Sample Argument for Analysis

We've specified elements of argument and style. Now try to spot their presence in the following opinion piece. "A New Moral Compact" was originally published in November 2012, right around Veterans' Day. The author, David W. Barno (b. 1954), is a retired lieutenant general. He served the U.S. Army in key leadership roles, his experiences including combat campaigns in Afghanistan, Grenada, and Panama. Barno is now senior advisor and senior fellow at the Center for a New American Security, a group whose mission is "to develop strong, pragmatic, and principled national security and defense policies." His article appeared simultaneously on the Center's Web site and in the digital edition of *Foreign Policy* magazine. Anyone might come upon his piece through a search engine. But probably he took his main audience to be elected officials, their staffs, other policy experts, military professionals, and academic scholars who study national defense.

As you read, consider the following questions:

- What is Barno's main *issue*, and what is his main *claim* about it?
- What smaller claims does he make as he develops his main one?
- Where in his article are you especially conscious of Barno's attempting *persuasion*?
- Where are you especially conscious of how Barno views his *audience*?
- What *evidence* does Barno offer?
- What are the steps in his *reasoning*?
- What are his major *assumptions*?
- To what extent does his argument rely on *logos*?
- To what extent might his *reputational ethos* matter to his readers?
- What sort of *ethos* does he create through his words?
- How much, and where, does his argument use *pathos*?

DAVID W. BARNO

A New Moral Compact

As our nation enters its second decade of armed conflict overseas, it is appropriate to reflect on the moral compact between our government, our people, and our soldiers. Eleven years of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, combined with the prospect for open-ended global warfare against terrorists, has blurred the lines between peace and war, perhaps forever. It has also effectively lowered our national threshold for decisions to conduct military operations or go to war. The reasons have as much to do with our declining personal stake in these conflicts as with the dangerous state of the world.

I recently attended an event honoring former Pennsylvania governor Tom Ridge for his public service. Ridge came from a working class family, won a scholarship to Harvard, and went on to law school. Upon completing his first year, he unexpectedly received his draft notice from Uncle Sam.

Tom Ridge did not seek to dodge his unwelcome summons. In his family, when you were called, you dropped whatever you were doing in your life and you went, as his father did in World War II. But as a Harvard grad and law student, he clearly had other options.

The Army decided to make Tom Ridge an infantryman. He soon became a sergeant and shipped out to Vietnam, where he joined the 101st Airborne for a year in combat from 1969 to 1970. None of the handful of young men he led in his small infantry rifle squad was a graduate of Harvard or any other college, but they were draftees from all social strata across the United States. Ridge observed: "The military is a great leveler. Nobody cares who you are, where you went to school, who your parents were. None of that mattered."

The only reason Ridge was in the Army and ultimately fought for a year in Vietnam was the draft lottery system. The Selective Service system randomly assigned numbers to each draft age male by birth date in an annual "lottery"; depending on the needs of the war that year, if your number came up, you were called. Theoretically, your chances of being drafted as a college grad under the lottery system were equal to those of a high school drop-out born on the same date. In the real world, however, both college deferments (see: Dick Cheney, Bill Clinton) and clever manipulation of the system allowed many of the well-off and well-educated to avoid service altogether. And for each of those who side-stepped the call, some other, less fortunate young man was called up to take his place. Some of whom, of course, never came back — a sharp point little noted in discussions about the complex national legacy

of the Vietnam War.

In the Vietnam era, draftees were called up for a maximum of two years of service, with one of those almost inevitably spent in Vietnam. And unlike in today's "all-volunteer" military, no draftee was ever sent back to Vietnam for another tour unless he volunteered — probably with a voluntary re-enlistment for longer service. With draftees serving only two years in uniform, it would have been nearly impossible to send a soldier for a second 12-month combat tour within the scope of his two-year service obligation. It simply wasn't done. If you were unfortunate enough to be drafted, you at least knew that the nation drew the line at one year of combat.

Contrast Tom Ridge's world of 1969 with that of America's combat soldiers today. In 2012, there is no draft, and our all-volunteer force has spent the last eleven years in prolonged, bloody ground wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army of this era fields about 560,000 troops on active duty, in comparison to 1.2 million at the height of the Vietnam war. Nearly 3 million Americans are veterans of the post-9/11 wars, with large numbers having served multiple combat tours. It seems obvious that some of the stress on the force — manifested by unprecedented rates of suicide and creeping indiscipline — has come from these widespread repeat deployments, the likes of which no soldier of the Vietnam era ever involuntarily faced. In fact, even career officers and sergeants in the Vietnam-era force — distinct from the two-year draftees — rarely served more than two one-year tours in Vietnam over the entire course of that ten-year war.

