

Readings in Argumentation

Studies of Argumentation in Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis (PDA)

This series contains reports on original research in both pragmatics and discourse analysis. Contributions from linguists, philosophers, logicians, cognitive psychologists, and researchers in speech communication are brought together to promote interdisciplinary research into a variety of topics in the study of language use. In this series several kinds of studies are presented under headings such as 'Argumentation', 'Conversation' and 'Interpretation'.

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Readings in Argumentation

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FORIS PUBLICATIONS
Berlin • New York 1992

Foris Publications Berlin • New York (formerly Foris Publications, Dordrecht) is a Division of Walter de Gruyter & Co., Berlin.

- ② Printed on acid-free paper which falls within the guidelines of the ANSI to ensure permanence and durability.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Readings in argumentation / William L. Benoit, Dale Hample, Pamela J. Benoit (eds.).	92-9887
p. cm. – (Studies in argumentation in pragmatics and discourse analysis; 11)	CIP
Includes bibliographical references and index.	
ISBN 3-11-013576-0 (alk. paper)	
1. Reasoning. 2. Logic. I. Benoit, William L. II. Hample, Dale, 1949- . III. Benoit, Pamela J., 1954- . IV. Series.	
BC177.R343 1992	
168-dc20	

Die Deutsche Bibliothek Cataloging in Publication Data

Readings in Argumentation / William L. Benoit ... (eds.). - Berlin ; New York : Foris Publ., 1992	
(Studies of argumentation in pragmatics and discourse analysis ; 11)	
ISBN 3-11-013576-0	
NE: Benoit, William L. [Hrg.]; GT	

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Printing: ICG Printing, Dordrecht

Printed in The Netherlands.

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Preface

As editors of the Series 'Studies of Argumentation in Pragmatics and Discourse Analysis', we are proud to present this volume of articles that have significantly influenced today's study of argumentation. Taken as a whole, these important articles cover a wide range of issues whose history goes back to classical rhetoric and dialectic. Since Aristotle, these issues have been persistently studied from a great variety of perspectives and angles.

In North America as well as in Europe the study of argumentation has been dominated for a long time by the works of Stephen Toulmin and Chaim Perelman. In the late fifties', both Toulmin and Perelman attempted to present an alternative to formal logic that is better suited to analyzing everyday argumentation. Both did so by taking the rational procedures of legal reasoning as a model from which to begin. Although some scholars of argumentation voiced strong criticism, others were inspired by their ideas, and all have benefited from them.

In the past decade, the study of argumentation has developed into a field of study in its own right. This evolution is achieved by an interdisciplinary venture of philosophers, formal and informal logicians, discourse and conversation analysts, communication scholars and representatives of still other disciplines. Depending on the perspective on argumentative discourse which is taken as a starting-point, different initial outlines of paradigms for the study of argumentation have been conceived. Apart from Perelman and Lucy Olbrecht-Tyteca's new rhetoric and Toulmin's analytic model, more or less worked-out frameworks for the study of argumentation can already be found in Michel Meyer's problematology, Charles Willard's social epistemics, Anthony Blair and Ralph Johnson's informal logic, Richard Paul's critical thinking, John Woods and Douglas Walton's post-standard approach to fallacies, Jean-Blaise Grize's natural logic, Else Barth and Erik Krabbe's formal dialectics, Frans van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst's pragma-dialectics and several other theoretical contributions.

In this volume, emphasis is placed on contributions to the study of argumentation by scholars from Communication, Speech Communication, Rhetoric, and Discourse Analysis. So far, their work has been insufficiently represented in anthologies, overviews and readers. William Benoit, Dale Hample and Pamela Benoit have made

efforts to correct the imbalance by filling in the gap. In our opinion, they have succeeded in compounding an excellent selection of classical highlights from modern literature in the field. For scholars, the book provides a rich source of information and references. For students, it provides an eminent introduction to the study of argumentation.

Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst,
Series Editors

I

THE STUDY OF ARGUMENTATION

Introduction: the Study of Argumentation

Although our overall organization of the readings suggests one way of dividing our selected literature, other patterns are possible as well. Quite a number of thematic issues run through contemporary research on argument. Once in a while, a whole paper is centered on one of those issues, but more often a theme appears only in passing within an essay, sometimes without much explicit comment. Even so, these themes often relate to the authors' fundamental assumptions and commitments. Therefore, in this portion of the book's introduction, we would like to discuss some of these issues. Our intention is chiefly to help sensitize you to these themes. These issues are multi-faceted, and don't seem to have any one correct position. As you read the book, you might try to work out your own stands in regard to each of these themes.

We've chosen to highlight five general themes, and to explore some of the subsidiary issues encompassed by each. The themes are: (1) Perspectives; (2) Structure; (3) People and Texts; (4) Individual and Social; and (5) Day to Day Argumentation. These themes inevitably overlap, but we will try to keep them as distinct as we can.

Perspectives

No scholar or student can approach a topic without predispositions of some kind. Your motivation for wanting to study argumentation, or a particular kind of arguing, focuses your interest on certain kinds of things. For instance, if you especially wanted to know why arguments within your family blow up and what to do about it, you would naturally be paying special attention to topics such as the psychological effects of arguing, the effect of prior relationships among the arguers, how arguments can escalate, and so on. You would probably be less interested in abstract theoretical issues, such as the relation between data and claim, or different meanings of "argument." Another person might have exactly the opposite predispositions. Within reason, any predisposition is fine, and no one will seriously advise you to approach the study of argumentation without any predispositions at all. It is

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important, however, that you know your own biases, for they are likely to influence your judgments, and may well lead you away from studying material that you really ought to examine.

Perspectives versus Reality. To underscore these possibilities, let us emphasize that you can only study argument-seen from-a-perspective. You cannot study pure argument, in some sort of naturally occurring, uncontaminated form. The observer always alters the thing observed, either physically or perceptually. Brockriede (1982) has shown us that the figure/ground metaphor is extremely applicable to scholarship. An argument is extremely complex, which makes it impossible to focus on all aspects of it simultaneously. To study some aspect of a thing, the scholar must make that aspect into the figure - that is, s/he must make it artificially prominent. All other features recede into the background, becoming the figure's ground. This means, among other things, that two people having different perspectives may "see" different things when they study the same argument, and could produce quite different analyses, drawing quite different conclusions.

Wenzel (Ch. 7) discusses the differences among rhetorical, logical, and dialectical perspectives in the study of argument. He shows how different questions are appropriate for each perspective, how each has a different rationale, and how asking perspective A's question while working in perspective B creates serious intellectual muddles. Although Wenzel's paper is probably the one in this book which most directly talks about perspectives, quite a few other perspectival issues also appear in the essays. For instance, Trapp (Ch. 10) contrasts the viewpoints of scholars versus naive social actors, and van Eemeren and Grootendorst (Ch. 29-33) advocate a dialectical perspective.

What Metaphor? To help detect some of these points of view, you might notice that different writers use different metaphors to describe arguing. For some (e.g., Jackson and Jacobs, Ch. 34.) arguing is a language "game." Games have specific rules. Some rules can be broken, and result in penalties; these are "regulative" rules because they regulate the players' actions. Other rules can't be broken, because if they are, you're not playing the game; these are "constitutive" rules because they constitute, or define, the activity itself. So if you go offsides in football, you are penalized five yards (regulative rule), but if you use a tennis racket to hit the ball between the goal posts, you are not playing football (constitutive rule).

"Drama" is another common metaphor, or rather a family of them. The most straightforward use of it is in Kneupper's essay (Ch. 15). Following Burke, he says that human acts have the same components

as an act in a theatrical production: agent, agency, scene, purpose, and the act itself. If all human action has these features, so does argument. So to understand an argument, we ought to study its setting, its means, and so forth. Here we would naturally ask scenic questions, or agent questions, while these might not be the immediate concerns of someone working with a game metaphor.

Several other metaphors also derive from the idea of drama, though not Burke's view of it in particular. One such is "script" (e.g., P. Benoit Ch 9). Here the idea is that when you argue, you are following a mental script which tells you what kind of thing to say, what cues to take and which to ignore, how to cue others to talk, what to do at different stages of the argument, and so forth. With this metaphor, an important issue becomes, "what stimulated the choice of an argument script, as opposed to, say, a compliment script?" This sort of question isn't as naturally prominent with the game metaphor. On the other hand, the idea of play - of coordinated action - is more natural to game thinking than to working with scripts.

Perhaps the most traditional metaphor is that of the public speech. It is difficult to recognize the metaphorical nature of this point of view, because arguments do in fact literally occur within public speeches. The perspective becomes figurative, however, when things thought true of a speech are assumed to be true of, say, conversational argument as well. Though not working in exactly these terms, O'Keefe's paper (Ch. 5) shows us how different these kinds of argument can be.

Certainly these are not the only metaphors in use by argumentation scholars, and probably aren't even the only ones in this book. We haven't mentioned "narrative," for instance (Fisher, 1987), or "war" (Shaw, 1922). Our points are simply these: that if you are alert to scholars' use of metaphors, you will learn a lot about those scholars' work; that metaphors naturally predispose people to study some topics and ignore others; and that metaphors are not literal, and so can't be right or wrong, merely more or less useful for a specific purpose.

