis accounts and other historical accounts of the same
groups are remarkably similar. The average correlation between these
composite interpretations was .60. " .48 for the Truman Cabinet, .75
for Kennedy Bay of Pigs Cabinet, .55 for Johnson's Tuesday Lunch
Group, and .66 for the Pearl Harbor Group" (412). What was decided
was that Janis "overemphasized the rigidity and conformity of
groupthink decisions. ....the most pronounced difference between
Janis and other authors, however, was on the Pessimism scale (a mean
difference of 1.2), $F(1, 52) = 19.52$, p < .001. Janis portrayed a
substantially more confident atmosphere in the groupthink cases than
did the other authors" (412).

Researchers Aronson, et.al. asserted that several leadership practices unfortunately, are "not low-cost means for bringing about improvements" (232). They "require cost and additional time and effort from leaders, backfiring by creating animosity and low morale....which could result from facilitating open debates about alternative options" (233). They go on to state that leaders should in fact avoid yielding to the temptation to "rig" meetings, thus promoting a higher quality decision - making process. Specifically, to abstain from using opportunities to hold meetings at times when dissenters can't attend, distribute intelligent reports, and expert appraisals in an unbiased way, limiting those that support the leaders option, adopt and convey a genuine attitude of openness (247). Those with this disposition would tend to have a relatively low threshold for responding to informational inputs that convey policy preferences of the group leader, which fosters a 'groupthink' consensus. Wherein satisfaction relies on strong dependency needs. Basically it is easier to engage in self – censorship to preserve group harmony, all of which interfere with vigilant problem solving.

This leaves the reader to a probing question; do the cumulative research results play any role whatsoever in the biases, and risk taking involved in error-laden decision-making? When a time-sensitive decision needs to be made, there are various tasks inherent within the decision-making process. However, these decisions, when made in groups, implore social aspects as well that may or may not present

various quagmires. Does one's gender make them susceptible to the groupthink phenomenon when forced to make decisions under the fore mentioned leadership styles?

VICTIMS OF GROUPTHINK

Bay of Pigs

"How could everybody involved have thought such a plan would succeed?" (Guthman quoting President Kennedy; 295)

Richard Nixon first suggested this clandestine operation during the Eisenhower administration. All key advisors approved the CIA's invasion plan. On April 17, 1961, a brigade of 1400 Cuban exiles aided by U.S. Navy Air Force and CIA invaded Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. Many problems arose, for example, ships containing reserve ammunition never arrived, and the remaining ships either sunk or fled. By the second day 20,000 of Castro's well-equipped army completely surrounded the U.S., subsequently, the U.S. force was either killed or led off to prison camps to be ransomed.

According to Sorenson's <u>Kennedy</u>, they should have anticipated as he put it in "a shocking number of errors in the whole decision-making process" (338). Within days after the invasion, the realities of the boggled situation quickly became apparent to Kennedy. Kennedy stated, "How could I have been so stupid to let them go ahead?" Sorenson added, "His anguish was doubly deepened by the knowledge that the rest of the world was asking the same question" (346).

Core members of Kennedy's team whom were briefed of the plan included three cabinet members and three men on the White House Staff. Each member was well qualified to be objective in their analyses of government policy. However, collectively, they failed to detect serious flaws.

Ironically, one of its members, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, was an expert statistician who had devised new techniques for improving rational methods of decision-making. Despite this being a presumed asset to the committee, several devastating miscalculations occurred during the course of the Bay of Pigs fiasco.

What seemed to be a major miscalculation was the belief that no one will know that the U.S. was responsible for the invasion of Cuba. The belief held that Cuba's air force is ineffectual and can be wiped out before the invasion commenced. The supposed high morale of the Cuban exiles, in addition to Castro's military capabilities was grossly underestimated. According to Sorenson: "The President thought he was approving a plan rushed into execution on the grounds that Castro would later acquire the military capability to defeat it. Castro, in fact, already possessed that capability" (340). The committee also believed that the invasion by the exile brigade would prompt the Cuban underground, thus aiding in the destruction of Castro. The latter belief held, despite ignored polls showing an overwhelming majority of Cubans that advocated Castro's regime. Lastly, the policy makers falsely assumed that the invaders could easily join guerillas in the

mountains (Escambray Mountains). Moreover, someone desperately needed to look at a map of Cuba, seeing as how Escambray was 80 miles away from the Bay of Pigs.

Some of the grossest errors that occurred at the Bay of Pigs resulted from faulty planning and communication with the CIA (Janis, 1982, p 27). Guthman portrays this faulty communication in an account concerning Ambassador Adlai Stevenson. The Ambassador spoke to the United Nations in reply to charges by the Cuban Foreign Minister that planes had been piloted by United States mercenaries before the actual invasion. According to Guthman, Stevenson replied to this account by stating, "these two planes to the best of our knowledge, were Castro's own air force planes, they took off from Castro's own air force fields" (109). Sadly, the planes were the air arm of the Cuban brigade. President Kennedy himself authorized the mission. "It was to be Stevenson's most humiliating hour, for he, like so many others in the government, had not been told" (109).

An illusion of invulnerability is prevalent when a euphoric phase encompasses cohesive groups. "At such a time the members became somewhat euphoric about their newly acquired "we-feeling", they share a sense of belonging to a powerful protective group that in some vague way opens up new potentials for each of them. Often there is boundless admiration of the group leader" (Janis 36). This statement is supported according to Schlesinger's interpretation of Kennedy's in-group. "Everything had broken right for him since 1956. He had won the

nomination and the election against all the odds in the book. Everyone

that surrounded him thought he had the Midas touch and could not

lose" (259).

The policy advisors were probably unaware of their reliance on

shared rationalizations. In fact, the odds versus their gamble was

over 140 to 1. Specifically, Castro's 200,000 to U.S. Cuban exile

regime of 1,400. A risky venture that was appraised as being safe.

This mode of thinking resulted in prisoners who were later ransomed by

the U.S. government for $53 million in food and drugs.

Rationalizations such as 'we're the good guys' must elicited

ideological stereotypes conducive to the ingroup/outgroup bias, a bias

that was identified within the Robbers Cave Experiment. Janis adds,

"members of a concurrence-seeking group tend to vow any antagonistic

out-group against whom they are plotting not only as immoral but also

weak and stupid" (86).

An illusion of unanimity was evident in Kennedy's team.

Evidently, the group's consensus regarding the fundamentals of the

CIA plan and its adoption was virtually free of any disagreement.

Schlesinger observed, "our meetings took place in a curious

atmosphere of assumed consensus" (39).

Self appointed mindguards seemed to have been a common theme

that surrounded the air in which the committee members breathed.

At one point Robert Kennedy essentially told Schlesinger to lay off

because his discordant notes were damaging the confidence of the

policy itself. Yet another means of keeping the in-group at 'bay'- by not reinforcing Schlesinger's memorandum, the decision would not be subject to reconsideration. "In retrospect, President Kennedy needed to circulate opposing statements that may have shed light on the plans drawbacks" (Schlesinger; 105).

Secretary of State Rusk effectively served as a mindguard by preventing Kennedy and his committee from the opposing ideas of a government official with access to information that could have enabled him to assess the political consequences of the Cuban invasion better than anyone present at the White House meetings could" (41). Some form of collusion certainly appeared to be going on.

Kennedy seemed to have encouraged the group's uncritical acceptance of the defective arguments in favor of the CIA's plan. He was a proponent of the one-sided meeting. At each meeting, instead of opening up the agenda to permit a full airing of the opposing considerations, he allowed the CIA representatives to dominate the entire discussion.

Janis concludes with "the Presidents demand that each person in turn, state his overall judgement, especially after having just heard an outsider oppose the groups consensus, must have put the members on their mettle. After listening to an opinion leader (McNamara, for example) express his unequivocal acceptance, it becomes more difficult than ever for other members to state a different view" (43). Futhermore, "open straw votes generally put pressure on each

individual to agree with the apparent group consensus as has been shown by well-known social psychological experiments" (43).

Guthman adds a final note, "What is really important in the Bay of Pigs affair was the very gap between decision and execution, between planning and reality" (295).

Researcher Etheredge provides a prime alternative interpretation of what went wrong that downplays the influence of groupthink as compared with "systematic factors". He acknowledges symptoms of groupthink at the Bay of Pigs but argues that other causes were more important. He states, "Janis declared the invasion decision to have been a mindless aberration" (112-113). Evidence he cites pertains to Operation MONGOOSE, the arrangement made be the CIA to hire the Mafia to assassinate Castro, which was to occur in conjunction with the invasion. He fails to cite evidence that information of the assassination plan was given to Kennedy or others within the in – group. He explains the lack of any convincing evidence on this point as resulting from a cover - up in line with the code of "plausible deniability" (10). In contrast to the former insights on the fiasco, Etheredge maintains, "the CIA's plans for the Bay of Pigs and MONGOOSE, although they did not work, under the circumstances and constraints were probably the best to be devised rationally" (116). "Several observations can be made to indicate that other causal paths were more significant than groupthink" (112). He states that critics of the Bay of Pigs were invited by Kennedy to say their peace and were heard by the group but "simply

lacked ultimate persuasiveness" (113). For example, Senator Fulbright was invited by Kennedy to present his objections on April of 1961, thus rejecting Janis' insulation and dissenter theories. Janis later rebuked Etheredge's notions in his book, Crucial Decisions, by stating "if the members of Kennedy's inner circle did not know of the Mafia assassination component, it seems to me that one could hardly up – grade the rating of the quality of the group's decision to approve the Bay of Pigs invasion without knowing to what extent they took account of moral considerations and pragmatic issues such as the likelihood that the Mafia might sell out to Castro by telling him about the United States assassination plan (which they apparently did) and the risk that Castro might retaliate by arranging to assassinate Kennedy (which perhaps he did?) (172).

Janis firmly believes that Etheredge's observations are extremely ambiguous. As for Senator Fulbright's objection presentation, Etheredge fails to mention that the President did not open the floor for discussion of any of the points that he raised. Instead, a straw vote ensued; which in effect, is congruent with closed leadership, an antecedent of the groupthink characteristic.

PEARL HARBOR

"I'm afraid we have awaken a sleeping giant" (Tora! Tora! Tora!)

There were three main groups responsible for the defense of Pearl Harbor: The Navy and Army groups in Hawaii and the War Council in Washington. All of which assumed that the fleet was safe.

The events leading up to that fateful day could easily be noted as being one of the worst military disasters in American history. Symptoms of groupthink that contributed to the wishful thinking appeared to be a culprit that ensued the commanders in Hawaii during the weeks preceding the Japanese attack. In addition, there was a lack of vigilance on America's part that also led to the devastation. Collective wishful thinking elicited shared rationalizations among the staff officers. These rationalizations about the Japanese army seemed to be accepted within the government bureaucracy. This in effect contributed to the staff's stagnation to all of the previous warnings that should have prompted contingencies.

Admiral King, head of a military commission that conducted one of the inquiries, reported that at Pearl Harbor, "there was an unwarranted feeling of immunity from attack" (73). A familiar landmark on the road to military fiascoes, Janis maintains.

Janis frighteningly depicts, "the Japanese were able to drop their bombs at will on 96 American ships at anchor early that fatal Sunday morning in 1941. Four vessels, eight battleships and three cruisers sank or were severely damaged, killing more than 2000 men" (74). Conversely, military commanders in Hawaii were given a steady stream of warnings during the course of the year based on what MAGIC (an intelligence service that served as the key to practically all Japanese codes and ciphers) had relayed. "These messages gave an almost daylight picture of the mind of the Japanese government" (74).

Japan wanted to nullify the United States blockade that cut Japan off from supplies of oil, cotton, and other vital raw materials. Despite the likelihood of a counteraction, it was not believed that Japan would attempt such a surprise assault, moreover, the belief in more plausible "attacks could occupy in more remote places such as Britain and Dutch territories-Philippines, or Guam- not Pearl Harbor" (85).

