

BAIT AND SWITCH: HOW A REPUTATION CAN BE DESTROYED

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ABSTRACT: Academic ethics can be violated through the technique known as "bait and switch." The essay outlines how a journal editor performed that technique, thereby seeking to destroy the academic reputation of a scholar. First, the editor asked the author of a book to respond to a short inconsequential comment by someone critiquing the book. Then, instead of publishing the critique and response, the editor published a much longer critique without asking the author to respond but instead assigning a response to someone who impersonated the author of the book. The essay then explains how the author took steps to reverse the damage, with the assistance of the journal and the Committee on Professional Ethics.

KEYWORDS: *ethics; ethics violation; journal; journal editor; reputation; Committee on Professional Ethics; Journal of Conflict Resolution*

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1978, forty-five years ago, two essays were published in an academic journal with considerable reputation. One was a devastating six-page critique of a political scientist's book. The other was a two-page rejoinder. The author of the latter essay was listed as the same as the author of book that the first essay critiqued. But that person did not write the essay and did not read either essay until June 28, 2022. How such impersonation occurred may be stated in three words—Bait and Switch.

The book was *International Conflict*, authored by Michael Haas, and published in 1974 by Bobbs-Merrill. The author of the six-page critique was Rudolph J. Rummel. At the time, both were colleagues in the Department of Political Science at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The journal was *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, then edited by Bruce Russett of the Department of Political Science, Yale University. The two essays appeared in the March 1978 issue, pages 156-162. The title of the critique was "A Warning on Michael Haas's *International Conflict*," and the essay begins with such words as "substantively worthless" and "substantively useless." The second essay, entitled "A Response" was incomprehensible and did not answer the criticisms in the first essay.

One puzzle, therefore, is who in the world was responsible for the impersonation? The two possible culprits are Rummel and Russett. The effect was to destroy the professional reputation of Michael Haas. Accordingly, there is a need for an explanation. Unfortunately, no documents exist after four decades. Haas is retired, living in Los Angeles, and did not bring his many files about the situation with him. Rummel died in 2014. Russett now lives in a nursing home near New Haven, but all his files were destroyed by one of his daughters after he vacated his office at Yale University. There is a new editor of *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, but Russett's files were not passed along to the new editor. Therefore, what appears below is based on the memory of Michael Haas in considerable detail as well as the contents of telephone calls by Haas to Russett in late 2022 and early 2023.

II. RELATIONS BETWEEN MICHAEL HAAS AND RUDOLPH RUMMEL

I, Michael Haas, had very cordial relations with my colleague Rudy Rummel while I taught in the political science department at the University of Hawai'i. Before I met him, I cited his work in my doctoral dissertation (Haas 1964:22n66,23n68,39). He even thanked me for "helpful comments" on the draft of his article on factor analysis (Rummel 1967:493).

While Rudy taught at Yale, where he was a colleague of Bruce Russett, he wrote me a letter expressing interest in joining me at the Department of Political Science of the University of Hawai'i, Mānoa Campus. I then made a successful pitch to have our department hire him, and he joined our department in 1967.

Throughout 1967 and 1968, I shared draft chapters of my forthcoming book, *International Conflict*, with him. Rudy responded to my drafts with praise for the theoretical aspects of my effort. I later shared our exchange of messages with one of my colleagues, Theodore Becker.

In spring 1969, while I was a visiting professor at Northwestern University, some members of my department sought to terminate him because of his political views. I refused to cooperate with that attempted purge, and he remained on the faculty. In fall 1969, Rudy allocated some of his NSF research grant to me so that I could devote myself to research while teaching only one course in that semester. I then finished my research, which was released in book form with the title *International Conflict*.

Nevertheless, Rudy was a quiet and shy person. He rarely came out of his office, even to attend department meetings. I had little direct contact with him over the years until I received a telephone call during December 1977, as explained below, and very little afterward.

In 1996, Rudy retired due to a significant loss of hearing, but he continued to do research worthy of later publications. Unfortunately, Rudy passed away in on March 2, 2014. His publications were honored in an edited book published three years later (Gleditsch 2017). Meanwhile, I took early retirement in 1998 for family reasons, and I have been living in Los Angeles ever since.

III. ORIGINS OF THE CONTROVERSY

One day in early December 1977, Rudy telephoned me to inquire about a mathematical procedure used in my book *International Conflict* (1974). When I asked him whether he was writing a review of my book, he answered in the negative. He only asked about a specific procedure that I followed in Part III, where the database came primarily from United Nations statistical sources. Unlike the other parts of the book, the source had missing data for some countries on some variables, complicating the goal of correlational analysis (p. 261). I correlated a full sample containing missing data to compare with a subsample lacking missing data. Rummel sought clarification of the former procedure, which I explained to him: The standard method of correlation programs then was to fill in missing data with means on each variable, which I did, referring to the resulting factor analysis findings on the phone jokingly as “poor man’s factor scores,” a comment that he cited in his later six-page essay (p. 161n4).