Methodology. Scholarly methodologies can be divided in many different ways, but one of the most common is "quantitative versus qualitative." Both preferences are represented by the authors in this book, even though we made an intentional decision to forego quantitative papers because of their technical nature. In spite of our omission of heavily statistical reports, however, you can still see quantitative preferences in some of the papers (e.g., Ch. 35-37), and can read two typical examples (Burleson, Ch. 28, and Canary and Sillars, Ch.

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36.). Other writers have a clearly qualitative bent (e.g., Ehninger, Ch. 8, McKerrow in Ch. 26, or Ch. 16-19., and Ch. 29-34).

Only a few people in the discipline would argue that just one of these orientations is legitimate. Most scholars are pretty liberal about what constitutes a reasonable methodology, and would only insist that people have a clear idea about how each method tends to be associated with certain kinds of substantive questions. For instance, if you wanted to know what kind of arguing goes on in *most* families, you would need a quantitative method to justify your generalizations. On the other hand, if you wanted to know how hinting can affect arguments between romantic partners, you might well want to conduct a close qualitative examination of a handful of examples. It is a regrettable fact that most scholars are wedded to either quantitative or qualitative methods, however, and this tends to point whole research programs at only certain kinds of questions.

Descriptive and Prescriptive Scholarship. A similar sort of division exists regarding the purpose of inquiry. Some researchers are content to describe arguing (e.g., P. Benoit and Canary and Sillars, Ch. 35 and 36), while others seek a means of evaluating arguments (e.g., Ch. 16-19). No one disputes that both description and prescription are ultimately desirable (see the papers by van Eemeren and Grootendorst in Section V.), but some scholars feel that our descriptions aren't well enough developed to permit normative advice. Prescriptive workers, however, ground their evaluations on what they regard as well-described facets of argument. Notice that prescriptions tend to be oriented to a specific argument or group of arguments, but that descriptions naturally try to summarize great bodies of argumentative behavior.

Scholars versus Naive Social Actors. The final perspectival issue we wish to discuss is a relatively recent one: who should define argument? You might think that the natural answer would be, "the scholar," and in fact this was the only answer for a long time. In the last ten years or so, however, several researchers have begun to argue that it is useful to learn how ordinary people understand argument (see Ch. 9-11). The idea is that arguing has a phenomenal reality: that is, when people are arguing, they know that they're arguing, and therefore they behave in "argument sorts of ways." So to figure out what naive social actors (i.e., real people who aren't argumentation professors) are doing when they argue, we first have to find out when they think they're arguing. In a more convenient world, the scholars and the naive social actors would agree on what constitutes an argument, but unfortunately they don't. As a matter of fact, the scholars themsel-

ves don't even agree all that much. Therefore, each student of arguing has to make a fundamental decision: will I begin with a scholarly definition in hopes of getting a precise, objective set of standards? or will I permit ordinary people to identify arguments for me, realizing that I will probably end up with fuzzy, subjective criteria? Those making the second choice often label their point of view "interpretive," because the goal is to understand and share the arguers' interpretations of what is happening during an argument.

Summary. Some of the essays in this book are explicit about the perspective being taken, and others leave such issues in the background in order to get on with other questions. Because we've tried to select especially fundamental papers, quite a few discuss these issues at length, and you will find examples of many divergent viewpoints represented here. Rather than becoming frustrated at not being given the one true answer, you should try to recognize your present predispositions, and test them against the many alternatives.

Argument Structure

Most things can be defined or at least described by specifying their form and content. Argument's structure has therefore been a long term preoccupation with argumentation theorists. For centuries, the form of argument was held to be derived from logic. Aristotle, for instance, said that enthymemes are rhetorical deductions, and examples are rhetorical inductions. The epicheireme was another classical effort to formulate argument's structure in logic-related terms. The past thirty years, however, have seen a strong movement away from logic as descriptive of argument's essential form.

Logic. Perhaps the two most important books on argumentation in recent decades are Toulmin's (1958) *The Uses of Argument*, and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1969) *The New Rhetoric*. Both books attack logic as being artificial, and hence irrelevant to ordinary argumentation. Both draw an important contrast between the artificial language of logic and the natural language of argument. Toulmin's "Layout of Arguments" was almost immediately taken up and endorsed as a genuine alternative to logic (Brockriede & Ehninger, 1960; Ehninger & Brockriede, 1960), and one of Perelman's most often cited contributions in our literature is his explanation of logic's impotence in the face of real world discourse. This rejection of logic became the mainstream opinion sometime during the 1970s. Even so, several of the papers in this book are still focused on logic, and

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consider that it defines argument's essential structure (e.g., Chs. 12-15, and van Eemeren, Ch. 32).

Should We Abstract a Structure? Both logic and the Toulmin model offer ways of abstracting and laying out the substantial content of arguments. But since normal people do not speak in the language of formal logic (or, for that matter, in the phrases Toulmin uses), some sort of translation is necessary to convert natural language into either structural format. Willard (Ch. 13) claims that no such translation can be satisfactory. He says that the meaning of an argument is not simply contained in specifiable verbal utterances; it also derives from the human interactional context, with all its nonverbal, unspoken, unacknowledged meanings, passions, and intentions (see Burleson, Ch. 14, for a reply). As noted above, Toulmin and Perelman emphasized the differences between natural and artificial language, but Willard's argument goes further: first, it applies with equal force to logic and the Toulmin model (and is, in fact, more explicitly concerned with Toulmin), and second, its concerns go much deeper than a simple dissatisfaction with translation. *Any abstraction* is a distortion, and thus unacceptable to Willard. However, many scholars are still comfortable with abstracting specific arguments, and with classifying argument types. The "stock issues" of debate theory are an example of a very common classification system still in use.

Conversational Structure. Sentiments such as Willard's combined with an interest in conversation, newly arrived in Speech Communication, to stimulate argumentation theorists to study transcripts and recordings of conversational arguments. One important impulse has been to approach those conversations with as little in the way of scholarly predispositions about structure as possible, and this has resulted in the interpretive movement mentioned earlier. Trapp in particular (Ch. 10 and 11) has championed "grounded theory" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), which calls upon researchers to find their theory within the data, and not to impose theory upon it.

Most discourse analysts are willing to say that conversations do have structures which are generalizable. Most important for our purposes here, perhaps, is the work of Jackson and Jacobs (Ch. 34). They describe the structure of conversational argument in terms of adjacency pairs, their expansions, side sequences, and so forth. An adjacency pair is two utterance types which are always paired so that the first elicits the second. A question, for example, stimulates an answer, while a request requires a grant or refusal. A person refusing to provide the second pair part at all is normally "heard" as actually giving the less preferred one (e.g., A: "Will you lend me \$25?" [request]; B: "Gee,

I'm late for class" [refusal]). A further level of structure is added by considering the felicity conditions for particular speech acts. A competent refusal, for instance, needs to address the requirements for a competent request. Thus, "I have no money myself" is a competent refusal in our example because felicitous requests require that the hearer is *able* to grant them. In short, structural analyses of conversation are now being applied in an effort to discover the structure of conversational argument (see Coulthard, 1985, for an introduction to discourse analysis). Illustrations of this sort of argument scholarship include the papers by P. Benoit and Canary and Sillars, Ch. 35 and 36, as well as the Jackson and Jacobs paper mentioned earlier.

Summary. Scholars find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to study something without being able to say (or assume) what is the structure of the thing studied. Several of the papers in this volume are explicitly concerned about argument's form (e.g., Ch. 12-15), but nearly all make some sort of assumptions about it. Most appear to think that it is possible and reasonable to abstract an argument from its context, but few try to justify this assumption. Some of the authors seem to have logic in mind as a model of form; others make use of Toulmin's terminology; others use conversational features as much as possible; and still others try to find form anew with each data set. As you read various of these papers, you may find it useful to wonder, "What does s/he think an argument looks like?" This question, or one like it, may display some of the author's most fundamental assumptions about the nature of argument for you.

People and Texts

The rhetorical tradition, which gave birth to argumentation studies, has always tended to focus on rhetorical documents – speeches, essays, letters, and so forth. Implicit in this choice is the idea that the arguments are *in* those texts. So you would search for an argument in the same way that you would search for a metaphor or a compound sentence: by carefully reading the rhetorical document. But there are other ways to think about where arguments reside.

Text and Cognition. One point of view is to say that the arguments aren't really in the texts at all – instead, they are in people's minds (see Hample, Ch. 6). The idea here is that you, as a speaker or a listener, are doing the arguing. The text – the words, the symbols, the gestures – only function to stimulate your private arguing. Arguments are seen as human accomplishments, not textual ones. An essay, being

inanimate, cannot argue; only its authors and readers can. So when we say something like, "their essay argues that...," we are expressing ourselves metaphorically, not literally. The fact of human understanding makes it possible for us to predict the private arguing a public text might reflect or stimulate, but the private arguing is the only real arguing. This is not by any means a common point of view among argumentation scholars, but it does serve to highlight the limitations of text as an object of study. W. Benoit (Ch. 27) applies this point of view to the study of credibility.