Tom Brokaw narrated, *Pearl Harbor-A Legacy of Attack* on Memorial Day of 2001. He begins with stating that Yamamoto planned the attack. "It's astonishing that the attack and sinking of Japanese submarines an hour before the assault did not in fact alert the United States." The Japanese had a force of 30 ships, all of which utilized commercial routes. When an officer spotted a periscope coming out of the ocean he notified the skipper. Unfortunately, the skipper appeared to of had misunderstood the message, coupled by the fact that he looked in the wrong direction. Many instances appeared to have been misconstrued: a radio station was contacted three different times, in regards to the possible warnings, however, a new employee on watch said "not to worry", not to mention the confusion that dealt with the realism of a signed pact with Nazi Germany. In reality, the United States thought that the Japanese would go to the Dutch East Indies, again, why Pearl Harbor? Illusions that seem to infect the information – processing process, all to often lead a group to groupthink. Nonetheless, he concluded that the tragedy that ensued Pearl Harbor, "redefined the American spirit for the modern age".

Admiral Kimmel's advisors formed a cohesive ingroup and shared strong feelings of loyalty to their leader. Face-to-face contact was not limited to business meetings, that is, spending time together both off and on duty. The day before that attack Kimmel expressed his concerns and anxiety over the fleet's safety to his officers on staff. Reason being, there were worrisome signs indicating a possible attack *somewhere.* Invariably, according to Brownlow whom interviewed Kimmel and several members of the advisory group, Kimmel was reassured with statements such as "the Japanese could not possibly be able to proceed in force against Pearl Harbor when they have so much strength in their Asiatic operations" (127). Another had told him that nothing more needed to be done. "We finally decided, Brownlow said Kimmel recalled, "that what we had already done was still good and we would stick to it" (127). In fact, the night before the attack Kimmel voiced some of his concerns to his staff. His staff replied with statements such as "put your worries aside" (127). Subsequently ending the evening by heading off to Admiral Leary's dinner party, thus missing his final chance to provide protection for the fleet.

Janis brings up the point of a feeling the group held regarding the outgroup biases. "The Navy group assumed that the Japanese could do no better than the Americans could in launching aerial torpedoes. Probably it would of violated the Navy group's stereotyped view of the enemy as inferior to themselves to assume that the Japanese might develop a weapon superior to the ones possessed by the U.S. Navy"

(86). In reality, Japanese technological developments enabled their aircraft to actually sink ships in shallow water.

Lastly, pay attention to the brief exchange between Admiral Kimmel and Lieutenant Commander Layton "Somewhat perturbed by the loss of radio contact with Japanese aircraft carriers, Kimmel asked Layton on December 01 to check it out. The next day when discussing the carriers, he remarked jokingly, "what, you don't know where the carriers are?" "Do you mean to say that they could be rounding Diamond Head (at Honolulu) and you wouldn't even know it?" (87). Having relegated the Japanese threat to Hawaii to laughing matters, it inadvertently inclines that he would laugh at anyone who would think otherwise!

IN AND OUT OF KOREA:

The Truman administration attempted to occupy North Korea by authorizing General MacArthur's army to cross the 38th parallel. An action that emitted Communist China to take part in the War.

Political scientist, Alexander George pointed to factors such as "intelligence appraisals (of Chinese Communist intentions) did not challenge sharply or early enough the widespread euphoria and optimism within the administration" (48).

Members of the policy-making group headed by President Harry S. Truman, included Secretary of State Dean Acheson and four civilians in the Defense Department in addition to four Joint Chiefs of

Staff. More key members were also members of the National Security Council, but which met less frequently with President Truman.

Historians and political scientists seem to be in general agreement about the poor quality of the risky decision to authorize pursuit of the defeated North Korean army across the 38th parallel up to the border of Communist China. At the start of the War, U.S. policy had been to prevent the pro-Communist government of North Korea from conquering South Korea. The 'escalation' decision authorized a large-scale American military effort to restore peace and security via the United Nations. A decision backed with the intention to conquer all of North Korea so that the entire country could be placed under the control of the pro-American South Korean government.

After the Chinese Communists entered the war, just as they had repeatedly warned the U.S. they would do, Leckie, points out more disillusionment. In his book, The History of the Korean War, he quotes General Bradley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who summed up the disillusionment of American policymakers. "America, he said, was becoming embroiled in the wrong war at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy" (214). Leckie further mentions how the resolution was poorly planned, without taking any of the risks into account. Janis supports Leckie's disapproval of the plan by stating that "With scarcely any debate, the new aim of uniting Korea by military force was approved on October 07, 1950, in a UN resolution worded essentially as it had been hastily drafted by the U.S" (55).

Ignoring the possible risks seemed to be inherent within the plan itself. The Peking government had been waging a 'hate America' campaign in the Chinese press. In addition to explicit, blatant warnings stating if U.N. forces crossed the 38th parallel, China would send in troops to help the North Koreans, however, it was regarded as a bluff. Neustadt reports, "With the military opportunity before them and with diplomatic dangers out of sight, the men he (Truman) leaned on for advice saw little risk of any sort" (204).

Despite all the warnings and subsequent ones they were dismissed and the committee ascertained that now was the time to eradicate communism in North Korea; thus, recommending escalation of the seemingly defensive War to protect South Korea into a full blown War.

"It is astounding," DeRivera points out in his psychological study of the Korean War decisions, that the group of decision-makers did not correct each other's oversights but instead "supported each other's beliefs in a manner that increased risk-taking" (148).

An integral strategy was to pour new troops into Pusan and attempt to break out from North Korean vise. However, the Commander of the United Nations decided to land on the port of Seoul, at Inchon. The army, navy, and marines were horrified according to DeRiveria's interpretation. It appeared to be the worst place to land; enormous tides (second highest in the world, averaging 29ft), and poor space. Not to mention that daylight was essential for fighting due to the tides.

DeRiveria states, "Here we have an example of an man with a high

need to achieve, rejecting the moderate risks and pay-off of a landing at Kusan for the extreme risks and pay-off of a landing at Inchon- Here is a man, 70 years old, who not only rejected the conservative strategy of breaking out the Pusan perimeter, but also created a high risk and fought to get the troops and the support to carry it out" (150).

It was imperative that the island of Wolmi be captured in order to secure the invasion flanks. Unfortunately, this would take days, thus, eliminating any element of surprise. Demonstrating yet again, a final enhancement of risk.

Despite suggestions of landing in Kusan which was not only closer, but carried fewer natural obstacles, the Commander of the United Nations stated, ".....knew of all the drawbacks to Inchon; let me remind you [group] of Wolfe's success in attacking Quebec from an impossible position" (177). DeRiveria brought an untouchable statement to the table, whereupon he quotes the Commander's dramatic elaboration. "The navy has never let me down in the past and I am positive it will not let me down this time. I realize that Inchon is a 5,000-to-1 gamble, but I'll accept it. I am used to those odds." Then he paused, and his voice sank to a whisper as he said, "*We* shall land at Inchon, and *I* shall crush *them*" (177; italics added).

Secretary Acheson, whom Truman relied on most heavily for guidance, failed to say anything to him to rebuke the illusions created by General MacArthur's glib assurances that America would soon become the victor. Moreover, none of the other advisors would

contemplate the dangers because they were all "collaborating in an optimistic view of the situation" (148). Yet another theme for the tendency of cohesive groups to foster a shared illusion of invulnerability, which in turn inclines them to minimize risks. DeRiveria concludes that the group displayed a tendency of oversights and "supported each other's beliefs in a manner that increased risk-taking" (148).

"Evidently, Secretary of State Acheson had adopted the role of a self-appointed mindguard, making sure that Kennan and those who shared his critical views of the risks of provoking Communist China were always kept at a safe distance from the men who had the power to shape the United States policy in the Korean War" (Janis, 60).

Even in defeat, disillusionment prevailed. Truman had eluded to accepting Acheson's claim that the Soviet Union was the hidden enemy behind China's unexpected move.

VIETNAM WAR

"The escalation of the Vietnam War is frequently cited as the contemporary archetype of escalating commitment to a losing course of action. This policy fiasco, committed under the Johnson administration is an example of "injudicious commitment escalation in the absence of personal responsibility for the initial failing decision" (Whyte, 432). President Johnson's response of bombing North Vietnam acted as a catalyst to the deadly war escalation.

Escalation decisions were made regardless of sound warnings from virtually all of American allies, intelligence experts within the United States government, as well as leaders from the United Nations. In spite of influential persons providing warnings, the committee still ignored the immortality and adverse political consequences of their actions. Bill Moyers, a member of Johnson's in-group, admitted: "With but rare exceptions we always seemed to be calculating the short-term consequences of each alternative at every single step of the [policy-making] process, but not the long-term consequences. And with each succeeding short-range consequence we became more deeply a prisoner of the process." (Janis, 98). As stated earlier, groups sometimes use discussion to avoid making a decision rather than facilitate making a decision.

As Janis and Mann suggested, most people are reluctant and use tactics to avoid having to face the decision. Evidently, Moyer admitted to satisficing, where he and the other members knew that "although superior solutions to the problem existed, the "satisficer" is content with any alternative that surpasses the minimal cutoff point" (35).

Dire forecasts were ignored, according to Janis' report of the Pentagon Papers. "In the late fall of 1964, for example, the high hopes of President Johnson and his principal advisors that Operation Rolling Thunder would break the will of North Vietnam were evidently not diminished by the fact that the entire intelligence community, according to the Department of Defense study, "tended toward a pessimistic

view." About a year and a half later, the CIA repeatedly estimated that stepping up the bombing of North Vietnam's oil-storage facilities would not "cripple Communist military operations," and the policy makers were aware of this prediction. Instead of accepting it, however, they apparently accepted the optimistic estimates from the Pentagon" (106).

Henry Graff was a historian who was given the opportunity to interview President Johnson and his advisors during critical phases in Vietnam between 1965-1968, and is the author of The Tuesday Cabinet. Although most individual members of the inner circle were replaced before the Johnson administration came to an end, "its work was distinctively continuous because new men joined it only infrequently and always one at a time" (3). These instances should have easily upset cohesion. Janis brings up a strong point considering whether Johnson's inner circle was unified before the bonds of mutual friendship and loyalty; an essential precondition for the emergence of the groupthink syndrome. Similarly, Janis pointed out that "Johnson was an extraordinarily aggressive and insensitive leader, which leads us to wonder if perhaps the apparent unity of Johnson's in-group was simply superficial conformity and polite deference out of a sense of expediency, with each member inwardly feeling quite detached from the leader and perhaps from the group as a whole" (99). Conversely, those who overtly observed the administration maintained that the group was indeed cohesive. Perhaps Janis was relating to cohesion brought out of mutual

respect and sharing a common adversity. Evidently, the increase in group cohesiveness will have its adverse effects if it leads, as the groupthink hypothesis predicts, to an increase in concurrence-seeking at the expense of critical thinking seen within Johnson's Tuesday Lunch Group.

Political analyst, Daniel Ellsberg stunned the nation by turning in an article based out of the secret Pentagon Papers to *The New York Times,* an article that took an extreme position as to why the Vietnam War escalated. Ellsberg depicted the American Presidents and their advisors as stumbling into the Vietnam War during the 1950's and 1960's by taking one little step after another, without being aware of the deep quicksand lying ahead, thus challenging what he calls the "quagmire myth". In brief, America's Vietnam policy was largely determined by one fundamental political rule: "This is not a good year for this administration to lose Vietnam to Communism" (242-246).

The power backed this rule from insinuations that the Truman administration was subjected to by Senator Joseph McCarthy and other right-wing Republicans after General MacArthur was removed from command during the Korean War. Ellsberg states, "those right-wingers had tattooed on the skins of politicians and bureaucrats alike some vivid impressions of what could happen to a liberal administration that chanced to be in office the day a red flag rose over Saigon" (252).

Even with Johnson's new members, they too still experienced the effects of being exposed to strong pressures from the military

establishments. Nevertheless, these individuals who presided over their country's foreign policy, moved consistently in the direction of the military escalation.

An analysis by Thomson Jr. suggests that Johnson's administration involved a constant striving for homogeneous beliefs and judgments, subjecting them to conformity pressures. Those that openly questioned the escalation policy often heard: "I'm afraid he's losing his effectiveness". This "effectiveness trap" –the threat of being branded a 'has been' and losing access to the seats of power-inclines its victims to suppress or tone down their criticisms. (49).

More issues such as this are evident in Guthman's inference of Robert Kennedy. "However, he was convinced that if he raised his voice-a freshman Senator, 3 weeks in office-it would add substance to the stereotype of the ruthless power-seeker; worse, be interpreted as a personal attack on President Johnson, rekindling the public fight between them, rather than an honest disagreement on strategy. He remained silent, and it was for him, too, the beginning of a long period of escalation—of vexing sound of thoughts and self doubts" (319).