I soon left for a conference in South Korea. When I returned to Honolulu the following week, I received a letter from Yale University political scientist Bruce Russett, then editor of *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. He asked me to comment on a short text written by Rummel, entitled “A Cautionary Note,” where he raised a question about the procedure used to calculate correlations with missing data. Russett asked me for a comment, which he promised would appear in the journal. I then referred Rummel’s “Note” to my colleague Richard Chadwick for a suggestion. A few days later, when I did not hear from Chadwick, I mailed a short reply to Russett, writing that I relied on the standard statistical procedure then found in “package programs.” In a week or so, Russett sent me a revised Rummel essay which added one sentence, stating that he had no objections to my use of cluster analysis, which was surprising since the same procedure for calculating correlations was performed before I began both my factor analyses and cluster analyses. I, therefore, added nothing to my previous short statement, which ended with a comical note that the hare and the tortoise both reach their destinations while taking different routes. Unfortunately, I do not have a paper trail, so I rely on my memory, which is quite distinct after all these years.

After January 1, 1978, I embarked on my six-month sabbatical throughout Asia, stopping first for about three months to join the political science faculty of the University of the Philippines. I presumed that the two short comments would appear in the journal, and I received no further information about the two essays from anyone in the decades to follow, not even a copy of the journal where they appeared. Because Rummel’s “Note” was inconsequential, as my reply indicated, I did not feel compelled later to look up the two short essays in print. I patently did not expect to be a victim of “bait and switch.”

The “switch” appeared in the March 1978 issue of *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*, consisting of a six-page Rummel essay with a very different content and title, “A Warning on Michael Haas’s *International Conflict*.” I was in Manila during most of March 1978.

Contrary to Rummel’s statement that I was “the first to receive my findings (in memo form)” (p. 158), I did not receive a copy of his essay before or after the issue was published. In his essay he also claimed that I “did not take the opportunity to respond” (ibidem.). Had he inquired, office staff would have informed him that I was on sabbatical for the first half of 1978 in Asia.

In the same March 1978 issue, a two-page essay appeared with my name listed as the author of a response to Rummel’s essay. But I did not write the essay, and I have no idea who did. The writing style is clearly not mine.

Upon completion of my sabbatical in mid-June 1978, I returned to the University of Hawai‘i for a week. No information about the matter was then in my political science department mail inbox. Although *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* customarily sends a copy of a journal issue to those who write essays in an issue, I never received a copy of the March 1978 issue. However, when my essay factor analyzing measures of school

violence was published by The Journal of Conflict Resolution in December 1988, I did receive a copy of the journal.

After my week in Honolulu during June 1978, I went to Ann Arbor, Michigan, for the summer. During the fall semester of 1978, I taught in the Department of Political Science at San Francisco State University. One of the courses was on methodology, including statistics. I returned to the Department of Political Science, University of Hawai'i, to teach from January 1979 until my retirement in 1998.

IV. ENCOUNTERING THE IMPERSONATED ESSAY

I first read the two March 1978 essays during June 28, 2022. The reason is that my marriage partner brought the matter to my attention earlier in 2022, having located a gossip website for political science. Accordingly, I decided to search on the Internet, expecting to see the "Cautionary Note." I was thus astonished to encounter "The Warning."

Consequently the "Editor's Note" on the first page of "The Warning" was incorrect in stating that I was afforded "an opportunity to respond" (Rummel 1978:157). The Journal of Conflict Resolution never asked me to proofread the text of the journal essay proposed under my name, a customary final step before publication. Had the Journal called my department about my failure to respond, the result would have been news of my departure for Asia.

Since July 2022, I have endeavored to correct the record and to ascertain who wrote the essay under my name. In doing so, I first contacted the current editor, the journal publisher, and the Committee on Publication Ethics. The current editor referred the matter to the publisher, Sage Publications. Sage later informed me that their efforts to contact the former editor, Bruce Russett, were unsuccessful. In addition, Sage discovered that the current journal editor lacked records formerly held by Russett. I consider a failure to keep records as dereliction of duty.

Contacting the Former Journal Editor

As Bruce and I were graduate students at Yale University during the same years, I called him at his new residence, a nursing home in Hamden, Connecticut, during 2022. In the first call, our conversation was cordial, though I was unsure whether he remembered me. When I next telephoned a member of the Yale political science department staff to locate journal records, I was informed that potentially relevant documents were removed by one of his daughters when Bruce Russett's office at Yale was vacated. She subsequently indicated in an email to me that most of Bruce's paperwork was discarded.