Argument Is In People. A more commonly accepted judgment is that arguments are in people. Brockriede (Ch. 4) made an historically important case for a person-centered view of argument. He does not see argument as being constituted by formal textual things, such as claiming statements, warranting propositions, adjacency pairs, and so forth. Instead, he says that the "generic characteristics" of argument are human things, such as shared frames of reference, willingness to risk self, and others. Each of your arguments is a part of your life. Every argument reflects your values, your sense of what makes one thing prove another, your knowledge and beliefs, and of course, your communicative behaviors. This is not quite the same as the cognitive view mentioned above, because here the notion of arguing is not confined to mental operations. Arguments are products of the lives that generate them, and every expression of an argument is another life behavior.

An important elaboration of this idea is that arguments are a species of interpersonal interaction (Willard, Ch. 13; also see O'Keefe, Ch. 4, and P. Benoit and Canary and Sillars, Ch. 35 and 36). In Willard's hands, this notion means that arguments are fundamentally collaborative and conversational; monological arguing, as occurs in a letter or public speech, is simply a variant of interpersonal arguing. Still, the arguments are in the people - or, rather, their relationships and conversations - and consequently are not conveniently available to scholars in the same way that an argument-in-a-text is. Other researchers who focus on conversational argument do not necessarily share all of Willard's views, however, and you will often find those scholars writing in ways quite compatible with the argument-in-a-text tradition (e.g., Ch. 29-34, or Ch. 35-37). van Eemeren and Grootendorst, for instance, insist on "externalizing" arguments, by which they mean that only public expressions ought to be studied (1984), and the Jackson and Jacobs paper (Ch. 34) is consistent with this impulse to externalize.

Whose Argument? Another way of addressing this issue is to take the viewpoint of a critic wishing to describe or evaluate an argument.

Critics are always and instantly faced with the question of whose argument to criticize. The text itself is normally quite incomplete: it will contain enthymemes, will reflect unstated prejudices, will pass over things already understood (see Willard, Ch. 13, or the Blair and Hample papers, Ch. 17 and 19). So the critic has to "fill in" the textual argument - but from whose point of view? Several choices are legitimate. The critic might try to understand the argument from the vantage point of the speaker, the audience, or himself/herself. These imply, in turn, formulating the speaker's intentions, the audience's reactions, or the critic's own distanced reading of the argument and its context (see Balthrop, 1982). None of these is easy, of course, but the point being made here is that they all involve people in important ways.

Summary. To study something, you have to be able to find it, and finding arguments turns out to be a complicated task. You might decide that it is most reasonable to locate arguments in texts, or in minds, or in people, or in relationships, or in symbol systems, or in cultures. Or perhaps you will be able to mesh two or more of these views, or even generate another alternative. In any case, a person's answer to the key question, "where is argument?" has much to do with his/her definition of argument, scholarly goals, and research limitations.

Individual and Social

Yet another theme has to do with the varying degrees of control which individual and social factors have over arguing. This is the explicit topic of Ch. 25-28, but some further things may be said about the issue here. (Among the pertinent papers outside Section V. are those by Hample (Ch. 6), and W. Benoit (Ch. 27), both advocating an individual view, and by P. Benoit (Ch. 35) and Trapp (Ch. 10), favoring a social emphasis; also see Hample, 1988, for a recent attempt to address this issue.)

Who Invents? This theme is perhaps easiest to appreciate by focusing on invention: how are arguments created? At one extreme is the conception of an isolated thinker, working out an argument in complete social isolation (see LeFevre, 1987, for a more thorough discussion). The argument is born in one person's mind, consists of his/her beliefs, and is manipulated in exactly the way that s/he prefers. At the other extreme is the conception of people as social creatures, obliged to follow social norms, say socially possible things, and think in common

patterns. "Social facts" constrain people, so that they may make only certain kinds of statements in order to be coherent and to appear reasonable. In between are most scholars' views.

Collaborative Production. An important development in the last decade or so has been the idea of "collaborative" argument production (e.g., Jackson and Jacobs, Ch. 34). This is one of the implications of O'Keefe's (Ch. 5) distinction between argument₁ (something a person makes) and argument₂ (something people have). When people *have* an argument₂, they produce it jointly. One person makes a statement, the other responds to it, the first takes the next step, and so forth. In a conversation, the argument doesn't belong to one person, because it is a dialogical production. If one person makes an argument, it takes its form and substance from him/her, and is a stable, permanent product immediately upon utterance. But if an argument is produced collaboratively, it is emergent. That is, it grows and takes shape in a gradual way, due to the different things that the people say to one another. (For research examples of this latter view, see P. Benoit and Canary and Sillars, Ch. 35 and 36).

This notion of collaboration is social in two different ways. First, the interaction of two people in any behavior automatically makes that behavior a social one, an event that cannot reasonably be attributed to one individual or even simply to two individuals functioning in isolation. Therefore, scholars may see little point in collecting personality data or self reports about individuals, when the object of study is conversational argument. Secondly, the fact of collaboration means that the joint behavior must be coordinated by means of shared understandings, and in the case of arguing, shared understandings about coherence, proving, reasonableness, and related topics. Since you can argue competently with nearly any other adult, this suggests that the means of coordination are not idiosyncratic possessions. If we each had a unique idea about what constituted proof, or what can reasonably be said in answer to an unwanted request, we would find argumentative collaboration impossible. Thus, scholars interested in collaborative production argue that the means of coordination are essentially *social* properties. Individuals who have been properly socialized will also possess this social knowledge, but it exists socially by its nature and individually only by accident. Therefore, scholars are more likely to look to the nature of conversation than to individual knowledge of norms, in order to describe these shared frames of reference.

Self. In a roundabout way, all this has profound implications for the individual. McKerrow (Ch. 26), Brockriede (Ch. 4), and Ehninger

(Ch. 8) all show how arguing involves and enhances your personhood. An argument entails a risk of self. That is, you commit yourself to the soundness of any argument you make, you display your values and open yourself to having them changed by the other person's responses. You can avoid this sort of risk, at least to a degree, by arguing monologically, perhaps by writing an essay and not getting feedback from anyone who reads it. But particularly in face to face arguing, your self is exposed. This is especially the case in the sort of encounter Ehninger has in mind, where "restrained partisans" make an open-minded effort to correct one another's misconceptions. This is a detailed way of understanding the general claim of symbolic interactionism, to the effect that one's self is a social construction (Mead, 1934).

Summary. We are individuals living in a social world, and this is as true about our arguing as about any other facet of our lives. Both the individual and society must be discussed in a full account of human arguing. Not every scholar is necessarily trying to give such a full account, however. Consequently, you will find some of these papers concentrating on social features of arguing, and others focusing on the role of the individual. In those papers which do simultaneously acknowledge the social and the individual, you will need to judge whether the union is presented in a reasonable way. Every student of argumentation must deal personally with the inherent tension between self and society: who invents arguments? how? from what impulses? under what constraints?

Day to Day Argumentation

The four previous themes mentioned here have been pretty abstract and theoretical, but this is not true of all argumentation research, or even all the papers reprinted in this volume. From the beginnings of our modern discipline (Yost, 1917; Rowell, 1932) we have had a strong impulse to address the practicalities of arguing in everyday life. We argue with friends about where to have lunch, with family about who should babysit, with coworkers about who should make the coffee. More formal everyday arguments occur in small groups within corporations, in parliamentary assemblies, in classrooms. Arguing is a fundamental human activity, and appears wherever there is social life.

Contexts and Fields. Consequently, scholars have been anxious to study arguments as they appear within specific settings or among

particular kinds of people. Toulmin (1958) says that most aspects of argument soundness are "field dependent." Thus an argument ("The Bible says so") that is quite acceptable in one field (religion) may be thought ridiculous in another (astronomy). Toulmin claims that each field has its own standards of reasonableness, its own preferred warrants and data. This is an exciting idea, although serious problems have been encountered in trying to define "field" or in trying to provide a defensible list of them (see the papers by Willard, Zarefsky, and Rowland, Ch. 22, 23 and 24).

"Context" is a less theoretically ambitious term, which is used unsystematically to mark off convenient research areas. Thus, this volume includes studies of the argumentation among children, between spouses, and within small groups (Ch. 35, 36 and 37). Oftentimes, argumentation scholars focusing on a particular context are motivated more by the context than by the argumentation, and are more interested in making generalizations about raising children, or maintaining a relationship, or making good decisions, than about principles of argument. This is not a weakness in applied studies; it simply reinforces what was said earlier about there being many good and varied reasons for wanting to study argument. We have been unable to represent all the contexts studied by argumentation scholars, of course, and you may well discover other contexts more important to you if you begin to read the argumentation literature in the field as a whole.

Functions. Applied work leads naturally to questions about the functions of argument. Several papers have tried to work out full functional descriptions of argument (Hample, 1983; Hirokawa & Scheerhorn, 1985), but no settled analysis has yet appeared. Quite a few scholars maintain, however, that the function of argument is disagreement resolution (e.g., Willard, Ch. 13; Jackson and Jacobs, Ch. 34; P. Benoit, Ch. 9 and 35; Trapp, Ch. 10 and 11; van Eemeren and Grootendorst, Ch. 29-33).