Regardless of the setbacks surrounding the Vietcong and United States bombing cessations, State Department official Chester Cooper, in his book The Lost Crusade, demonstrated a great deal of overoptimism in regards to American's Vietnam policy. This was manifested from 1964 up until the last several months of the Johnson Administration: "The optimistic predictions that flowered from time to

time…reflected genuinely held beliefs. While occasional doubts crossed the minds of some, perhaps all [senior policy-makers], the conviction that the war would end "soon" and favorably was clutched to the breast like a child's security blanket. Views to the contrary were not favorably received….We thought we could handle Vietnam without any noticeable effect on our economy or society…..

Because the war was likely to be over "soon," there was also a reluctance to make any substantial changes in the bureaucratic structure. There would be no special institutional arrangements for staffing the war, for implementing or following up decisions" (424).

Cooper goes on to mention the fumbled Marigold peace plan, suggesting that Johnson's in-group was adhering to a norm of being tough and belligerent. "Ceasing the bombing, even temporarily and even as a logical or necessary accompaniment to a diplomatic initiative was regarded as an American admission of weakness and failure" (432-433). The Hanoi bombings had left an insatiable effect of distrust within the United State's allies, evoking an outcry of protest and recriminations among governments and civilians alike. Just one month prior to the bombings, President Johnson promised a 'declaration of peace'. This appeared to truly hurt his credibility and thus continued to haunt him throughout his administration.

In 1988, researcher D.M. Barrett presented a paper on the escalation of the Vietnam War. He took an extreme position that groupthink did not enter into the process at all. His rationale is that

President Johnson willingly received "wide ranging opinions from significant advisors about whether or not to intensify America's military role in Vietnam" (1), refuting insulation. For example, Barrett states that Senator Russell, one of Johnson's "personal intimates", who gave opposing advice, "lamented to friends that McNamara.... seemed to exercise some hypnotic influence over the President" (22). Thus, prompting casual factors such as dispositional, influential aspects not necessarily rooted from groupthink.

Counterpoint

A prime example of effective decision - making was made during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. The policy – making group included most of the key members involved in the Bay of Pigs fiasco. However, this time around they displayed few symptoms of groupthink, thus, counteracting the phenomenon and functioned in a more effective manner.

Evidently, Soviet Union missiles armed with nuclear warheads were arranged to be installed in Cuba by Castro's regime. United States military intelligence experts estimated that the installations represented about one – third of the Soviet Union's entire atomic warhead potential. If fired at the United States, the missiles might kill about 80 million Americans. The CIA had received reports from agents in Cuba that the Soviets were merely reinforcing the Cuban air defense system. In Janis's earlier book, Victims of Groupthink, he asserts that

is "shared consensus, as unwarranted as the consensus about Castro's weakness that had evolved before the Bay of Pigs invasion, evidently kept the Kennedy administration from taking the initial warning signs seriously (133). A United States U – 2 plane flying over Cuba discovered via photographs, the ominous layout. For example, a launching pad and an offensive missile lying on the ground, thus indicating the quick tempo of Soviet activity. After the President's concerned initial briefing to the committee, the latter information fueled thirteen days of crucial decision – making.

What is relevant is the fact that the President let the Executive Committee decide to get rid of the missile threat. "The decision – makers (1) thoroughly canvassed a wide range of alternative courses of action; (2) surveyed the objectives and the values implicated; (3) carefully weighed the costs, drawbacks, and subtle risks of negative consequences, as well as the positive consequences, that could flow from what initially seemed the most advantageous courses of action; (4) continuously searched for relevant information for evaluating the policy alternatives; (5) conscientiously took account of the information and the expert judgements to which they were exposed, even when the information or judgements did not support the course of action they initially preferred; (6) reexamined the positive and negative consequences of all the main alternatives, including those originally considered unacceptable, before making a final choice; and (7) made detailed provisions for executing the chosen course of action, with

special attention to contingency plans that might be required if various known risks were to materialize" (136). Therefore, one is led to conclude that this policy – making group met all the major criteria of "sound, good quality decision – making" (138).

Many alternatives were discussed, for example, the committee's first choice was to threaten or arrive at a massive air strike. The committee took into account that this verbal threat may back – fire via escalation of a nuclear war. Instead, a more conservative approach was taken, and a naval blockade was instituted. This route allowed a more gradual escalation, and as Janis quotes McNamara, "the action would serve as a non - humiliating warning and would still maintain the options" (138). Subsequent warnings, not ultimatums, continued throughout those thirteen days until the crisis was finally resolved on October 28, when the Soviet leaders agreed to remove the missiles in exchange for assurances that the United States would not invade Cuba.

In Sorenson's book, Kennedy, he mentions that on the fourth day of the meetings, "The President was impatient and discouraged. He was counting on the Attorney General and me, he said, to pull the group together quickly – otherwise more dissensions and delay would plague whatever decision he took. He wanted to act soon" (780). When the consensus did not occur that day Sorenson departed from his usual conduct at these meetings and tried to push the members toward a unified response telling them "that we are not serving the President well, and that my recently healed ulcer didn't like it much either" (780).

Despite the disagreements the group resisted strong pressures to develop consensus, a pressure that is often observed in groupthink tendencies. Illusions of invulnerability were not shared, the absence of oversimplifying the foreign policy issue could easily been due to the recent Bay of Pigs misfortune, compounded by the threat of nuclear devastation.

Irving Janis notes four procedural changes that took place during this national security threat. These changes promoted independent thinking by curtailing the adverse influence of groupthink. The members were expected to function as critical thinkers. For example, Robert Kennedy deliberately became the devil's advocate. Janis asserts, "the two men with whom the President trusted the most-his brother Robert Kennedy and Theodore Sorensen, were given a special role. As intellectual watchdogs, these two men were told to pursue relentlessly every bone of contention in order to prevent errors arising form too superficial an analysis of the issues" (141).

Secondly, there were changes in the group's atmosphere. There was no formal agenda imposed on the group. Experts broadened the scope of information, and new advisors were brought in periodically. Futhermore, subgroups were devised to further create critical thinking.

Edgar Abel's book, The Missile Crisis, mentions an account regarding leaderless sessions, specifically addressing the hypothesis of this experiment. He begins with Robert Kennedy's strong advocacy in

his brother's resolve to allow some sessions to be leaderless: "I felt there was less true give and take with the President in the room. There was the danger that by indicating his own view and leanings, he would cause others just to fall in line" (60). When the President was absent, either Secretary Rusk or Robert Kennedy chaired the meeting, "but each of these men seemed aware that he should not try to direct the group or attempt to replace the President as the most influential voice in the group" (58). Kennedy's deliberate absence, particularly during the preliminary meetings, allowed the committee to discuss unbiased, free-range alternatives. Thus fostering a non-directive, or open style of leadership that counteracts the groupthink tendency.

Often at times, as mentioned in the introduction, the risky initial leanings seen in decision – making tend to polarize the decision to more risky endeavors. For example, Abel states, "Adlai Stevenson, who spoke with the President on the first day, was disturbed to hear the President tell him, "we'll have to do something quickly. I suppose the alternatives are to go in the air and wipe them out or take other steps to render the weapons inoperable" (36). If the President had presented his initial position forcefully, the group members might have conceptualized their task as deciding which type of air assault to recommend – the limited surgical strikes favored by the President or the more extensive air assaults favored by the Joint Chiefs – without giving much consideration to any of the less drastic or less dangerous options. Sorenson commented on the President's need to canvass alternatives

instead of inducing the group at the opening session to focus on the air – strike, in which he favored. "Action was imperative" (761), Kennedy stated, but he wanted the members to devote themselves to making "a prompt and intensive survey of the dangers and all possible courses of action" (761).

One can easily begin to see the benefits of impartial leadership. Sorenson recalled, "one of the remarkable aspects of those meetings was a sense of complete equality……I participated much more freely than I ever had in an NSC [National Security Council] meeting; and the absence of the President encouraged everyone to speak his mind" (765).

"The participants were keenly aware of the enormous risks they were taking; they repeatedly acknowledged all the uncertainties and dire contingencies that could arise from a military confrontation with the Soviet Union. This time there were none of the illusions of safety that the White House group had shared while planning the Bay of Pigs invasion, no comfortable rationalizations that minimized the dangers, no shared myths about the invulnerability of the group or of the nation" (Janis, 147).

Phillip Tetlock describes the tendency of organizational decision makers to adopt the position that is likely to gain the favor of those powerholders to whom they feel accountable. He refers to this coping strategy as the "acceptability heuristic". His account of how, when, and why this heuristic is used is similar to Janis' account of the "avoid punishment" rule. There is however, a noticeable difference. Tetlock

asserts that the acceptability heuristic is "limited to settings in which one can discern relatively quick the expectations of the constituencies to whom one is accountable" (314). When it is not obvious what the socially acceptable position is, according to Tetlock, organizational decision makers will tend to use "vigilant information processing.....to identify the most defensible policy" (310). When this occurs, the decision makers use "more complex judgement and decision strategies" and consider arguments and evidence on both sides of the issues in order to prepare themselves for a wide variety of possible critical reactions to their view" (315).

In 1986, researchers, Hensley and Griffin wanted to identify shortcomings of the groupthink model. In doing so, they explored the 1977 Kent State University's Board of Trustees decision to build a gymnasium where students were once killed. The missing symptom according to the researchers "appeared to be the failure to extend the time period for reaching a decision" (528). On several occasions, the trustee majority refused to postpone decisions in order to gain time to discuss matters with various groups to explore alternative courses of action. This notion is congruous to President Kennedy and his advisors to accomplish this in the Cuban Missile Crisis, an important factor in the successful outcome of that situation and the failure to do so was associated with the aforementioned fiascos.

The authors suggest as one of the implications of their study was that the quality of policymaking could be improved by changing the

way group members are selected: The premise of the study may suggest
by interpretation the variable of gender and its applicability to the
intricacies of groupthink.

The current procedure for selecting members to a university's
board of trustees in Ohio and many other states virtually assures that
the members will be somewhat cohesive and well-insulated from
outside sources of opinion and information, two important antecedent
conditions of groupthink. "Current procedures give a governor
virtually unchecked authority to select trustees, and this has meant that
trustees overwhelmingly have been upper – socioeconomic – class
white males. A more diverse representation of groups on a trustee
board is clearly needed in order that the divergent perspectives of
students, faculty, and other groups in society can more faithfully be
reflected in discussions and decisions" (529-30).

Do superior policymakers differ to a substantial degree from the
vast majority of others in comparable decision - making roles in their
ability to get to the heart of a problem intuitively, and to look ahead
toward good moves that will put them on the right track toward a
superb solution? Kennedy's open leadership style sheds light on this
inquiry, specifically, the steps taken during the Cuban Missile Crisis.
Was he better able to generate viable alternatives by having available
an instance (Bay of Pigs) to draw upon when making judgements of
pros and cons of alternative courses of action?

Another alternative to better aid in effective decision - making would be for a leader to perform a quick analysis, as constructed by researchers Behn and Vaupel. Diagrams could show crisis managers in schematic form the decision alternatives and their probable consequences with some indications of probability estimates for each of the possible outcomes. As the researchers point out in their book on how to construct and use decision trees, "decision 'saplings' (simple decision trees with only a few branches)....can help even lead time [for making a decision] is very short. Intuition still plays an important role, as it does in any decision, but it can be aided and focused by using a simple decision sapling to generate one's analytical, intuitive energies on the essence of the dilemma" (6). In addition, when reaching the end of deliberations and settling upon a consensus, an alternative diagnostic course, it is recommended that when the "persisting symptom is either failure to reconsider originally rejected alternatives or failure to examine some major costs and risks of the preferred choice, arrange for the group to construct a decisional balance sheet, which requires listing all the known pros and cons for each alternative that has been considered" (262).

In his last book, Crucial Decisions, Irving Janis outlined steps he believed would counteract tendencies toward groupthink, therefore, creating a higher quality decision – making process. This exploration of open mindedness includes "the assignment of critical evaluators, arranging or sufficient time, encouraging diversity of discussion with others, invite experts, assigning devil's advocates, creation of subgroups, and to hold a

second chance meeting (247-248). In fact, such processes were seen to an extent and consisted of a comprehensive and detailed program for supplying American funds to aid European recovery in 1947; the making of the Marshall Plan. Another successful journey expounding proof within the quality of the decision – making process.