In today's military, it is not uncommon to see Army lieutenant colonels and senior sergeants deployed three or four times for 12- to 15-month combat tours over the past decade — a back-breaking, family-stressing commitment the likes of which we have never before asked of our men and women in uniform. Even in World War II, only a small fraction of our nearly 16 million uniformed men and women served more than three years in a combat zone, and the entire war was finished for the United States in 45 months. Our war in Afghanistan has lasted 134 months. It now has eclipsed the American Revolution and Vietnam as the longest war in U.S. history. Stunningly, sizable numbers of the very same sergeants and officers fighting the war today are the men and women that led the way into the earliest campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq. If you are a career officer or NCO in today's Army and Marines, by and large you either continue to deploy — or you leave the service. There are few other options. Across our volunteer force, over 6,500 have been killed and more than 50,000 wounded since 2001. Consider the burden of that stark reality upon career military families.

Both of my sons have served one-year combat tours in Afghanistan. When our youngest son, an Army pilot, was called to go back after completing his first tour, I was suddenly angry. Not an anger that derived from misunderstanding our rotation system, nor from seeing the war as somehow unjust. My anger was visceral, unbidden, reflexive. And as I examined my unexpected reaction, it came down to this: my son was going back, yet 99 percent of his military age contemporaries were not — and never would, no matter how long the war lasted. Neither his civilian peers, their parents, nor their spouses or siblings would ever be exposed in any way to the gut-wrenching dangers of being in the middle of a lethal national enterprise. It simply wasn't important enough for our nation to insist that all of us shared the sacrifice of unlimited liability that war demands from those who fight it. Having a cadre of admirably willing volunteers simply has made it too easy for us to go to war.

For we Americans as a people, that's just wrong. There must be some limit to what we will ask of our men and women in uniform before the rest of us feel some moral obligation to step in. Tom Ridge — representing all of the people of the United States in 1969 — got the telegram, put his life on hold, stepped forward and served in combat alongside a broad cross-section of America's youth. Today, we call on no one to make this kind of sacrifice. We have even made that a matter of some pride, a nation that has moved beyond the dark days of "conscription."

Yet at what point are we morally compelled to in some way expose every American family to our fights abroad, to invest some moral equity as a nation and a society into fighting our wars? Absent any prospect whatsoever for our current or future wars to touch any of us personally, where is the moral hazard — the personal "equity stake" — that shapes our collective judgment, giving us pause when we decide to send our remarkable volunteer military off to war? They are fully prepared to go — but they trust the rest of us to place sufficient weight and seriousness into that decision to ensure that their inevitable sacrifices of life and limb will be for a worthy and essential cause.

Throughout our history, American decisions on going to war have been closely connected to our people because they remain matters of life and death. And they were always seen as matters of deep import to the nation as a whole, since all could be called upon to fight. Today such profound decisions are all but free of consequences for the American people. When the lives and the deaths of our soldiers no longer personally impact the population at large, have we compromised our moral authority on war? How can our elites and our broader populace make wartime decisions in good conscience when those paying the price are someone else's kids — but assuredly never their own?

The past ten years suggest that relying on a professional military comprised only of willing volunteers has

eroded the core societal seriousness that we have always accorded to national decisions of war and peace. One wonders if we would have entered our recent conflicts as quickly — or let them drag on so long — if our Army was filled with draftees, drawn from a random swath of families across all segments of America.

One policy to better connect our wars to our people might be to determine that every use of military force over 60 days would automatically trigger an annual draft lottery to call up 10,000 men and women. They would serve in every branch of service for the duration of the conflict, replaced by future draft tranches in limited, like-sized numbers. Ten thousand draftees would comprise only about 5 percent of the number of new recruits the military takes in each year, but they would signify a symbolic commitment of the entire nation. Every family in the country would now be exposed to the potential consequences of our wars and come to recognize in a personal way that they had a stake in the outcome. The national calculus on go-to-war decisions subtly changes when all families can be called upon to answer the call to arms.

In the last decade, war has become something done by "the 1 percent" — our rightly acclaimed force of volunteers — with 99 percent of America uninvolved, and sometimes seemingly uninterested. But with war becoming this easy, our historic caution in committing our troops abroad has frayed dramatically. Partly as a result, "America at war" is slowly becoming a permanent condition. We have gradually, almost imperceptibly, eroded the bonds of responsibility linking our soldiers, our people, and our government. It's time to reestablish that moral compact between our people and our wars. *[2012]*