Many other researchers do not directly address functional questions, which is unfortunate. Knowing the *function* of something is not quite the same as knowing *why* it happens (for instance, one function of high school is to keep youth out of the labor market, but this is not necessarily why we have high schools). Still, functional analyses are good beginnings for analyses of why things occur. And context-based studies of argument, by their very nature, often offer insight into the rationale and functions of everyday arguing.

Summary. Although it is less a matter of taste than of motivation, you may find that you have a strong preference for either applied or theoretical work. Both are represented in this volume, although

our wish to focus on the nature of argument has resulted in a greater number of theoretical essays. However, if you have a special contextual interest - perhaps families, negotiations, classrooms, literary composition, or intercultural understanding - you ought to be able to apply the theoretical work to your own concerns.

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Chapter 1

From Argument to Argumentation: Fifteen Years of Identity Crisis

Bruce E. Gronbeck

Let me begin this evening by dropping back fifteen years. I was a carefree graduate student, convinced beyond doubt that the field of argumentation needed my mouth, my wit, and my good sense, probably in that order. In 1964, those people who called themselves debate coaches and scholars of forensics were aswirl in exiting-but-controlled controversies. Ehninger and Brockriede had just brought out *Decision by Debate*, urging that debate ought to be viewed as a method of problem-solving and not just a game, that "proof" should be understood not abstractly but as proof *to* and *for* real people, and that Stephen Toulmin's scheme for laying out arguments was both pedagogically and strategically sound.

In 1964, the theory of argumentation was being expanded by two other traditions as well. Social scientists were beginning to get in the act, with my fellow graduate student Gary Cronkhite firing an early shot. In his attack on the classic persuasion-conviction dichotomy, he was unshakably convinced he had mathematically and experimentally demonstrated the connection between logical structures and motivational appeals through a theory of concept association. And, in that same year, two of my doctoral professors, Donald Bryant and Douglas Ehninger, returned from a conference at Pennsylvania State University, urging us to read with considerable care articles from two upstart philosophers, Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. Natanson spent that conference running on about the "self" which risks its wellbeing in argument, and Johnstone had produced a somewhat naive but provocative piece on the relevance of rhetoric to philosophy and philosophy to rhetoric.¹

In other words, although the great textbooks in argumentation and debate by Freeley, Kruger, Mills, Potter, and others² still held center

court in their essential defense of highly rationalistic theories of argumentation, psychologism, phenomenology, and post-positivist philosophy were getting into the game.

The criticism of argumentation as a field likewise was being opened up. Edwin Black's 1965 assault on neo-Aristotelianism was primarily an attack upon critics who blithely charted logical, emotional, and ethical appeals, who, in other words, mechanically took apart units-of-proof. In their place, he urged us to examine what he termed argumentative incapability, clusters of opinion, and universes-of-discourse created by stylistic maneuvers. Gone were diagrams of arguments; in came essentially content analyses of linguistic choices apparent in enthymematic discourse. A second call-for-change among critics was sounded by Leland Griffin in 1964. He showed us how to analyze the argumentative foundations and subsequent exchanges between "pro" and "anti" rhetoricians in his hauntingly predictive study of the "New Left." He encouraged us to examine, not just arguments, but the entire historical-cultural processes of argumentation. Griffin's call for a process view was echoed by a member of this audience; Malcolm Sillars insisted that we view individual speeches as acts, more specifically, as a series of acts occurring within a determinative social-cultural setting.³

Again, then, although Thonssen and Baird still was the bible for critics learning how to analyze closely argumentative discourse,⁴ the demand that we move from "arguments" to "argumentation" was forceably before us. Both theory and criticism, as I sat in the basement of Schaeffer Hall in Iowa City during 1964-65, were being driven out of the tabulation room and into the worlds of human affairs and academic reification. Although we did not really know it then, what we were witnessing was the beginning of a full-fledged assault upon a seventy-five year tradition of conceptualization.

In this mini-keynote tonight, I want to review some of the weapons which have been used in mounting that assault. Pulling together some of the "new" perspectives and exhortations undoubtedly will produce, in my brief time here, a dizzying maelstrom of Kafkaesque nightmares and bareboned "-isms" and "-ologies." That is the point, really: As we have attempted to specify and operationalize in some little completeness the concept "argumentation" understood as an intrapersonal, interpersonal, inter-group, and intercultural process of mutual influence and decision-making, we have experienced a good deal

of frustration and confusion. We have experienced a successively deepening set of identity crises. I will not pretend to solve those afflictions tonight. But, I will review the genesis of our manic depression and neuroses, and attempt to isolate a few pivotal fears which must be worked out before the field of argumentation will achieve mental health.

1. Theory of Argumentation: Manic Depression

Let me begin by noting some instances of manic depression among philosophers of argumentation. In the mid-60s, some of the traditional joints between argumentation and rationality became unglued. In 1966, David Shepard attacked the utility of deductive and inductive logic as an instrument for understanding policy debates. In 1967, Ray Lynn Anderson and C. David Mortensen disparaged strict formal logic's ability to comprehend the usual connectives among argumentative propositions in everyday or marketplace discourse. In 1968, Parke Burgess won an SCA Monograph Award for berating our misunderstanding - and hence misanalysis - of the deeply moral, illogical bases of contemporary social-political conflict. And, in 1969 James McBath and Walter Fisher hammered away at the notion that political argumentation is not really substantive at all, but rather an exercise in image-building.⁵

Worse, real-live philosophers questioned the traditionally understood relationships between argumentation and rationality. Natanson and Johnstone's *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation* (1965) demanded that we deal with the seeming irrationality of everyday argumentation and with the existential personness of arguers. The 1969 English edition of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric* had much the same force, basing its theory of adherence and discussion of argumentative techniques upon personal belief and only "quasi-logical" connectives. The severest attacks, however, came from an aggressive new breed of symbolists, dramatists, and sociolinguists, culminating in what we are calling constructivists. In roughly the last seven or eight years, we have been told that all communication - including argumentation - is dramaticistic or at least interactional, that reality is socially or interpersonally constructed, and that units-of-discourse "smaller" than propositions control our lives.⁶

Now, just stop for a moment to consider what happens as one asserts those last three statements. Traditional studies of argumentation were based on a positivist paradigm. A good positivist works from two inviolable standards - a formal logic and an experiential analysis of propositional content. These two assumptions demand that theorists of argumentation focus on mathematically derivable connectives for standards of *validity*, and on operationally verifiable statements for standards of *truth*.

The new "-isms" and "-ologies" stridently challenge those assumptions. To them, standards of validity are not to be found in the good old logical words - "all," "none," "some," and "some are not" - or in Aristotle's Square of Opposition,⁷ but in community standards for language usage and in context-determined rules for interpersonal relations. Validity to the linguist is a matter of verbal competency, and, to the humanistic sociologist, a matter of social competency. Further, truth is not to be found in either universally accepted maxims or in propositions whose force can be ascertained through inductive and deductive proofs and a look at evidence, but in a society's perception of itself and in individuals' relationships with each other. Truth to the phenomenologist is intrapersonally and interpersonally constructed, and, to the ethnomethodologist, is imbedded in a series of perception- and behavior-controlling myths or fantasies.⁸

Fundamentally, therefore, *theory of argumentation over the last fifteen years has been viewed by the new prophets as a poetic rather than a logical enterprise*. We have been asked to see arguers as actors - even "lovers"⁹ - role-types who write and play out scripts within a quasi-poetic or myth-governed universe. Any arguer-lover-actor who wishes to triumph must understand and employ the culture's *mythoi*, and must adhere to the procedures for proper human relations, in order to be judged competent to lead, to advise, to persuade via arguing. The traditional theory of argumentation has been successively buffeted by psychologism, phenomenology, dramatism, humanism, and, now, constructivism - poeticizing our vision of what we are about.

As a result, I think, we have been left in a state of manic depression. On the one hand, we are fascinated by new claims that rhetoric and argumentation are what make society and human relations possible at all, by our newfound ability to deal with what Cicero termed *argumentatio* rather than mere *argumenti*, and by our warm affinity for scholars in fields other than logic and history. Yet, on the other

hand, we are occasionally driven to the depths of despair in the knowledge that our old machinery for arguing and speaking is no longer applicable. If intersubjective standards for validity and truth are embraced, then we must abandon old appeals to logic and externalized criteria-of-judgment. The new rationality may be, to some, a rule-governed system, but those systems are context- or even person-determined, and hence we continually must begin anew, constructing systems of evidence and proof context by context. We must live with Gerry Philipsen in Teamsterville, and follow along when Charles Willard sings the praises of contextual analysis. Given that we are surrounded with a near infinite number of contexts, we are liable to go crazy examining the argumentative rules governing science, law, south Chicago, and used car lots. No wonder we suffer manic depression when pondering current theories of argumentation.¹⁰

2. Criticism of Argumentation: Neuroses

If contemporary theories of argumentation can make us manic, current approaches to the criticism of argumentation are calculated to make us absolutely neurotic. As I argued in a 1972 *JAF* article, most of us came into the field of argumentation via historical-critical dissertations analyzing arguments—that-mattered in some usually political context. Our studies of classical oratory and confrontations depended in large measure upon the careful isolation of *topoi*, reasoning and organizational patterns, use of evidence – in a phrase, of what we so simply called "logical appeals." What most of us were doing in those studies was analyzing arguments, that is, discrete units of discourse, with a "unit" understood as premise-plus-assertion-plus-evidence-plus-conclusion. Then we would append a few remarks about common ground, the evaluative or emotive appeal those units must have had for members of the decision-making group, and perhaps a word or two about the short-circuiting of reasoning. In other words, we in the name of criticism did essentially ideological analyses of argument.