In summary, the review began with an outline of the general information – processing process, then began to delve deeper into characteristics of decision – making, both positively and negatively. Subsequently, variables of interest were highlighted, displaying empirical evidence both advocating and otherwise. The variables show the importance of further research and the strong impact of gender and leadership styles in thwarting groupthink tendencies. The rationale for such a statement is simply put, the evidence was presented in support of and in opposition to gender and leadership differences, effecting policy makers that may lead to groupthink fiascoes. Finally historical accounts regarding foreign policy provided horrific examples of the consequences of faulty decision - making, and the severity of finding the best means to reaching a prolific decision.

Given the literature presented, it has stressed the importance of a possible new groupthink symptom (gender) and emphasized leadership variances in making crucial decisions. This establishment infers to some extent that the aforementioned variables of interest play a significant role in decision making. One can then deduce and hypothesize that leadership style impacts groupthink, in addition to the role of gender and its applicability to be considered as a new symptom of the groupthink phenomenon.

Chapter III

Research Methodology

<u>Participants</u>

The participants were volunteer graduate and undergraduate students from Boston University and Merrimack Community College in the state of Massachusetts. A total of 120 students completed the questionnaire, sixty – one females [50.8%] and fifty – nine males [49.2%]. All participants completed the questionnaires and satisfied what would constitute as being a member of a group for this particular study, thus fulfilling the researchers desired data collecting goal. Overall, the mean age of the cases was 23.5. The minimum age for the participants was eighteen, maximum thirty – eight. The targeted students whom volunteered predominately majored in business, psychology, or political science. The groups were picked randomly, however the researcher tried to recruit an equal number of males as females. It was not stressed that the groups be two males and two females, although the researcher did not want same gender groups due to the interest of gender acting as a possible antecedent to groupthink. For the purpose of this study, group members were given role sheets in which each person in the four – person group would randomly assign themselves to the four available roles. These roles enabled them to portray themselves as holding upper – level positions. Thus, acting as members of a committee who had to reach a

decision, a committee whose imminent decision touched on both the corporate setting as well as their nations foreign policy. The students had no known prior knowledge of this study, nor were they familiar with the research instruments.

Instrument

There were three research instruments used in this study. The first instrument (Appendix A) was the introduction created by the researcher that would assign the groups to either a nondisclosure (Groups 1 – 15) or a disclosure (Groups 16 – 30) condition. Once groups were formed the researcher, whom also acted in the experiment as the President (leader), would briefly state the facts to the members and let them know what time was allotted to reach their decision. In the nondisclosure condition the researcher did not state her position in what she thought needed to happen, basically suggesting nothing and encouraging the group to brainstorm and come up with what that thought needed to be done in order to reach a decision. Conversely, the leader stated her position for groups that fell into the disclosure conditions, stating the preferred solution, without subsequently encouraging divergent viewpoints. Specifically, stressing the group to take the assumed most rewarding outcome, which is also the riskier option. Next, the participants were presented with the second instrument, a scenario (Appendix B). Each member of the groups, across both conditions, was presented with a dilemma that required a possible risk – taking decision to be made. A dilemma that encompassed foreign policy as well as their company's

employees, and stakeholders future. In the latter half of the scenario roles were provided for each of the four members indicating known facts to further aid in the group discussion. The third instrument served as an answer sheet, as seen in Appendix C. Here participants were asked demographic questions pertaining to age, ethnicity, major, year in school, and political party preference. Finally, the participants were asked to briefly describe what route to take and were then asked to individually rank six questions after the group decision had been sealed. The researcher designed the questions, in addition to the scenario. Each of the questions is rated on a seven point Likert scale, for example, "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

The questionnaire assumes that group members are making an important decision that is affected by leadership style as well as the facets of risk involved. It suggests that group problem – solving strategies can be characterized in terms of the antecedents to groupthink as identified by Irving Janis. The scenario demonstrates a fictitious committee that need to come up with a solution that will affect the lives of many. (A similar scenario developed by Flowers in 1977 inspired the researcher's scope of data collection). Specifically, each of the questions developed by the researcher highlight the variables of interest. Each question in light of gender, and including the disclosure conditions, represent the variables of interest. These include: 1.) Leadership Issues: Freedom to express personal viewpoints, utilization of presenting facts on role sheet to group

during discussion prior to reaching solution, and ranking the leaders

influence on the group's decision.   2.) Level of Risk: Probability/odds

that the company's expenditure will prove to be financially and ethically

sound, feeling of personal responsibility for the decision, and

polarization; initial leaning of the group's decision (conservative or

risky).

Procedures

The scenario and the questionnaires were administered to the

students in their classroom if permitting, or in a nearby classroom, shortly

before or after their regularly scheduled class. The leader assigned

conditions to the group and a brief explanation of the test was given;

however, the purpose of the study was not revealed at this time. Students

were noted to each pick out a role for themselves. To ensure

confidentiality, students were not required to record their names.

Questionnaires were identified for analysis by an Identification Number,

for example, male = 1, female = 2. In the subsequent questions, options

were provided and coded when asked to record age, ethnicity, major, year

in school, and political party. After making the group decision from the

scenario, each member of the group was to individually rank the six

questions. These questions surrounded a problem, which fulfilled certain

criteria common to those studied by Janis. For example, the scenario

consisted of morality, controversy, competition of an outside group, and

leadership conditions. Value labels also coded these questions. All of the

students completed the questionnaires in approximately a half an hour.

Immediately after collection of the questionnaires, a short debriefing was held. At this time, the purpose of the study was discussed, and students were thanked for their participation. If interested, students and professors were asked to write down their phone numbers or email addresses to be informed of the results of the study.

Data Analysis

The experiment was a 2 x 2 factorial design. This was an experimental study, with gender and disclosure as the independent variables and the six questionnaire scores as the dependent variables. Reading and scoring of the questionnaires was completed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, (SPSS 9.0). Microsoft Office's Excel created several charts and tables. The groups, male and female, as well as the nondisclosure and disclosure conditions were compared in terms of their mean scores by a two – way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The significance level was set at .05.

The responses were coded according to the value set they represent. Frequencies and descriptive statistics were tabulated for each of the variables, and layered crosstabulations were assessed.

RESULTS

None of the questionnaires were rejected. The resulting sample included 120 participants, sixty – one females and fifty – nine males. There were thirty groups in the study, fifteen in the disclosure condition and fifteen in the nondisclosure condition. The sample pool's demographics in Table three are as follows:

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Variance
AGE	120	18.00	38.00	23.5167	3.9662	15.731
ETHNIC	120	1.00	5.00	2.8833	.8810	.776
MAJOR	120	1.00	4.00	2.2750	1.0122	1.025
STATUS	120	1.00	5.00	3.9417	1.2589	1.585
PARTY	120	1.00	4.00	1.4583	.6723	.452
Valid N (listwise)	120					

Table 4 contains the frequencies and displays medians for the age variable.

Table 4

Boxplot of Age Variable

93
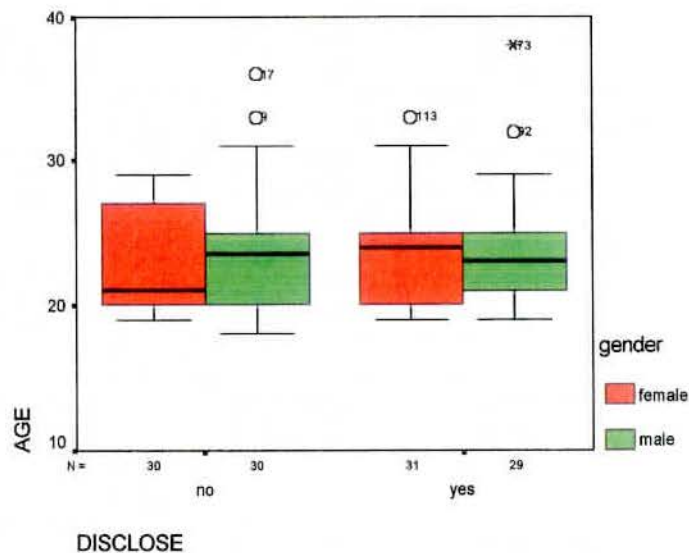
Figure 5 represents the frequencies for freedom of expressing viewpoints

and displays the medians for males and females in disclosure conditions.

Figure 5

Boxplot for Freedom of Expressing Viewpoints variable
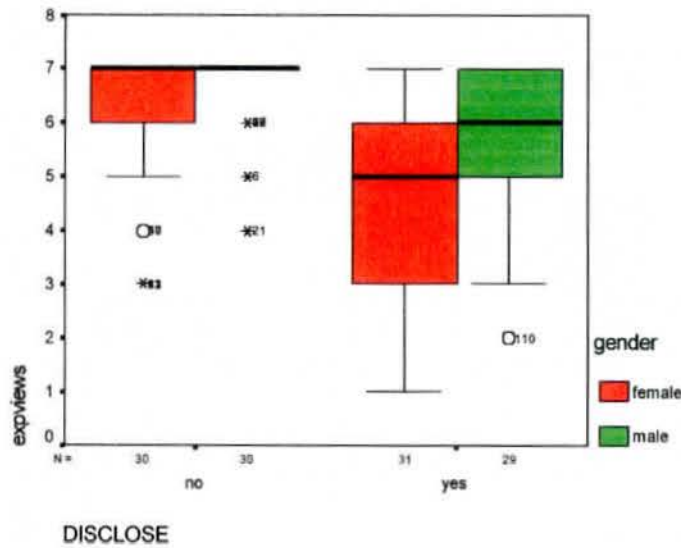
Figure 6 represents the frequencies for probability of a sound decision

and displays the median for males and females in disclosure conditions.

Figure 6

Boxplot for Probability/Odds of Making a Sound Decision variable
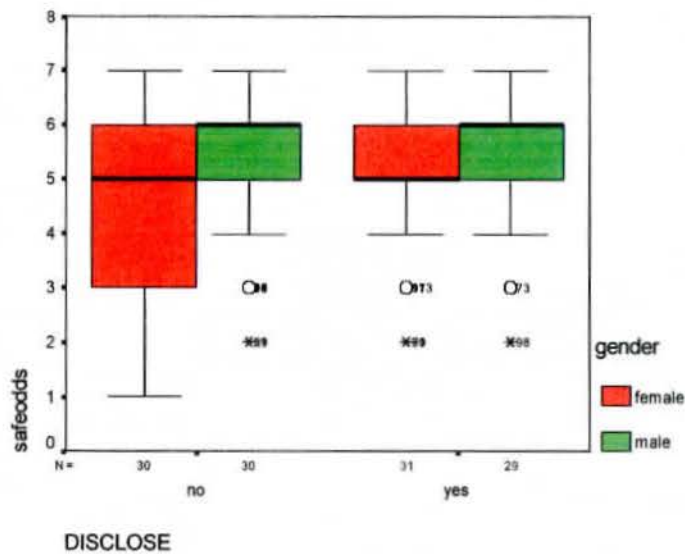
Figure 7 represents frequencies for discussing facts on role sheet

and displays the median for gender in disclosure conditions.

Figure 7

Boxplot for Discussing Role Sheet Facts Prior to Decision variable
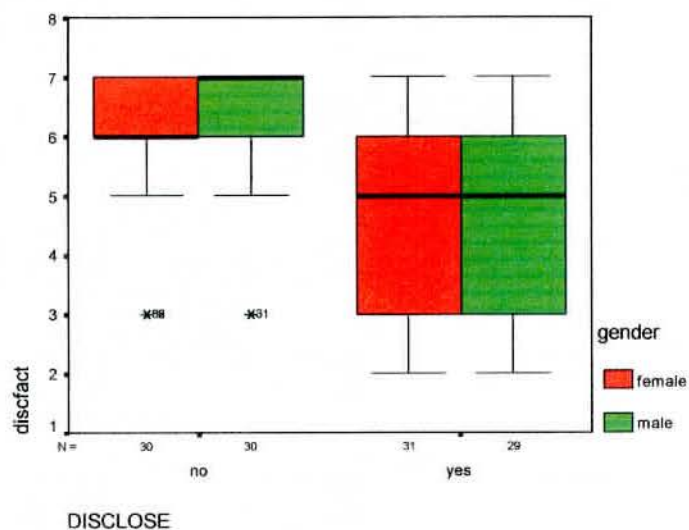
Figure 8 represents the frequencies for feelings of responsibility and

displays the median for males and females in disclosure conditions.

