

**"CRISIS IN KRASNOVIA"**

**Teachers Manual 0.1**

**January 12, 1999**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

**"CRISIS IN KRASNOVIA" (CIK) is a computer-based simulation with a learn-by-doing approach. The student plays the role of advisor to the President in the midst of a fictional foreign policy crisis. The student's immediate task is to evaluate a slate of plan options and recommend one to the President for use. Since the setting is fictitious, there is no one "right" answer to the problem. The important thing is how well the student carries out the evaluation and argues for her/his recommendation.**

**To "help" the student in this task, a panel of fictional, opinionated advocates offer their conflicting judgments of the plans. These advocates cite stories to support their claims from an indexed database of video interviews with historians, political scientists and foreign service experts discussing past foreign policy problems. These interviews provide the knowledge and insight about 20th century political crises that the student needs to complete the evaluation task.**

**In order to perform her/his task, the student must listen to conflicting arguments and make judgments about how well the arguments are constructed and about the merit of the evidence used to support them. Thus, CIK provides experience in two areas: modern foreign policy problems and critical thinking.**

### **MODERN FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS**

**Six individuals contributed their foreign policy knowledge and experiences to CIK:**

- **David Allen, Evanston Township High School.**
- **Professor Kenneth Bain, History Department, Northwestern University.**
- **Ambassador Thomas Boyatt.**
- **Ambassador Lowell Bruce Laingen.**
- **Professor David Laitin, Political Science Department, University of Chicago.**
- **Ambassador Edward Peck.**

Collectively, they provide extensive comments on foreign policy issues relating to China, Vietnam, Cuba, Panama, Bosnia, South Africa, Somalia, Iraq, Iran, the Cold War, and the post-Cold War period.

## **CRITICAL THINKING**

In addition to this material, CIK provides the basic lesson that there are generally at least two sides to any story. In order to make a judgment about an issue one must pay attention to the arguments on all sides. In addition, CIK gives the student many opportunities to analyze complicated arguments and determine their soundness. These are good skills to have in thinking about any issue.

## **"CRISIS IN KRASNOVIA": REQUIREMENTS**

CIK requires the following in terms of computer hardware/software and demands on student's knowledge and time:

### **System Requirements**

"Crisis in Krasnovia" requires a Macintosh with:

- At least 32 Meg of RAM .
- Color video capability. 800x600 resolution or better. Thousands of colors or better highly recommended.
- CD-ROM drive (if using the CD-ROM demo version).
- Hard disk with at least 4 GB free (if using the full application) (subject to change).
- Internet connectivity (optional).

### **Software Requirements:**

- CIK 1.0 installed. (For installation instructions, see the CIK Users Manual.)
- System 7.5 or later.
- Netscape Navigator (optional).

### **Student Requirements**

CIK is designed to be used by high school students with a basic knowledge of 20th century international history. We have assumed

that the student has at least some knowledge of the main events of the past fifty years: World War II, the Cold War and its aftermath. Students lacking this knowledge will require some support by the teacher or other students. CIK is not a self-contained introduction to these topics, but provides a way of making the issues from the current era "live".

CIK running on a single Macintosh is designed to be used by 1-3 students working as a team. The plan evaluation task that the student carries out requires between 2-4+ hours total time to complete. Since the system contains more than 4 hours of video interview material from experts, a thorough investigation of that material would require at least that amount of time. However, the evaluation task can be completed satisfactorily without consulting the entire corpus of interviews. In any case, CIK allows students to save their work at any point and resume it at a later time. The application can be used across multiple class days.

### "CRISIS IN KRASNOVIA" IN THE CLASS ROOM

Because of CIK's dual focus, it can be used in a variety of classroom settings including those not immediately connected to 20th century foreign policy. This section provides suggestions about using CIK to enrich class room learning.

#### **Debating Krasnovia**

Organize the class into small groups. Have each group use CIK to evaluate the plan options and decide on a group plan recommendation for Krasnovia. In class, have the groups present and argue for their decision.

#### **The Krasnovia Advocates on other crises**

After the class has used CIK, consider a real foreign policy crisis. Have the class develop what each of the Krasnovia plans would look like and what the arguments of each advocate (Hawk, Humanitarian, ...) would be in the real setting. Stage the debate with students taking the roles of the advocates. As a follow up, look into the policy debate at the time and see what options were considered and whether the arguments developed by the class were actually put forward in the real debate.

## **Debating the Experts**

The expert interviews in CIK contain a wealth of knowledge and opinion about real crises. What do the students think about these views? Do students think some of these opinions are debatable? Have the students research and rebut the experts.

## **The Krasnovia Advocates in other societies**

The Krasnovia Advocates and their arguments are meant to embody policy debate in a democracy. How might the values they argue for have been represented in feudal societies? In other historical settings?

## **CIK: Using the basic structure**

The basic structure of the CIK problem setting consists of the following parts:

- A decision-maker who must decide how to address a problem.
- A slate of proposed plans under consideration.
- Competing goals the plans are supposed to satisfy.
- A panel of advocates each with a particular slant on the problem (perhaps each advocate is in single-minded pursuit of one goal).
- A body of evidence (the expert interviews in CIK) that can be used in support of an argument or to undermine one.
- The student's role as advisor to the decision-maker.

This structure can be reused in many different settings. As a class project, pick a new setting and design a version of CIK in this setting. (Appendix A contains a form that could be used as an aid to the evaluator.)

## **Critiquing CIK**

CIK can undoubtedly be improved. Have the class criticize CIK and develop ways to make it better. Please send us your suggestions!

**APPENDIX A: Analysis template**

**The issue or question:**

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**The assertion or claim:**

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**Evidence for:**

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**Evidence against:**

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