But, as we all know, both God and ideology died somewhere in the mid-60s. The assassins were legion. Following Black's book, the next major assault came from the New Orleans Conference of 1968, whose deliberations were published the next year as *Conceptual Frontiers in Speech-Communication*. It urged the scientizing of rhetorical criticism, oral interpretation, and theatre, among other things, and demanded that we deal with all forms of symbolic interactions.¹¹ Two

years later, *The Prospect of Rhetoric* published by the Wingspread Conference went much farther, telling critics to "broaden [their] scope to examine the full range of rhetorical transactions; that is, informal conversations, group settings, public settings, mass media messages, picketing, sloganizing, chanting, singing, marching, gesturing, ritual, institutional and cultural symbols, cross cultural transactions, and so forth," and to "undertake the examination of the rhetoric of such areas of study as sociology, political science, psychology, anthropology, English, history, education, speech and so forth."¹² Those two "and so forths" literally blew our cannons of criticism to smithereens.

To be sure, many of us doggedly went on analyzing arguments, but the call to non-ideological discipleship could not be denied. Ernest Bormann pushed fantasy theme analysis as a way of dealing with competing visions of society embedded in discourse. Articles treating the "argumentation" in popular songs, sit-ins, flag-burnings, popular magazines, sitcoms, and operas were printed with respectable regularity. The message of constructivist criticism was preached by even such faithful AFA members as Charles Arthur Willard.¹³

The symbolic-constructivist paradigm was destroying our positivist methodological machinery. Premises could no longer be conceived of as ideological statements; rather, they were seen as narrative-based myths. Arguments came to be seen as value-laden myths or fictions or themes. Evidence was construed as the associations any given auditor could make with a particular statement. And proof could be understood only as the use to which any given listener might put a statement. Overall, argumentation came to be seen as a process of attaching any symbol to literally any other symbol so as to produce any sort of perceptual, attitudinal, or actuarial change. *As long as we could call a symbolic manipulation "strategic," we were willing to term it argumentative.*

Among critics of argumentation, consequently, there arose a neurotic malaise. We, indeed, almost dared not publish an analysis of propositions and evidence, for fear of being charged with inaccurate translation, mere descriptiveness, and contextual insensitivity. For fear of, in Willard's words, leaving out the "paralinguistic, kinesic, and proxemic cues [which] can and do modify the meanings of propositions,"¹⁴ we willingly allowed our critical selves to be declared clinically certifiable neurotics, patients damned to a life of scholarly inaction. Rather than simplify and distort the world of human affairs,

we more or less decided, let us instead abandon all attempts to deal with the process of public argumentation on any but essentially poetic grounds. We found ourselves sitting in the cell next to our old rationalistic theorists of argument.

3. Conclusions: Directions for Mental Health

Now, I suppose I can be accused of an occasional hyperbole in this review of the theory and criticism of argument, and I know I have left out a good many forays along the way, but if I have been overly dramatic and sketchy, it is only because the entire field is. Further, anyone who has read my writings over the last few years knows I personally embrace some of the positions I have tonight exaggerated. Neither my intentional *reductiones ad absurdum* nor my idiosyncratic shortcomings, however, really blunt the force of the preceding analysis. We are in a state of turmoil. We are in danger of collapsing time-honored distinctions between "rhetoric" and "argumentation," between "argumentation" and "poetics" - between private musing and public decision-making processes. In throwing out positivism and prescription and in embracing an elastic concept of communication and mere description, we have transmuted our self-concepts. Our sense of distinctiveness may be gone. The plea of the rich ruler from the New Testament - "What must I do to be saved?" - is upon our lips.

While I have no nostrums to offer, I can suggest three issues which must be confronted directly before we once again are happy with ourselves.

1. *We must reassert and operationalize distinctions between "argumentation" and "arguments," even between "argument" and "arguing."* In his declaration *Argumentatio est explicatio argumenti*, Cicero firmly distinguished between the essentially public, tradition-governed process of bringing forward proofs and the essentially private, personalized ways for building units-of-inference, in order to separate that which is expected in public from that which creatively goes on in private. O'Keefe writing before Willard and Burleson writing after him similarly have attempted to maintain such a distinction,¹⁵ although as Willard has noted in response, the separation at times is nearly impossible to maintain. Yet, without the distinction, we fall into the traps which plague ethnomethodologists and other researchers preaching participant-observation and intuitively descriptive linguistic analyses of discourse:

(a) How can we specify the rules of communicative interaction without getting hopelessly locked into a *petitio principii*? And (b), if all communication is undeniably subjective and meaningful only to the actual participants, how can any theorist or critic of argumentation get far enough outside the process to analyze it? If, in other words, we are to follow the ethnomethodologists into conversational analysis, like them we must grapple with distinctions between private strategies governing individual units or phases of attack and defense on the one hand, and the general, public flow of the whole exchange on the other. Only in this way can we discover the ways in which idiosyncratic modes of thought and justification are transformed and molded into public expressions of facts, values, and policies. If distinctions among "argumentation," "argument," "arguments," and "arguing" fall by the wayside, so too does any notion of publicness.

2. We must grapple explicitly with the issues which made George Herbert Mead a great social philosopher - the relationships among "mind," "self," and "society."¹⁶ As I read Jesse Delia or Charles Willard, I see clever attempts to discuss "mind" and "self", but frankly floundering efforts to deal with "society." In a time especially when cultural analyses of collectivities are waxing, that is too bad. It always has been some conception of "society" and "social standards" which has allowed us to talk about generalized rationality, about inviolable rules governing argumentation, and about procedures for evaluating argumentative effectiveness and ethics. Cultural arbiters of argumentative effectiveness, reasonableness, and ethics sometimes have taken the form of an Ideal Mind; sometimes, the Church; sometimes, the constitutive rules of language-use; sometimes, fact-based science. Whatever the form, some notion of "society" or "authority" or "culture" has been posited in order to give us an externalized court of appeal- an objectivitated judge of rationality, truth and order. Without such judges, argumentation becomes wholly indistinguishable from, say, dialectic, persuasion, and even art. We must return to social philosophy to find an operable notion of "society"-as-arbiter in order to separate the sensing mind from language as the public medium of communication, and in order to reaffirm the importance of procedural, substantive, and social rules within argumentative enterprises. Without firm distinctions and a sense of social power or authority, all of our speculations degenerate into mere particularization and the age-old death trap of psychologism.¹⁷

3. And, perhaps most obviously, we must identify and promote a workable relationship between the theory and the criticism of argumentation. As I look over journal articles, I am impressed - and somewhat frightened - by the fact that the theorists and the critics of argument, for the most part, represent two distinct communities of scholarship. Only in rare instances is the same person both a theorist and critic. Theorists of argument have become evangelical perspectivists, filling their prose with exhortations concerning proper critical attitudes, demands that critics begin working on intersubjective rather than objectified rules-of-inference, and panegyrics on the virtues of conversational analysis of arguing.

Now, consider the plight of the poor critic: Critics who want to live up to such guidelines are expected to mystically isolate arguers' "real" intents, to ferret out all of the possible "meanings" a participant might have assigned to an argument, and to unearth unspoken "rules" governing a particular argumentative exchange. Stripped of any concept of objective reality, of externalized rules-of-inference, and of social rules, critics must muddle along, hoping against hope they won't objectify too much, simplify naively, translate inaccurately, or generalize beyond a single context. Unless theorists are willing to transform their exhortations into behavioral-procedural constructs which conform to real-world discoursing, or unless critics are willing to join in theoretical activities, the current gulf between theory and criticism will widen. And if it does, a good many of us will fall into the pit - or take up a less frustrating occupation such as textbook writing.

Unless, in conclusion, we disambiguate our vocabulary, restore a sense of "publicness" into our speculations concerning argumentation, and reunite theorists and critics, we all will continue to dwell in the booby hatch. Even in the face of the attractive cases forwarded by social constructors of reality, by phenomenologists, by cognitive sociologists, and by constructivists, we must recognize with Goethe that "It is not given to us to grasp the truth.... We perceive it only in reflection, in example and symbol, in singular and related experience. It meets us as a kind of life which is incomprehensible to us, and yet we cannot free ourselves from the desire to comprehend it."¹⁸

It is that desire to comprehend which, ultimately we must not abandon if we are to maintain the theory and criticism of argumentation. Without the desire, we are relegated to the asylum.