Figure 8

Boxplot for Feelings of Personal Responsibility for Decision variable
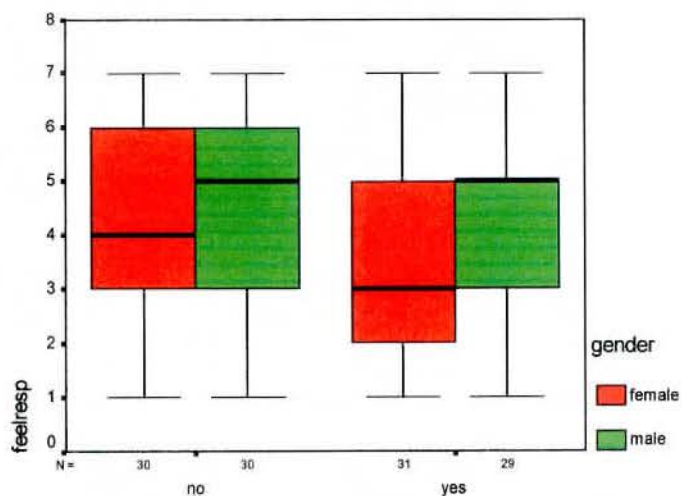
Figure 9 represents the frequencies for the leader's influence and

displays the medians for males and females in disclosure conditions

Figure 9

Boxplot for Leader's Influence on the Group Discussion
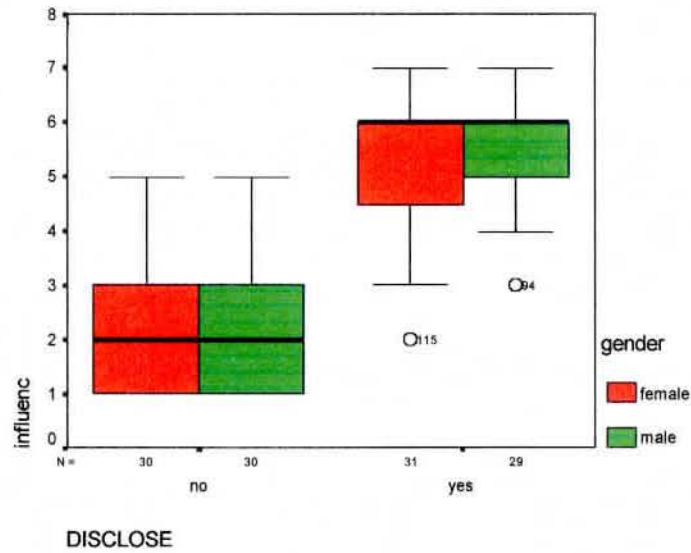
Figure 10 represents the frequencies for the discussion's initial

leaning and displays medians for gender in disclosure conditions.

Figure 10

Boxplot for Initial Leaning of Discussion; Polarization variable
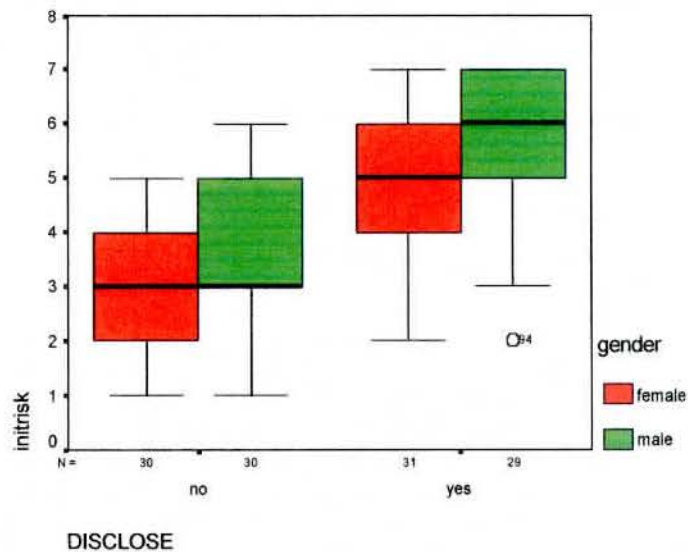
Here one can see how frequently the possible responses occur,
done in descending counts. The average age overall was 23 years old.
25% of the cases are 20 years old or younger, 25% are between 20 and 23,
25% are between 23 and 26, and 25% are 26 or older.

In looking at the relationship between variables, a crosstabulation
was used. The procedure tabulated the different combinations of values
for each of the six questionnaire variables under the disclosure
conditions. In addition, gender was identified to obtain separate
crosstabulations for men and women, see Appendix D for layered
crosstabulations.

A two – way analysis of variance was utilized for testing
hypotheses about the values for the questionnaire variables. The
independent variables of gender as well as the disclosure conditions were
used for the analysis. Futhermore, a gender – by – disclosure interaction
was used. Table 4 represents the between – subjects factors that served
as the object of evaluations for the subsequent diagrams. The diagrams
contain the two – way ANOVA'S seen via charts and accompanied by
tables to better see how much the sample means varied, by analyzing the
seven options each question provided. N = 120

Table 4

Between-Subjects Factors

		N
gender	female	61
	male	59
DISCLOSE	no	60
	yes	60

Table 5 represents a two – way analysis of variance for leadership

influence between males and females in disclosure conditions.

Table 5

Two – Way ANOVA of the Leadership Influence Variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: influenc

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	348.910[a]	3	116.303	84.448	.000
Intercept	1765.184	1	1765.184	1281.709	.000
GENDER	1.425	1	1.425	1.034	.311
DISCLOSE	347.863	1	347.863	252.585	.000
GENDER * DISCLOSE	.687	1	.687	.498	.482
Error	159.757	116	1.377		
Total	2272.000	120			
Corrected Total	508.667	119			

a. R Squared = .686 (Adjusted R Squared = .678)

Figure *5a* represents means for gender in disclosure conditions under the following variable:

Figure *5a*

Influential Leadership Perceptions

	Nondisclosure		Disclosure
Female	2.1		5.3548
Male	2.1667		5.7241
Total	2.1333		5.5333
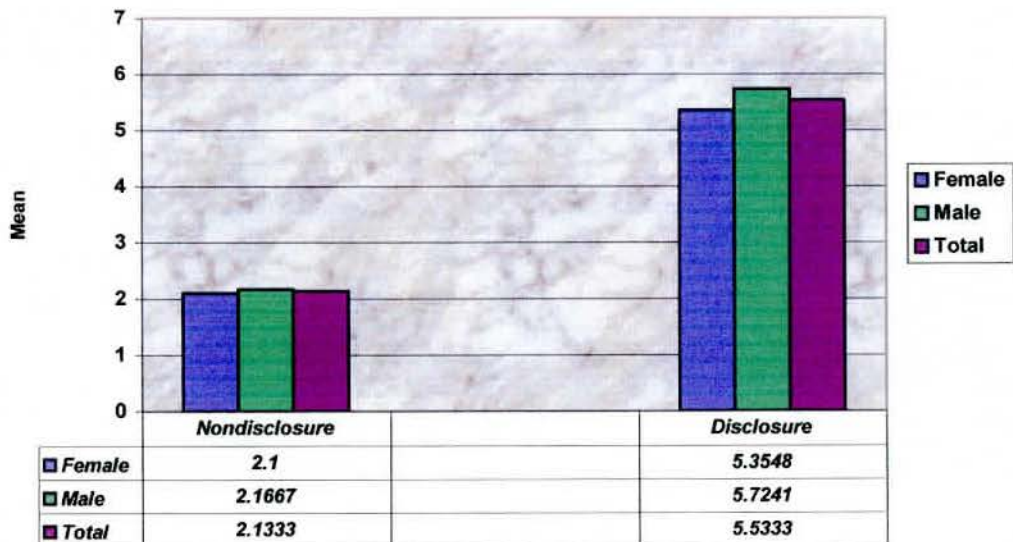
Table 6 represents a two – way analysis of variance for freedom of

expressing viewpoints variable between gender in disclosure conditions

Table 6

Two - Way ANOVA of Freedom of Expressing Viewpoints Variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: expviews

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	54.791[a]	3	18.264	9.436	.000
Intercept	4079.326	1	4079.326	2107.486	.000
GENDER	14.364	1	14.364	7.421	.007
DISCLOSE	38.681	1	38.681	19.984	.000
GENDER * DISCLOSE	.756	1	.756	.391	.533
Error	224.534	116	1.936		
Total	4351.000	120			
Corrected Total	279.325	119			

a. R Squared = .196 (Adjusted R Squared = .175)

Figure *6a* represents means for gender in disclosure conditions under the following variable:

Figure *6a*

Freedom of Expressing Viewpoints

	Nondisclosure		Disclosure
Female	6.1333		4.8387
Male	6.6667		5.6897
Total	6.4		5.25

Table 7 represents a two – way analysis of variance for feelings of responsibility

for the decision between males and females under disclosure conditions

Table 7

Two – Way ANOVA of Feelings of Responsibility Variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: feelresp

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	15.832[a]	3	5.277	1.752	.160
Intercept	2067.979	1	2067.979	686.431	.000
GENDER	6.426	1	6.426	2.133	.147
DISCLOSE	8.373	1	8.373	2.779	.098
GENDER * DISCLOSE	.871	1	.871	.289	.592
Error	349.468	116	3.013		
Total	2432.000	120			
Corrected Total	365.300	119			

a. R Squared = .043 (Adjusted R Squared = .019)

Figure *7a* represents means for gender in disclosure conditions for the following variable:

Table *7a*

Feelings of Responsibility

	Nondisclosure		Disclosure
Female	4.1		3.7419
Male	4.7333		4.0345
Total	4.4167		3.8833

Table 8 represents a two – way analysis of variance for discussing facts on

role sheet prior to decision between gender under disclosure conditions.

Table 8

Two – Way ANOVA for Discussion of Facts Variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: discfact

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	56.154[a]	3	18.718	10.098	.000
Intercept	3519.057	1	3519.057	1898.544	.000
GENDER	1.518	1	1.518	.819	.367
DISCLOSE	53.281	1	53.281	28.746	.000
GENDER * DISCLOSE	1.301	1	1.301	.702	.404
Error	215.012	116	1.854		
Total	3792.000	120			
Corrected Total	271.167	119			

a. R Squared = .207 (Adjusted R Squared = .187)

Figure *8a* represents means of gender in disclosure conditions for the following variable:

Figure *8a*

Prior Factual Group Discussion

	Nondisclosure		Disclosure
Female	5.8667		4.7419
Male	6.3		4.7586
Total	6.0833		4.75
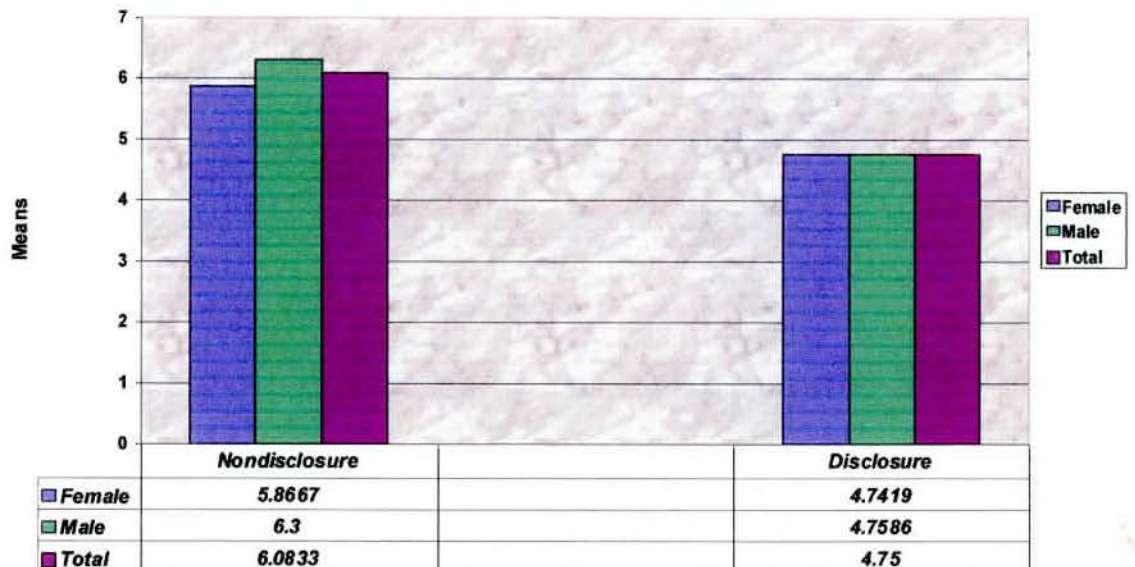
Table 9 represents a two – way analysis of variance for the odds of making an

ethically and financially sound decision for gender under disclosure conditions.