A few months later, I called Bruce again. To my delight, he enthusiastically remembered both Rudy Rummel and me. After reminding him that Rudy had written a critique of my book, *International Conflict*, I asked him who wrote the two-page response in The Journal of Conflict Resolution. He then replied "Michael Haas?" as if responding logically though without certainty. I then informed Bruce that I could not have done so because I was in Asia at the time. I then asked, "Who wrote the two-page response to Rummel?" He then admitted that he did not remember.

In early 2023, I mailed a letter to Russett, enclosing an essay similar to the present one, enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope, urging him to comment. Because I received no reply, I called him for a third time. Evidently, he had conversed with someone else on the matter, as his tone was quite belligerent this time. He said, "This is not my responsibility! Get it?" I then responded, "Got it."

Editorial Response

As noted above, I contacted the current editor, the journal publisher, and the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), seeking a resolution of the problem during 2022. Sage and the current editor evidently decided that modern technology allows a unique way of correcting the past. They could tag an essay onto the same issue of the journal's Internet version.

Sage's first response was to post "Publisher's Note for A Response" on September 25, 2022, stating "We have received a complaint from the listed author that he did not write this article. We are investigating the matter in accordance with COPE guidelines" (Sage 2022).

Later, I sent a draft essay similar to the present one to COPE, Sage, and the current editor of The Journal of Conflict Resolution, urging the journal to publish my essay. Instead of providing details outlined above, they decided to publish rejoinder to Rummel's six-page critique on the Internet version of the same issue.

Since Rummel only had three specific objections, the journal published my response to each of the three points, proving with extensive footnotes that Rummel inexplicably misread my book (Haas 2023). Had he seen my essay, he doubtless would have withdrawn his, as he never correctly cited any specific page to the first two items, and he misrepresented what was stated on the pages he identified regarding the third item.

In all, I exchanged almost a dozen emails with Sage headquarters. I also exchanged about sixteen emails with COPE.

Although I accepted Sage's actions, two problems remain. One is that the journal's statement about my being "afforded" an opportunity to respond remains uncontested on page 157 of the March 1978 issue of *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*. However, Sage did finally provide an opportunity for a detailed rejoinder due to my complaint. The other puzzle is the identity of the person who wrote the essay under my name in that issue. Perhaps this essay will enable that person to come out of the closet.

V. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Many readers of the present article will wonder why I took 44 years to read something that I expected to appear in print. The answer is that I expected the "Cautionary Note" and my two-sentence rejoinder would appear but were of little significance. When I returned to Honolulu in 1979, I embarked on another research project on an entirely different topic—Asian international relations—and thus was focused elsewhere.

Nevertheless, there were some clues that other scholars took the exchange quite seriously. One day in June 1978, while on the Ann Arbor campus of the University of Michigan, I was briefly introduced to Philip Converse and three other Michigan political scientists. Converse immediately looked down at the ground as if in tears and never looked up. I then could not comprehend why two such short minor essays could have produced such a reaction. In contrast, the other three political scientists were quite amiable.

The reason for the visit to Ann Arbor was to attend a workshop on the latest research methods. When I arrived, I was informed that I was already enrolled on a workshop regarding factor analysis. Puzzled, since I had no need to learn more, I did not inquire why or attend the session. Instead, I went to other sessions while also preparing pages for the manuscript of three volumes on Asian international relations (Haas 1979). And later I published an essay and a book utilizing factor analysis with no adverse feedback (Haas 1988, 1994), the former of which appeared in *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

There was a third clue. In 1977, before my departure on sabbatical, I had been assigned to serve on a committee to rewrite the American Political Science Association (APSA) constitution. But when I attended a meeting of the committee in 1979, a new member had been appointed—Rudolph Rummel. In other words, someone in an APSA leadership position did not want to appear favoring me and disfavoring Rummel. At the time, I considered the unexpected matter an overreaction to a relatively inconsequential exchange, unaware that "bait and switch" had taken place.

What had happened is that my professional reputation was at the time very seriously damaged: I was never again invited to serve on an APSA committee. I was never asked to serve on the editorial board of any professional journal in political science. And I was never asked to write a review of a book for any such journal.

Attendance at committee meetings would have involved flying hour and after hour from Honolulu to destinations on the East Coast on so many occasions that I was happy to be relieved of that burden. Journal editors did not refer books for me to review possibly because my career had changed from statistical exercises to research on Asia and Hawai'i.

International Conflict was my fourth book. As of today, I have authored a total of sixty-six books. In 2009, I was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize due to a letter from a distinguished academic political scientist in Seoul, Korea. Whatever damage to my reputation occurred in 1978 is in contrast with my later academic career.

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