Notes

1. Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockiede, *Decision by Debate* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1963), *passim*. Gary Lynn Cronkhite, "Logic, Emotion, and the Paradigm of Persuasion," *QJS*, 50 (Feb. 1964), 13-18. (Although the scientizing of the study of argumentation, especially inferential processes, has been a fascinating development in our literature, I will forego analysis of it in this essay, given my focus. A valuable review of several studies, however, can be found in Gerald R. Miller, "Some Factors Influencing Judgments of the Logical Validity of Arguments: A Research Review," *QJS*, 55 (Oct. 1969), 276-286. Those wishing to see a recent social-scientific study of argumentation-as-process should examine J. Robert Cox, "Deliberation Under Uncertainty: A Game Simulation of Oral Argumentation in Decision-Making," *JAFA*, 14 [Fall 1977], 61-72). Natansons's essays may be found in n. 6, below. Johnstone's lecture was later published as "The Relevance of Rhetoric to Philosophy and of Philosophy to Rhetoric," *QJS*, 52 (Feb. 1966), 41-46. Many of the positions advanced in these and similar articles were semi-canonicalized in Gerald R. Miller and Thomas R. Nilsen, eds., *Perspectives on Argumentation* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman and Co., 1966).
2. Austin J. Freeley, *Argumentation and Debate* (Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth Pub. Co., Inc., 1961); Arthur N. Kruger, *Modern Debate: Its Logic and Strategy* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1960), probably the most purely rationalistic of the group; Glen E. Mills, *Reason in Controversy*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968); David Potter, ed., *Argumentation and Debate: Principles and Practices* (under the auspices of Tau Kappa Alpha; New York: Dryden Press, 1954). One might also include, although it is more akin to Ehninger and Brockiede, Russell R. Windes and Arthur Hastings, *Argumentation and Advocacy* (New York: Random House, 1965).
3. Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism; A Study in Method* (Macmillan Co., 1965), esp. Chaps. 4 and 6. Leland M. Griffin, "The Rhetorical Structure of the 'New Left' Movement: Part I," *QJS*, 50 (April 1964), 113-135. Malcolm O. Sillars, "Rhetoric as Act," *QJS*, 50 (Oct. 1964), 277-284.

4. Lester Thonssen and A. Craig Baird, *Speech Criticism: The Development of Standards for Rhetorical Appraisal* (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1948).
5. David W. Shephard, "Rhetoric and Formal Argument," *WS*, 30 (Fall 1966), 241-247. Ray Lynn Anderson and C. David Mortensen, "Logic and Marketplace Argumentation," *QJS*, 53 (April 1967), 143-151. (These pieces were assaulted in Glen E. Mills and Hugh G. Petrie, "The Role of Logic in Rhetoric," *QJS*, 54 [Oct. 1968], 260-267) Parke G. Burgess, "The Rhetoric of Black Power: A Moral Demand?", *QJS*, 54 (April 1968), 122-133. James H. McBath and Walter R. Fisher, "Persuasion in Presidential Campaign Communication," *QJS*, 55 (Feb. 1969), 17-25.
6. Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., eds., *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation* (University Park: Penn. State Univ. Press, 1965). Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric; A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (1958; Notre Dame, In.: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1969). The "-isms" and "-ologies" I list here, of course, could be expanded. Among those relevant to this essay, however are the following:
Dramatism/Dramaturgy - the works of Kenneth Burke, Erving Goffman, and Hugh D. Duncan; the pieces in James E. Combs and Michael W. Mansfield, eds., *Drama in Life; The Uses of Communication in Society* (Communication Arts Books; New York: Hastings House, 1976). *Ethnography* - e.g. Dell H. Hymes, "The Ethnography of Speaking," in *Anthropology and Human Behavior*, ed. Thomas Gladwin and William C. Sturtevant (Washington, D.C.: Anthropological Society of Washington, 1962), pp. 13-53; Mary Douglas, ed., *Rules & Meanings: The Anthropology of Everyday Knowledge* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973); or Richard Bauman and Joel Sherzer, eds. *Explorations in the Ethnography of Speaking* (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1974). *Cognitive Sociology* - esp. the writings of its principal exponent, Aaron V. Cicourel, *Cognitive Sociology: Language and Meaning in Social Interaction* (Baltimore: Penguin, 1973). *Sociolinguistics* - e.g. Samir K. Ghosh, ed., *Man, Language and Society* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), or Joshua A. Fishman, ed., *Readings in the Sociology of Language* (The Hague, Mouton, 1968). *Ethnomethodology* - esp. its "father," Harold Garfinkel, "Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies," *American Journal of Sociology*, 61 (1955-56), 420-424, and his *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967); and also Roy Turner, ed., *Ethno-methodology* (Baltimore: Pen-

guin Books, 1974). *Constructivism* - at the level of "society," Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1966), or John P. Hewitt, *Self and Society* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1976); at the level of the "self" and "others," the pieces flowing through our journals are near legion, although for solid reviews see C. Jack Orr, "How Shall We Say: 'Reality is Socially Constructed Through Communication?", *CSSJ*, 29 (Winter 1978), 263-274, and Charles Arthur Willard, "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument: The constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument," *JAFA*, 14 (Winter 1978), 121-140.

For an interesting critique of these and some few other "-isms" and "-ologies" currently in vogue, see Howard Schwartz and Jerry Jacobs, *Qualitative Sociology: A Method to the Madness* (New York: The Free Press, 1979).

7. The traditionist position is developed clearly in Irving J. Copi, *Introduction to Logic* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1961), esp. Chaps. 5 and 6.

8. For a "communicational" analysis of linguistic competency, see Noam Chomsky, *Cartesian Linguistics: A Chapter in the History of Rationalist Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), or Raymond D. Gumb, *Rule-Governed Linguistic Behavior* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972), esp. pp. 11-53. On social competency and communication, see Charles K. Warriner, *The Emergence of Society* (Dorsey series in Anthropology and Sociology; Homewood, Ill.: The Dorsey Press, 1970), esp. Chaps. 2, 3, and 5. The phenomenologist's position is artfully undergirded in Alfred Schutz and Thomas Luckmann, *The Structures of the Life-World*, trans. Richard M. Zaner and H. Tristram Engelhardt, Jr. (Evanston: Northwestern Univ. Press, 1973). Among Garfinkel's works, this issue is probably best addressed in Harold Garfinkel and Harvey Sacks, "The Formal Properties of Practical Actions," in *Theoretical Sociology*, ed. John C. McKinney and Edward A. Tiryakian (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1970).

Even some of the rationalists or formalists are responding to some of these forays. A newly developing field is termed "practical reasoning" (discussed generally in Schwartz and Jacobs, pp. 211-224). That practicality can become outrightly pragmatic, as in Nicholas Capaldi, *The Art of Deception* (Buffalo: Prometheus Books, 1971), or it retains some of its formality, as in Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke, and Allan Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning* (New York: Macmillan Pub. Co., Inc., 1979).

9. Wayne Brockriede, "Arguers as Lovers," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 5 (Winter 1972), 1-11. The foundation for a full-blown "dramatistic" theory of argumentation can be found in Ernest G. Bormann, "Fantasy and Rhetorical Vision: The Rhetorical Criticism of Social Reality," *QJS*, 58 (Dec. 1972), 396-407. Since this article, numerous studies have followed in its wake; a complete listing can be acquired from Professor Bormann (Univ. of Minn.- Minneapolis). To see fantasy theme analysis applied to traditional argumentative discourse, see especially the October 1977 issue of *QJS* (vol.63). A more general view of "dramaturgy" and political argumentation is offered in Bruce E. Gronbeck, "The Rhetoric of Political Corruption: Sociolinguistic, Dialectical, and Ceremonial Processes," *QJS*, 64 (April 1978), 155-172, and in "The Functions of Presidential Campaigning," *CM* 45 (Nov. 1978) 267-280. The widest "rhetorical" view of dramatism and conflict, however, perhaps is Leland M. Griffin, "A Dramatistic Theory of the Rhetoric of Movements," in *Critical Responses to Kenneth Burke*, ed. William H. Rueckert (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minn. Press, 1969), pp. 456-478.
10. Gerry Philipsen, "Speaking 'Like a Man' in Teamsterville: Cultural Patterns of Role Enactment in an Urban Neighborhood," *QJS*, 61 (Feb. 1975), 13-22, and his "Places for Speaking in Teamsterville," *QJS*, 62 (Feb. 1976), 15-25. For pieces by Willard, see n. 13.
11. Robert J. Kibler and Larry L. Barker, eds., *Conceptual Frontiers in Speech-Communication: Report of the New Orleans Conference on Research and Instructional Development* (New York: Speech Assoc. of America, 1969), esp. pp. 21-23.
12. Lloyd F. Bitzer and Edwin Black, eds., *The Prospect of Rhetoric: Report on the National Developmental Project* (sponsored by the Speech Communication Association; Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1971), esp. pp. 225, 226.
13. For Bormann, see n.9. Exemplar pieces of criticism include: Stephen Kosokoff and Carl W. Carmichael, "The Rhetoric of Protest: Song, Speech, and Attitude Change," *SSCJ*, 35 (Summer 1970), 295-302; Allen H. Merriam, "Symbolic Action in India: Gandhi's Nonverbal Persuasion," *QJS*, 61 (Oct. 1965), 290-306; G.P. Mohrmann and F. Eugene Scott, "Popular Music and World War II: The Rhetoric of Continuation," *QJS*, 62 (April 1976), 145-156; Cheryl Irwin Thomas,

