

*forever? Do you send even more of your family members over to mow his lawn? Or do you say to that neighbor, you better step it up and mow your own lawn, or there are going to be serious consequences for you? Mr. Speaker, sending more young American troops now into the middle of Iraqi civil war violence is not the answer.*

*Texas Republican Congressman Ron Paul used a “visit to the doctor” analogy to make his case against the war:*

*A wrong diagnosis was made at the beginning of the war, and the wrong treatment was prescribed. Refusing to reassess our mistakes and insisting on just more and more of a failed remedy is destined to kill the patient. In this case, the casualties will be our liberties and prosperity, here at home, and peace abroad.*

*Debaters make a serious mistake when they underestimate the persuasive power of analogies. One can, of course, point out the obvious: the Iraq War is not much like mowing a lawn, the universe is much larger than a watch, and civil liberties do not really rest on a muddy slope. The real power of an analogy, however, comes not from its literal force, but from the way it illuminates the imagination.*

*The two most successful strategies for responding to an analogy are as follows: (1) Extend the analogy (on its figurative side) until it breaks down and (2) Offer a counter analogy. Consider Representative Ric Keller’s analogy asking how long we should mow our neighbor’s lawn. In response, you might ask whether it changes the equation if you have borrowed and broken your neighbor’s lawnmower? We took responsibility for maintaining order in Iraq when we destroyed its own capability to do so. How long must we mow Iraq’s lawn? Until we can get its lawnmower repaired.*

*As many of Representative Keller’s colleagues seemed to realize, often the best answer to an analogy is a counter analogy. Georgia Representative Jim Marshall, a Democrat, used just such a method:*

*The anti-surge resolution is akin to sitting on the sidelines and booing in the middle of our own team’s play because we don’t like the coach’s call. I cannot join midplay naysaying that might discourage even one of those engaged in this current military effort in Baghdad.*

*John Shaddegg, a Republican from Arizona, used the analogy of stepping on a landmine: The best analogy I heard was one that said, “This is like stepping on a land mine, where you put your foot on it, but you know that if you lift your foot off it will blow up.” We have put our foot on a land mine in Iraq. But if we lift our foot off before the Iraqi government can defend itself, it will blow us up, and it will blow them up.*

*Representative Joe Wilson, a Republican from South Carolina, used a fire fighting analogy to argue for staying the course in Iraq:*