Table 9

Two – Way ANOVA for Probability/Odds of Sound Decision Variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: safeodds

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	18.438[a]	3	6.146	2.783	.044
Intercept	3236.733	1	3236.733	1465.764	.000
GENDER	9.579	1	9.579	4.338	.039
DISCLOSE	8.210	1	8.210	3.718	.056
GENDER * DISCLOSE	.847	1	.847	.384	.537
Error	256.154	116	2.208		
Total	3509.000	120			
Corrected Total	274.592	119			

a. R Squared = .067 (Adjusted R Squared = .043)

Figure *9a* represents means for gender in disclosure conditions for the following variable:

Figure *9a*

Probability/Odds of Sound Decision

	Nondisclosure		Disclosure	
Female	4.5667		5.2581	
Male	5.3		5.6552	
Total	4.9333		5.45	
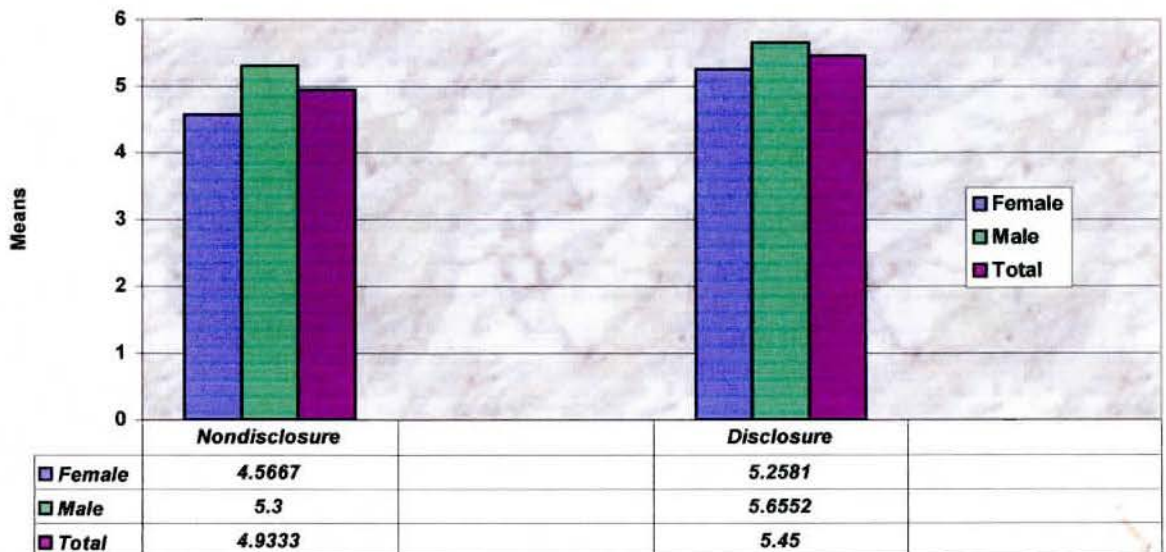
Table 10 represents a two – way analysis of variance for the initial leaning of

group discussion variable between gender in disclosure conditions.

Table 10

Two – Way ANOVA for Initial Leaning / Risk; Polarization Variable

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Dependent Variable: initrisk

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	154.550^a	3	51.517	27.998	.000
Intercept	2163.933	1	2163.933	1176.044	.000
GENDER	15.874	1	15.874	8.627	.004
DISCLOSE	140.154	1	140.154	76.170	.000
GENDER * DISCLOSE	9.776E-04	1	9.776E-04	.001	.982
Error	213.441	116	1.840		
Total	2527.000	120			
Corrected Total	367.992	119			

a. R Squared = .420 (Adjusted R Squared = .405)

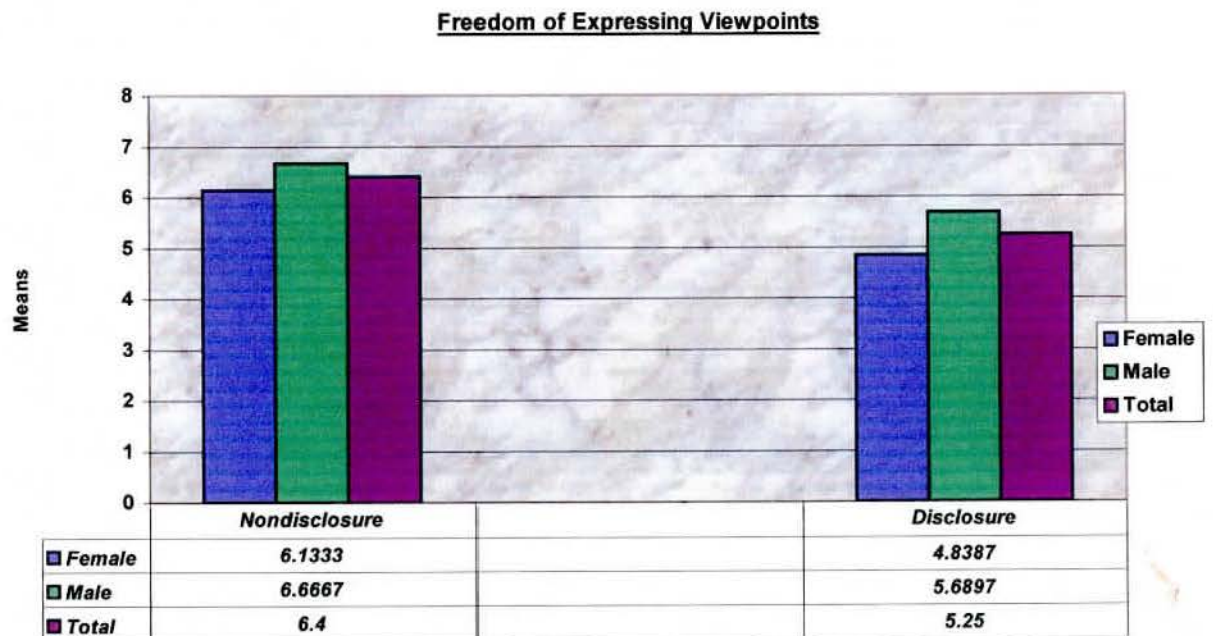Figure *10a* represents means of gender in disclosure conditions for the following variable:

Figure *10a*

Initial Leaning; Polarization

	Nondisclosure		Disclosure
Female	2.8		4.9677
Male	3.5333		5.6897
Total	3.1667		5.3167
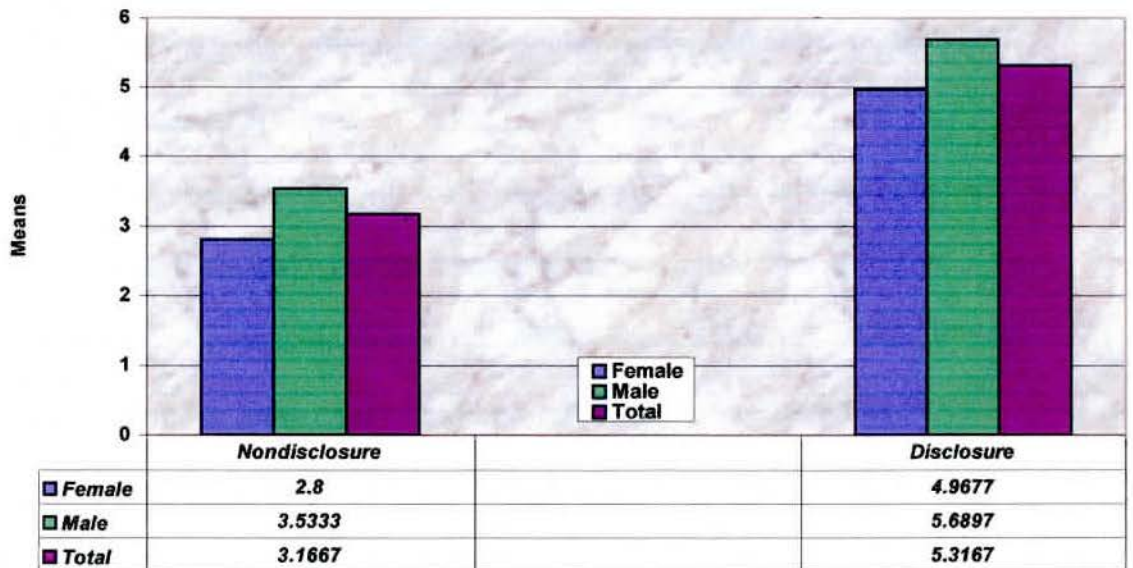
Chapter V.

Discussion

The preceding chapter revealed interesting information about the pool of participants. A condensed explanation of data is as follows. The majority of the sample pool was Caucasian, undergraduates, who majored in business and prefer the democratic party. All of which ranged from 18-38 years of age.

Overall, the most frequent responses are displayed on the median charts, (where 1 is least agreed or felt and ascends to 7, where it is strongly felt or agreed upon) located on Charts 1 – 7. (p. 93 – 96). The median for the freedom to express viewpoints was agreed upon (6). The median for the probability/odds of reaching a decision that is both financially and ethically sound was agreed upon (6). The median for discussing facts on the role sheet prior to reaching a solution was agreed upon (6). The median for feeling personally responsible for the group's decision was a perceived feeling of being somewhat responsible (5). The median for the leader influencing the group's decision was a feeling of uncertainty (4). As for the initial leaning of the group's discussion being either risky or conservative, the median was uncertainty (4).

Appendix D examines the different combinations of values for each of the six questionnaire variables under the disclosure conditions. In addition, to further investigate the gender variable, it is used to obtain separate crosstabulations for men and women. Overall, males appeared to have more freedom in expressing viewpoints, however, 12.9% of females disagreed under disclosure conditions as opposed to 3.4% of males disagreeing in the nondisclosure condition. Males and females strongly agreed with greater intensity under nondisclosure than in

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disclosure males in nondisclosure tallied 76.7%, and 31.0% in disclosure; females in nondisclosure tallied 66.7%, and 19.4% in disclosure. None of the males strongly disagreed.

Regardless of gender, participants felt more unsure of the odds under the disclosure condition. 37.3% of males agreed under both conditions of their decision being both ethically and financially sound. 23.7% strongly disagreed, whereas 6.7% of females strongly agreed under the nondisclosure condition. None of the males strongly disagreed.

Overall, for the variable of discussing facts on the role sheet, one male participant under the nondisclosure condition felt the only case of uncertainty. A significant 30% of females in the nondisclosure condition felt facts were discussed in contrast to 9.7% in the disclosure condition. An even more startling revelation was for males, where 56.7% strongly agreed under the nondisclosure condition, with a mere 3.4% under the disclosure condition. None of the participants strongly disagreed.

None of the males felt any uncertainty as to claiming personal responsibility, whereas females felt more "somewhat responsible" under the disclosure condition (19.4%) than in the nondisclosure condition (13.3%). The opposite was seen for the males. Males felt somewhat responsible more so under the nondisclosure condition. Percentages for both male and female were similar for the remaining options (opposite ends of the continuum) regardless of condition.

A lot of similarities across conditions for the variable of leadership occurred. The strongest responses under disclosure displayed 58.6% for males who felt the leader influenced the group, and 32.3% for females. However none

of the males or females in the nondisclosure condition ranked the leader as being influential or most influential. Instead, higher rankings fell under least influential, or hardly influencing the group. Females were extremely conservative, 16.7% under nondisclosure and 6.7% for males in nondisclosure. In contrast, regardless of gender, no one was extremely conservative under the disclosure condition. None of the males were extremely risky under nondisclosure. Women were more conservative under nondisclosure conditions, and are not as extremely risky under disclosure conditions as males were; 37.9% as opposed to females 6.5%.