"Riots as Symbolic: A Criticism and Approach," *CSSJ*, 27 (Winter 1976), 310-317; Richard J. Goodman and William I. Gorden, "The Rhetoric of Desecration," *QJS*, 57 (Feb. 1971), 23-31; William Brown, "The Prime-Time Television Environment and Emerging Rhetorical Visions," *QJS*, 62 (Dec. 1976), 389-399; Virginia Kidd, "Happily Ever After and Other Relationship Styles: Advice on Interpersonal Relations in Popular Magazines, 1951-1973," *QJS*, 61 (Feb. 1975), 31-39; Kathleen J. Turner, "Comic Strips: A Rhetorical Perspective," *CSSJ*, 28 (Spring 1977), 24-35; James R. Irvine and Walter B. Kirkpatrick, "The Musical Form in Rhetorical Exchange: Theoretical Considerations," *QJS*, 58 (Oct. 1972), 272-284, especially as exemplified critically in Thomas J. Cowan, "The Rhetorical Implications of '*La battaglia di Legnano*,'" unpub. M.A. thesis, Colo. State Univ., 1977; James W. Chesebro and Caroline D. Hamsher, "Communication, Values, and Popular Television Series," and Philip Wander, "Counters in the Social Drama: Some Notes on 'All in the Family,'" in *Television: The Critical View*, ed. Horace Newcomb, 1st ed. (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1976), pp. 6-25, 35-42.

Among Willard's writings relevant to this essay I would include: Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," *CM*, 43 (Nov. 1976), 308-319; "Argument as Non-Discursive Symbolism," *JAFA*, 14 (Spring 1978), 187-193; "A Reformulation....," cited in n. 6 above; and "The Epistemic Functions of Argument: Reasoning and Decision-Making From a Constructivist/Interactionist Point of View," *JAFA*, 15 (Winter 1979), 169-191.

14. These accusations are laid out in Willard, "On the Utility," and the quotation comes from p.319.

15. Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *JAFA*, 13 (Winter 1977), esp. p. 127; and Brant R. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," *JAFA*, 15 (Winter 1979), esp. pp. 140-143. See also Wayne Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," *JAFA*, 13 (Spring 1977), esp. 129-130.

16. George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and society* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1934), as well as *The Philosophy of The Present* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1932).

17. Now, it should be noted that Willard ("A Reformulation...") following Joseph W. Wenzel ("Three Senses of Argument," unpub. paper, 1977), does recognize that procedural rules - rules for who speaks when, perhaps even rules for following one proposition with another - come into play in at least some argumentative situations. Yet, in his desire to strip back the notion of "rationality," he does seem to ignore two other kinds of rules which at least occasionally have force in argumentation: *Substantive rules* - what must be brought in support of what - certainly are operative in legal argumentation and certain forms of religious disputation, for example. And, *social rules* - things I *must* say and ways I *must* say them - are present in, say, the British House of Commons ("Backbenchers may not speak until floor leaders and party luminaries have spoken," "Your opponent must be referred to as 'the Hon. Member from X,'" etc.), the U.S. Senate ("First-year senators should not give speeches on the floor"), and even less formal familial spats (e.g., "My wife should not bring up my smoking when we are arguing about another issue"). The point is, argumentation is a convention- or rule-governed activity, except, I suppose, in what Rapoport terms a "fight" situation. To him - and to me - both "games" and "debates" are impossible to conceive of free from at times controlling rules. See Anatol Rapoport, *Fights, Games and Debates* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Mich. Press, 1960).

18. As quoted in Joseph R. Royce, *The Encapsulated Man* (New York: D. van Nostrand, 1964), p. 129. My thanks to Jack Orr (n. 6, p. 274) for finding this pithy quotation.

Chapter 2

The Contemporary Renaissance in the Study of Argument

Wayne Brockriede

This conference marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the contemporary renaissance in the study of argument. Twenty-five years ago Dr. Chaim Perelman and Mme. Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca produced *The New Rhetoric*.¹ The book went largely unnoticed by persons in this country until 1964 when Robert T. Oliver and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. co-hosted a conference in rhetoric and philosophy and invited representatives of both disciplines, including Chaim Perelman, philosopher and rhetorician. While preparing for that conference I read essays of Perelman appearing in philosophy journals in English and browsed *The New Rhetoric*, but because my French was so feeble my discoveries were limited virtually to seeing an astonishing range of works on rhetoric and philosophy cited in footnotes. The essays in English manifested a sophisticated and innovative view of rhetoric in general and argumentation in particular. For some time I tried in vain to interest a doctoral candidate proficient in both French and argumentation to introduce Perelman's work in this country. Someone else's student, Ray Dearin, wrote a dissertation on Perelman and a subsequent article² that appeared in 1969.³ Since then, through further writing and lecturing in this country, Chaim Perelman continues to be a major force in the contemporary renaissance in the study of argument.

Also twenty-five years ago, in the summer of 1958, I was at work on a convention paper for the Speech Association of America on an assigned title, "The Anatomy of Argument." I'm not sure what Paul Carmack had in mind when he asked me to write a paper on such a title, and until late June I had no idea what I was going to do. Erwin Bettinghaus, then a forensic assistant supervising library study at our summer high school debate workshop, but now only a dean, suggested that I look at a new book he had spotted that afternoon. It was

Stephen Toulmin's *The Uses of Argument*⁴ and it became the basis for my convention paper, now with the new title, "The Physiology of Argument."⁵ On the same convention program Douglas Ehninger presented a paper that later became Chapter 2 of *Decision by Debate*,⁶ a collaboration we struck up over coffee after the convention program.

Toulmin's influence on the renaissance of argument was rapid. Within ten years most textbooks on argumentation, public speaking, and other assorted topics included several pages on the Toulmin layout of argument, with an amazing array of variations on the theme. In the 1970s writers began to emphasize his more recent work, *Human Understanding*,⁷ and ideas of *The Uses of Argument* other than the layout in Chapter 3. During the past seven years his work has been the subject of a controversy of many long articles on whether arguments usefully may be diagrammed at all. His concept of fields of argument has spawned still another controversy. Clearly, he and Perelman are the two most important influences on the study of argument during the past twenty-five years. Coincidentally, both of their seminal books were published in 1958.

I feel honored by the invitation to speak to you this afternoon. I intend my presentation to keynote an epideictic celebration here. Four years ago Bruce Gronbeck in his keynote address to the first summer conference on argumentation⁸ deplored fifteen years of identity crisis, spoke of the theory of argumentation as manic depressive, called the criticism of argumentation neuroses, and concluded with some recommendations for mental health. I shall take a longer view - twenty-five years instead of fifteen - and look at the bright side of what has happened during that period. I do not mean to try to refute Gronbeck's claim that some of our distinctions are fuzzy, that some of us may have poeticized a vision of argumentation (a heresy several papers at this conference happily will continue), and that some of us had become evangelical perspectivists. His is not a view to refute or ignore, but one to consider alongside others.

But I do mean to try to dispel a mood of gloom and doom. We justly can be proud to have been a part of twenty-five years of existing studies on argument. Although some persons may deplore an elasticity in the construct of argument, wince when someone declares argument is anywhere in the vicinity of people, and wish for the good old days when everyone knew what an argument was, a candid look at the status of argument in 1958 and in 1983 should suggest that the old days

were not all that good. At this conference we have programs on five general topics. I intend to take them up, one by one, and look at what we have accomplished during the past twenty-five years in comparison with the preceding twenty-five years from 1933 to 1958.

1. Theory and Philosophy of Argument

This first topic of the conference includes programs on Aristotle and argumentation, the role of time in argumentation, argumentation as epistemic, rhetoric of the human sciences, and argumentation and critical theory. With the exception of the program on Aristotle, they could not have been presented at a conference on argumentation in 1958. These programs will include papers with such titles as "The Language of Time: Toward a Temporal Grammar of Argument," "Interrogation and Understanding: The Argumentative Basis of Experience," "Models, Statistics, and Other Tropes of Politics: Or, Whatever happened to Argumentation in Political Science," and "Deconstructing Habermas." None of these papers could have been presented in 1958. But the very idea of discussing the philosophy or theory of argument at a national conference at that time would have seemed fanciful in the extreme. Who would the speakers have been? What would they have said?

