L98: Introduction to Computational Semantics

Pre-Lecture 15 Exercise: Two strange usages (Discourse)

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- **obviously**. In lecture 8, you have seen an example of the "normal" usage of this adverb (as a sentential adverb). Describe the meaning of obvious in that usage, in particular the discourse situations when it can be used in this way.

  Now consider the following (semi-real) example from a radio program:

  Host: *Welcome to the show, Gary. Would you like to tell us what happened to you during the recent flood?*

  Gary: *Oh yes, it was really horrible. Obviously, my two year old daughter was asleep in the downstairs bedroom...*

  What has gone wrong here?

- **Always make new mistakes.** This is a saying attributed to Esther Dyson and various other people. Under the assumption that this is a real (and benevolent) piece of advice, answer the following questions:
  - What could they possibly have meant with it?
  - Is there another interpretation that is more on the surface?
  - Could the statement be reformulated to convey the intended meaning better? If so, how?