The reason for using questionnaires in this study was to examine quality decision making of males and females whom are influenced by open (nondirective) and closed (directive) leadership styles. There were elements of risk which were needed to fulfill the reasoning behind the study, see Appendix B, The Scenario. The questionnaires accomplish this task using indices explained earlier with respect to the analyzed data. The desired analysis was used via two – way ANOVA's. As Table 5 demonstrates, for the leadership influence variable, one can see that there is no gender – by – disclosure interaction. In fact, gender alone is not statistically significant, males and females are similar. However, there is significance in the disclosure conditions (F = 252.585, p = .000) as demonstrated in Figure 5a. The means (2.1333 versus 5.5333) in the nondisclosure condition greatly exceed the means in the disclosure condition.

Although there was no gender – by – disclosure interaction, Table 6 suggests that gender and disclosure proved to be statistically significant. Gender (F = 7.421, p = .007) and disclosure conditions (F = 19.984, p = .000). Overall, as seen in Figure 6a, more freedom of expressing viewpoints was felt

under the nondisclosure condition. Males were much more apt to express viewpoints throughout the discussion under both conditions.

Table 7 represents the two – way ANOVA for feelings of responsibility variable. Despite the absence of a gender – by – disclosure interaction, disclosure conditions came close to reaching significance ($F = 2.779$, $p = .098$) for disclosure conditions, and nearly reached significance for gender, ($F = 2.133$, $p = .147$). Figure 7a demonstrates the means for the variable, while there are slight differences for females across conditions, there are greater differences for males across conditions. An interesting find is that both males and females felt slightly more responsible for the group decision under the nondisclosure condition.

Table 8 demonstrates the variable of utilizing facts on the role sheet. The two – way ANOVA for gender failed to prove any significance. In addition, there was no interaction effect. However, the disclosure condition proved to be statistically significant, ($F = 28.746$, $p = .000$). Figure 8a shows the means of this variable and the means were quite similar for males and females under the disclosure condition, males: 4.7586; females: 4.7419. However, under nondisclosure, facts were discussed more and males tended to make reference to the facts on the role sheet.

The probability of making a sound decision variable is listed on Table 9. Although there is no interaction, both gender and disclosure conditions are just barely reaching statistical significance. Gender is ($F = 4.338$, $p = .038$) and disclosure ($F = 3.718$, $p = .056$). Overall, participants in the disclosure condition felt more secure in the odds of making a wise decision, with slightly more males as seen in Figure 9a.

Table 10 demonstrates the possible polarization during the initial discussion. There was no interaction effect, however, statistical significance was found in gender, (F = 8.627, p = .004). Futhermore, disclosure conditions were significant as well, (F = 76.170, p = .000). According to the means in Figure *10a,* both males and females took the riskier routes under the disclosure condition. Females remained the most conservative . under nondisclosure condition, 2.8 in nondisclosure versus the 4.9667 in the disclosure condition.

Summary

This study has covered a number of different aspects pertaining to the groupthink phenomenon. Indeed, past policy making fiascoes have set a template for encouraging cogent decision - making. Evidence has been cited in respect to and against groupthink symptoms, as well as offering contingencies to these errors. In addition, the notion that leadership style plays a huge part in how a group attempts to solve a policy problem has been divulged, including the possibility of incorporating a new symptom of gender into the groupthink phenomenon. Specifically, some elements in the gender variable are significant, while certain leadership and risk – taking questions proved to be insignificant, ie: One leadership question suggests that male and female members differ in perceiving the freedom to express personal viewpoints in a group. However, the remaining two leadership questions of leadership proved to be insignificant. There were no differences in males or females when it came to feelings of leadership influence nor were there differences in the usage of available facts on role sheets. Disclosure

conditions in for each of the three leadership based questions proved to be extremely significant. One could assume that under nondisclosure conditions, individuals feel less influenced by a leader and discuss available facts more intensely. Under this condition viewpoints are expressed more thoroughly, males felt they had greater freedom to express more viewpoints than women.

Elements of risk were designated in questions where nearly all analyses proved to be significant. Particularly for polarization; males leaning towards a riskier decision than females. There was not a great deal of difference between males and females under the feelings of making a sound decision variable, however, the analysis came quite close to reaching significance as well as the feelings of responsibility variable. It appears as if males, regardless of condition, developed riskier decisions initially.

What showed significance throughout every question in the study were the disclosure conditions. Findings may accept part of the hypothesis and perhaps refine the gender inclination. Questionnaire scores and subsequent analyses presented in the preceding chapter have produced considerable evidence to suggest that the hypothesis be refined. In conclusion, indeed, there is a difference in groups when exposed to closed, or directive (disclosure) conditions and open, or nondirective (nondisclosure) conditions. In some instances, males and females differ in their level of propensity towards risk taking involved in the decision making process. Substantially when expressing viewpoints, and during the initial leaning of the discussion, wherein males take the riskier route.

Empirical evidence both advocated and opposed the issue of gender, yet supported leadership variances affecting the decision - making processes.

Both were presented and lead to the hypothesis that discernable differences do exist in the group decision - making process, that is undoubtedly within and leadership variances.

Moreover, the intention of this research was to measure differences between male and female as well as open (nondisclosure) and closed (disclosure) styles of leadership. However, questionnaire scores and subsequent statistic analysis presented in the preceding chapter have produced considerable evidence to suggest that the hypothesis be refined and to conclude that, within the sample pool, males and females to some extent differ when in group decision – making, however there is no evidence derived from this study to suggest any similarities between the disclosure conditions.

Limitations

Limitations obviously need to be carefully considered when looking at this study. When looking at the design of the study, the researcher would have been at an advantage to conduct lab experiments, thus attaining greater control over the manipulation of the independent variable's (gender and disclosure conditions) and therefore more certain identification of cause and effect relations than is the case with questionnaire or field studies.

Psychologist's have suggested that because the information – processing capabilities of every individual are limited, no responsible leader of a large organization ought to make a policy decision without using a computer that is programmed to spell out all the probable benefits and costs of each alternative under consideration. Perhaps this outlook would enhance a study providing

interesting routes taken for reaching a group decision, such devices known is the Group Dynamics Q Sort (GDQS), see page 55 for brief details.

First of all while the subject pool for all intents and purposes, may seem applicable for this type of research it truly is not. These participants are not facing a true to life national crisis, nor are they holding prominent positions and collaborating efforts to resolve a dilemma. Instead, they are only told that they are. Futhermore, the participants have not been on a team for a long period of time, as seen with most other committees, especially those that are facing foreign policy issues. Because of this it is possible that problems in managing information may have stemmed from the groups relative immaturity.

Suggestions for Future Research

Certainly it would be in the study's best interest to provide better representation of the sample pool by enlarging the groups within the pool itself. Perhaps using a male leader as well as a female leader to see if there would be any changes in the analysis could enhance the scope. Also, to create same sex groups to further indicate any possible differences. It is recommended that the study itself undergo replication to refute the hypothesis and to increase awareness of other potential variables and controls.

Methodologies utilized would need to be modified in order to achieve more conclusive results. Obviously, policy makers or corporate committee members themselves would provide a better representation of the groups needed for research, as opposed to the fictitious policy - making committees used in this study. Thus, creating clearer, more indicative research instruments. Clearly, policy - making committees are enormous

administrative organs that communities thrive on. Nonetheless, these members hold great omnipotent powers within their decision - making. Members of union and management could also shed light on the intricacies of decision – making from a labor relations / negotiation standpoint, which may augment the "we" versus "us" factor Janis discusses in groupthink. Perhaps inclusion of international students would not only provide a more diverse pool, but would display more perspectives that influence decisions.

One should bear in mind ideological assumptions: modify what is being rationalized in the group and also surmount all limitations on their thinking about foreign policy issues. Reason being, intelligent national leaders are capable of modifying some of their misconceptions about rival nations when impressed evidence indicates that their notions may mislead them into inappropriate action. This action could result in severe military or economic losses and drastically interfere with attaining their long - term political goals. Perhaps the size of the groups, salience of a true 'enemy', rationalizations of the reality of the situation, or the length of time over which the groups met were factors in themselves. Futhermore, modify, add, and erode questions to signify why some questions appear to be significant when paired with gender and why some are not; explore any underlying factors.

Great findings suggest that people strive to find out if their opinions and judgements are correct. When objective means are unavailable people evaluate their opinions and judgements by comparing them with those of others who are similar to themselves, especially within members of face- to - face groups. Such comparison procedures pressure members toward conformity.

Indeed, this presents an efficacy issues within decision – making.

Substantial percentages of fiascoes display groupthink symptoms/causes and have been seen in ill-conceived nationalistic policies, miscalculated executive decisions made by government, and other business organizations. Many lives, as history proves, have been unintentionally sacrificed as a result of this lack in awareness.

APPENDIX A

NONDISCLOSURE CONDITION

INSTRUCTIONS FOR LEADER (RESEARCHER) TO BE READ IN VERBATIUM

USE FOR GROUPS 1 – 15:

"Each of you will be given a scenario that presents a dilemma and each of you have been chosen to act as a committee to come to a resolution." Each person in the group will pick a role from the role sheet upon their discretion, my role will be the president, (leader)."

"Bear in mind, your decision will involve the fate of other people, as well as yourselves. An answer must be given, one that impacts foreign policy as well as your organization's policies and standards."

"The most important thing is that we air all possible viewpoints in order to reach a wise decision." As I pass out the questionnaire I will state, "Now what do each of you think should be done?" "You half an hour to make a decision."

DISCLOSURE CONDITION

USE FOR GROUPS 16 – 30:

"Each of you will be given a scenario that presents a dilemma and each of you have been chosen to act as a committee to come to a resolution. Each person in the group will pick a role from the role sheet upon their discretion, my role will be the president (leader)."

"Bear in mind, your decision will involve the fate of other people, as well as yourselves. An answer must be given, one that impacts foreign policy as well as your organization's policies and standards."

"The most important thing, I think, is that we all agree on our decision. Now what I think should be done is to make a go of it, in other words, I think <u>we</u> the committee should take on the acquisition and take the risk of owning a piece of the pie, barring this all pans out." "You have half an hour to make a decision."

APPENDIX B

THE SCENARIO

The Vice President of your manufacturing company has just brought together the four of you to serve as a committee at the request of the President. Due to spacing and funding issues, a governmental proposal has come to the Company's attention to acquire a missile producing plant on the premises.

Your elite company is facing the problem. Presently, recent events have created economic hardships and an influx of fearful shareholders. In addition, one of the Company's most profitable plants is now saddled with financial problems, lower tax support, and a militant manufacturing union.

A national crisis has occurred, one that arguably was fueled over global indiscretions encompassing foreign policy. In summation, your company has brought together the four of you to serve as a committee at the request of the President. Due to spacing and funding issues, a governmental proposal has come to the Company's attention; to acquire a missile producing plant on the premises.

ROLES:

President: *Myself (leader role)*

States that she has successfully served for 12 years. If the committee acquires the plant, they will be offered a share in ownership, contingent upon survival and profit of the plant throughout the war.

Vice President:

Has known for months now that key players in Horatio's (CEO) administration have asked him to step down. Is aware of Horatio's clandestine stroke 2 years earlier. The committee's salary will increase if they agree to acquire the plant, thus dramatically increasing the Company's role in the war effort.

Employee Relations Consultant:

Recent polling suggests that the majority of the Company's employees are quite fond of Mr. Horatio and his practices. The majority of the employees also advocate his beliefs of keeping the Company out of drastic government intervention.

Industrial Psychologist:

Corresponds with union officials that express great disdain for Mr. Horatio. Furthermore, the union threats to strike over any curtailment of retirement benefits, or if subcontractors will be hired on as a result of any new acquisitions. (Which will undoubtedly occur) Believes that every corporation is under siege financially and states that it is quite a gamble.

Director of Mergers and Acquisitions:

Regales over Mr. Horatio's performance as CEO. The director's high impression of him could be related to the fact that he is Horatio's son-in-law and has been dubbed as a protégé of his. Is well aware of Mr. Horatio's view on this matter, which is to veto it in its entirety.

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE

(Please Circle One)

GENDER: **Male**   **Female**

AGE:_____

ETHNICITY: **African American**   **Asian**   **Caucasian**

                 Hispanic   **Other**

MAJOR: **Psychology**   **Business**   **Political Science**   **Other**

YEAR IN SCHOOL; STATUS: **Freshman**   **Sophomore**

                                    Junior   **Senior**   **Graduate**

POLITICAL PARTY PREFERENCE: **Democrat**   **Republican**

                                        Independent   **Other**

Will you choose to acquire the plant and eradicate Mr. Horatio, and act as prime players in the war effort?   **YES**   **NO**

Do you feel the country as well as the Company's situation warrants such a decision? ~ Or will you stand by your Company's union, its employees, and CEO's wishes to remain conservative?

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DID YOU REMAIN CONSERVATIVE?   YES   NO

INDIVIDUALLY, PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING BY CIRCLING ONE

OF THE SEVEN OPTIONS FOR EACH OF THE SIX QUESTIONS.

1.)   Did you feel you had freedom to express your personal viewpoints?

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1

DISAGREE 2

EXPRESSED MINIMAL VIEWS 3

NOT SURE 4

MODERATE FREEDOM 5

AGREE 6

STRONGLY AGREE 7

1.)   Do you think the probability (odds) of the company's expenditure will

prove to be financially and ethically sound?

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1

DISAGREE 2

FAIR ODDS 3

UNSURE 4

SOMEWHAT CERTAIN 5

AGREE 6

STRONGLY AGREE 7

3.) Do you feel that during the group's discussion facts on the role sheet were presented to one another prior to reaching a solution?

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1

DISAGREE 2

OCASSIONALLY 3

NOT SURE 4

SUFFICIENT USAGE 5

AGREE 6

STRONGLY AGREE 7

4.) Do you feel responsible personally for your group's final decision?

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1

DISAGREE 2

MINIMAL FEELINGS OF RESPONSIBILITY 3

NOT SURE 4

SOMEWHAT RESPONSIBLE 5

AGREE 6

STRONGLY AGREE 7

5.) Rank your leader's influence from "most influential" to "least influential".

LEAST INFLUENTIAL 1

HARDLY INFLUENCED GROUP 2

MINIMALLY INFLUENTIAL 3

NOT SURE 4

SOMEWHAT INFLUENTIAL 5

INFLUENTIAL 6

MOST INFLUENTIAL 7

6.) Did the initial group discussion surround a risky or a more conservative stance before reaching a decision?

EXTREMELY CONSERVATIVE 1

CONSERVATIVE 2

LEANED SOMEWHAT TOWARDS THE CONSERVATIVE DECISION 3

NOT SURE 4

LEANED SOMEWHAT TOWARDS THE RISKIER DECISION 5

RISKY 6

EXTREMELY RISKY 7

APPENDIX D

CROSSTABULATIONS

Table 8

Crosstabulation for Freedom of Expressing Viewpoints

expviews * DISCLOSE * gender Crosstabulation

gender					DISCLOSE no	DISCLOSE yes	Total
female	expviews	1.00 strongly disagree	Count			1	1
			% within DISCLOSE			3.2%	1.6%
		2.00 disagree	Count			4	4
			% within DISCLOSE			12.9%	6.6%
		3.00 expressed minimal views	Count		3	4	7
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	12.9%	11.5%
		4.00 not sure	Count		3	2	5
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	6.5%	8.2%
		5.00 moderate freedom	Count		1	5	6
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	16.1%	9.8%
		6.00 agree	Count		3	9	12
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	29.0%	19.7%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		20	6	26
			% within DISCLOSE		66.7%	19.4%	42.6%
	Total		Count		30	31	61
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
male	expviews	2.00 disagree	Count			1	1
			% within DISCLOSE			3.4%	1.7%
		3.00 expressed minimal views	Count			1	1
			% within DISCLOSE			3.4%	1.7%
		4.00 not sure	Count		1	3	4
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	10.3%	6.8%
		5.00 moderate freedom	Count		1	5	6
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	17.2%	10.2%
		6.00 agree	Count		5	10	15
			% within DISCLOSE		16.7%	34.5%	25.4%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		23	9	32
			% within DISCLOSE		76.7%	31.0%	54.2%
	Total		Count		30	29	59
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 9

Crosstabulation for Feeling Responsible for the Decision

feelresp * DISCLOSE * gender Crosstabulation

gender					DISCLOSE		Total
					no	yes	
female	feelresp	1.00 strongly disagree	Count		3	2	5
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	6.5%	8.2%
		2.00 disagree	Count		4	8	12
			% within DISCLOSE		13.3%	25.8%	19.7%
		3.00 minimal feelings of responsibility	Count		6	7	13
			% within DISCLOSE		20.0%	22.6%	21.3%
		4.00 unsure	Count		3	1	4
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	3.2%	6.6%
		5.00 somewhat responsible	Count		4	6	10
			% within DISCLOSE		13.3%	19.4%	16.4%
		6.00 agree	Count		8	6	14
			% within DISCLOSE		26.7%	19.4%	23.0%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		2	1	3
			% within DISCLOSE		6.7%	3.2%	4.9%
	Total		Count		30	31	61
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
male	feelresp	1.00 strongly disagree	Count		1	3	4
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	10.3%	6.8%
		2.00 disagree	Count		1	2	3
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	6.9%	5.1%
		3.00 minimal feelings of responsibility	Count		7	9	16
			% within DISCLOSE		23.3%	31.0%	27.1%
		5.00 somewhat responsible	Count		10	8	18
			% within DISCLOSE		33.3%	27.6%	30.5%
		6.00 agree	Count		9	6	15
			% within DISCLOSE		30.0%	20.7%	25.4%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		2	1	3
			% within DISCLOSE		6.7%	3.4%	5.1%
	Total		Count		30	29	59
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 10

Crosstabulation for Discussing Facts Prior to Decision

discfact * DISCLOSE * gender Crosstabulation

gender					DISCLOSE		Total
					no	yes	
female	discfact	2.00 disagree	Count			4	4
			% within DISCLOSE			12.9%	6.6%
		3.00 occasionally	Count		3	7	10
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	22.6%	16.4%
		5.00 sufficient usuage	Count		4	5	9
			% within DISCLOSE		13.3%	16.1%	14.8%
		6.00 agree	Count		14	12	26
			% within DISCLOSE		46.7%	38.7%	42.6%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		9	3	12
			% within DISCLOSE		30.0%	9.7%	19.7%
	Total		Count		30	31	61
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
male	discfact	2.00 disagree	Count			2	2
			% within DISCLOSE			6.9%	3.4%
		3.00 occasionally	Count		1	7	8
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	24.1%	13.6%
		4.00 not sure	Count			1	1
			% within DISCLOSE			3.4%	1.7%
		5.00 sufficient usuage	Count		5	6	11
			% within DISCLOSE		16.7%	20.7%	18.6%
		6.00 agree	Count		7	12	19
			% within DISCLOSE		23.3%	41.4%	32.2%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		17	1	18
			% within DISCLOSE		56.7%	3.4%	30.5%
	Total		Count		30	29	59
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 11

Crosstabulation of the Probability of the Final Decision's

Financial and Ethical Soundness

safeodds * DISCLOSE * gender Crosstabulation

gender					DISCLOSE no	DISCLOSE yes	Total
female	safeodds	1.00 strongly disagree	Count		1		1
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%		1.6%
		2.00 disagree	Count		3	2	5
			% within DISCLOSE		10.0%	6.5%	8.2%
		3.00 fair odds	Count		7	2	9
			% within DISCLOSE		23.3%	6.5%	14.8%
		4.00 unsure	Count			3	3
			% within DISCLOSE			9.7%	4.9%
		5.00 somewhat certain	Count		7	9	16
			% within DISCLOSE		23.3%	29.0%	26.2%
		6.00 agree	Count		10	9	19
			% within DISCLOSE		33.3%	29.0%	31.1%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		2	6	8
			% within DISCLOSE		6.7%	19.4%	13.1%
	Total		Count		30	31	61
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
male	safeodds	2.00 disagree	Count		2	1	3
			% within DISCLOSE		6.7%	3.4%	5.1%
		3.00 fair odds	Count		4	1	5
			% within DISCLOSE		13.3%	3.4%	8.5%
		4.00 unsure	Count		1	2	3
			% within DISCLOSE		3.3%	6.9%	5.1%
		5.00 somewhat certain	Count		6	6	12
			% within DISCLOSE		20.0%	20.7%	20.3%
		6.00 agree	Count		10	12	22
			% within DISCLOSE		33.3%	41.4%	37.3%
		7.00 strongly agree	Count		7	7	14
			% within DISCLOSE		23.3%	24.1%	23.7%
	Total		Count		30	29	59
			% within DISCLOSE		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 12

Crosstabulation of Leader's Influence on the Group

influenc * DISCLOSE * gender Crosstabulation

gender				DISCLOSE no	DISCLOSE yes	Total
female	influenc	1.00 least influential	Count	13		13
			% within DISCLOSE	43.3%		21.3%
		2.00 hardly influenced group	Count	7	1	8
			% within DISCLOSE	23.3%	3.2%	13.1%
		3.00 minimal; unsucessful influence	Count	5	3	8
			% within DISCLOSE	16.7%	9.7%	13.1%
		4.00 not sure	Count	4	4	8
			% within DISCLOSE	13.3%	12.9%	13.1%
		5.00 somewhat influential	Count	1	6	7
			% within DISCLOSE	3.3%	19.4%	11.5%
		6.00 influential	Count		10	10
			% within DISCLOSE		32.3%	16.4%
		7.00 most influential	Count		7	7
			% within DISCLOSE		22.6%	11.5%
	Total		Count	30	31	61
			% within DISCLOSE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
male	influenc	1.00 least influential	Count	9		9
			% within DISCLOSE	30.0%		15.3%
		2.00 hardly influenced group	Count	12		12
			% within DISCLOSE	40.0%		20.3%
		3.00 minimal; unsucessful influence	Count	5	1	6
			% within DISCLOSE	16.7%	3.4%	10.2%
		4.00 not sure	Count	3	2	5
			% within DISCLOSE	10.0%	6.9%	8.5%
		5.00 somewhat influential	Count	1	5	6
			% within DISCLOSE	3.3%	17.2%	10.2%
		6.00 influential	Count		17	17
			% within DISCLOSE		58.6%	28.8%
		7.00 most influential	Count		4	4
			% within DISCLOSE		13.8%	6.8%
	Total		Count	30	29	59
			% within DISCLOSE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 13

Crosstabulation of Initial Leaning of the Group

Discussion; Polarization

initrisk * DISCLOSE * gender Crosstabulation

gender				DISCLOSE no	DISCLOSE yes	Total
female	initrisk	1.00 extremely conservative	Count	5		5
			% within DISCLOSE	16.7%		8.2%
		2.00 conservative	Count	9	1	10
			% within DISCLOSE	30.0%	3.2%	16.4%
		3.00 leaned towards conservative decision	Count	8	5	13
			% within DISCLOSE	26.7%	16.1%	21.3%
		4.00 unsure	Count	3	4	7
			% within DISCLOSE	10.0%	12.9%	11.5%
		5.00 leaned towards risky decision	Count	5	7	12
			% within DISCLOSE	16.7%	22.6%	19.7%
		6.00 risky	Count		12	12
			% within DISCLOSE		38.7%	19.7%
		7.00 extremely risky	Count		2	2
			% within DISCLOSE		6.5%	3.3%
	Total		Count	30	31	61
			% within DISCLOSE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
male	initrisk	1.00 extremely conservative	Count	2		2
			% within DISCLOSE	6.7%		3.4%
		2.00 conservative	Count	5	1	6
			% within DISCLOSE	16.7%	3.4%	10.2%
		3.00 leaned towards conservative decision	Count	9	1	10
			% within DISCLOSE	30.0%	3.4%	16.9%
		4.00 unsure	Count	5	4	9
			% within DISCLOSE	16.7%	13.8%	15.3%
		5.00 leaned towards risky decision	Count	7	5	12
			% within DISCLOSE	23.3%	17.2%	20.3%
		6.00 risky	Count	2	7	9
			% within DISCLOSE	6.7%	24.1%	15.3%
		7.00 extremely risky	Count		11	11
			% within DISCLOSE		37.9%	18.6%
	Total		Count	30	29	59
			% within DISCLOSE	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

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