What were people saying about the theory and philosophy of argument in 1958? Not much. Perhaps the only truly notable work during that era was Richard Weaver's *The Ethics of Rhetoric* in 1953.⁹ Ronald Matlon's *Index* of the category of pragmatic communication, sub-category of argumentation, subheading of philosophy and argument,¹⁰ shows sixteen entries, the earliest of which was published in the *QJS* in 1962, Maurice Natanson's "Rhetoric and Philosophical Argumentation."¹¹ Other major works written at the beginning of the renaissance of the past twenty-five years would include Lloyd Bitzer's "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited," published in 1959 in the *QJS*,¹² and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr.'s book, "*Philosophy and Argument*, which also came out in 1959.¹³ A few other entries before 1958 related loosely but not, I think, importantly to an understanding of theory or philosophy of argument. The pickings were slim between 1933 and 1958. I won't claim the title of a two-page article in *Today's Speech* in 1957 was representative of writing during the pre-renaissance era, but I am quite confident no editor of *Communication Quarterly* during recent

years would have published an essay with the title, "How to Argue With a Red-Headed Woman."¹⁴

To be sure, classical studies of *logos*, *stasis*, the enthymeme, and other classical concepts related to argumentation have appeared from time to time, and *logos* still sometimes receives its once obligatory paragraph or page in critical studies of ancient, British, or American orators. Convention papers on Aristotle, Whately, and others recurred. But the kind of papers now produced regularly in regional and national journals dealing with theoretical and philosophical issues in the study of argument, and doing so quite directly, were somewhere between rare and none in 1958.

Contrast that situation with the contemporary scholarship that produces a book like *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, edited by J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard, and published in 1982.¹⁵ The book was dedicated to me, and I am delighted to have my name associated with such an undertaking. Willard's own book, published earlier this year, *Argumentation and the Social Grounds of Knowledge*,¹⁶ could not have been conceived in 1958. We've come quite a long way.

2. Public Argumentation

Our advance in the study of argumentation in public communication is different. In the twenty-five years preceding 1958, the study of argument as a part of public discourse was well entrenched. Rooted in the essay by Herbert Wichelns¹⁷ and nurtured by elaborate categories in Thonssen and Baird,¹⁸ hardly any study in public address was produced without some reference to the arguments of speakers. In addition, many studies focused on aspects of argumentation and debate in the public forum. In Arthur Kruger's *Bibliography* of 1964¹⁹ one can count two books, fifty-two theses and dissertations, and thirty-three articles on debaters and debates from 1933 to 1958. I suspect Matlon's *Index* would turn up other items, but without further counting the conclusion is well justified that the period was ripe with studies emphasizing the arguing or debating abilities of speakers or keying on particular debates. In addition, thousands of studies in the history and criticism of public address devoted some pages to *logos*.

These studies, later castigated by Edwin Black²⁰ and others with the pejorative label of neo-Aristotelianism, made use of classical constructs

and terminology, all of which carried with them the baggage of assumptions that worked wonderfully well in understanding classical oratory, but less well in dealing with differences in people, issues, situations, and cultural norms in this country during the twentieth century. But the question of "goodness of fit" between classical doctrine and contemporary practice was raised rarely before 1958. The best of several such criticisms, in my judgment, was Albert J. Croft's "The Functions of Rhetorical Criticism," published in the *QJS* in 1956,²¹ a paper too little recognized for initiating arguments developed later in the 1960s.

Little interest in 1958 was attached to the topic of one of the programs at this conference, "Understanding 'the Public' in Public Argument." No interest was shown in 1958 on "Ways of Going Public," the title of a paper on that program, because at that time we would have assumed that one went public by making public speeches. The idea that one might go public by sending direct-mail fundraising letters, the topic of another paper on the same program, would have provoked either amusement or annoyance. A paper like Walter Fisher's at this conference, in which he takes the status of the revered rational-world paradigm and gives equal status to, would you believe it, telling stories, might have been construed as a paper on the ethics of evidence on a forensics program. The topics of competitive papers on public argumentation might have been addressed in 1958, although at that time a writer on the Johnstonian predicament would not have had the benefit of Johnstone's best work. A program on the ideograph would have been impossible in 1958.

In addition, I suspect strongly that all the papers on all the programs will be more sophisticated at this conference than they would have been had such a conference been possible in 1958. In public argumentation, too, we've come quite a long way.

3. Interpersonal Argumentation

We've come even a longer way in advancing our understanding of interpersonal argumentation. I can't treat this topic comparatively for one simple reason: we had no concept of argument viewed as interpersonal interactive process in 1958. Persons then would have been bewildered thoroughly by programs on argumentation with titles such as "Individuality in Argument and Reasoning," on "Functions

of Argumentation in Group Communication," on "Social Conflict in Interpersonal Relationships," or on "Studies in the Sociology of Argument." Even young Turks like myself in 1958 might have wondered a bit about papers titled, "Interactional Antecedents of Social Reasoning Development," or "Negotiating Conflict in Differing Relationship Contexts," of "Characteristics of Arguing from a Social Actor's Perspective."

Some persons in 1983 might still question the legitimacy of such studies of argumentation. But the number is dwindling, and clearly I am not among them. I applaud the idea of looking at arguing as an interaction process persons engage in as one of the useful perspectives students of argumentation may take. I predict it will continue to attract the attention of some of the best minds in our discipline. I see it as one of the advances that has spawned the contemporary renaissance in the study of argument. We've come quite a long way, especially since we started at square one.

4. Forensics

I see several special problems in comparing forensics in the twenty-five years before and the twenty-five years after 1958. First, the number of persons who were involved actively in debating or in directing debate both in 1958 and 1983 is quite small. Probably over half the members of this audience once were so involved and now are not. I'm one of the earlier forensics emeriti, and my colleague Lucy Keele is one of the newest. We left forensics after too many miles, too many hours, too many Motel 6s, too many quick-stop fast-food places, and with the hard realization that our best shot at achieving other professional goals would come with retirement from the forensics community. I have wondered at times whether anything I've done since 1963 was as useful and as rewarding as seeing bright people develop abilities in arguing and communicating. Probably almost another half the audience are still working in forensics but are too young to have experienced the activity in 1958.

So the first problem with this comparison is that some persons in this room were not around in 1958, and the rest of us had intimate acquaintance with the before and not much knowledge of the hereafter. In that regard I may come closer than most persons to be equipped to hazard some comparisons because from 1973 to 1977 I went to debate

tournaments, worked in tab rooms, judged debates, talked with coaches and debaters, and one quarter served as a Visiting Assistant Debate Coach for Jack Rhodes at the University of Utah.

A second problem is that the world at large and persons in this room may tend to become polarized into the two groups implied by what I have just said: the working stiff who toil long hours with much emotional involvement and the old buffalo out to pasture who shake their heads sadly at what they see. Each group has a hard time understanding the other. When I was a director of forensics in the 1950s I resented the oldtimers of the 1940s who saw their activity being led to ruin by us youngsters. Many directors of forensics of my era now see present-day forensics in a similar way. Although I share some of their concerns, I must tell my fellow buffalo that I have some appreciation for the feeling of workers when condemned by exworkers.

For one thing we "ex"es sometimes engage in selective recall. We probably remember the dozen or so best debaters we heard better than we do the thousands of persons who had relatively little skill or ambition and sometimes engaged in questionable ethical practices. One friend of mind who debated in the 1950s and coached in the 1960s told me of a fellow debater who had advanced to the final round of the West Point Tournament. He once prayed on his way to his first tournament of the year that he would draw negative in his first round so he could appropriate his opponent's case for his second round on the affirmative. Most debaters in 1983 are far better prepared than very many debaters were in 1958. Other comparisons no doubt also would favor debaters today over those of twenty-five years ago.

But I do believe all changes are not gains. I hope you will take my comments about current debate practices as friendly and well-intentioned, even if you are right assuming I know too little about 1983 and remember too little about 1958. I have three major concerns. First although debaters now have more information, they do not put it into arguments better than their 1958 counterparts. Sometimes warrants are not only unproved and unstated but unable to withstand critical scrutiny. Sometimes to say an opponent's warrant out loud is to refute the argument. My impression is that not enough debaters do this in 1983, nor did they do it often enough in 1958.

Second, although the omnibus propositions of today that invite fifty or so legitimate affirmative cases and admit another hundred or so where topicality is suspect or absurd can prevent a debate season from getting tedious (as admittedly propositions sometimes got during the 1950s when affirmative teams were limited to a few variations on a few legitimate approaches), today's propositions create problems. They tend to confuse students about the nature of policy debating, encourage quibbles about topicality, invite trick cases that make our 1958 squirrels look like sable, and produced canned negative attacks designed to fight spreads with spreads. The best negative debaters in 1958 would tailor precise objections to practicability and arguments about disadvantages to fit closely the individual affirmative case they were opposing.

Third, although expert judges of championship debates selected through elaborate strike systems can hear more efficiently, write flow sheets in more sophisticated ways, and certainly write far more lucid criticism than we used to do in 1958, not enough judges demand consistently that debaters make arguments instead of read evidence or require them to communicate clearly rather than expect judges to fill in the blanks.

If these criticisms were only my idiosyncratic objections, merely the musings of a nostalgic buffalo, you could write them off with a clear conscience. You cannot dismiss so easily what present leaders in inter-collegiate forensics see as serious problems, however. At the last convention of the Western Speech Communication Association I attended a program on problems of NDT debate. Our buffalo were represented by Malcolm Sillars who, with his customary modesty, admitted he was the very first college debater to utter those immortal words, "Carry that across your papyrus!" The other members of the panel included influential directors of forensics who voiced some of the concerns I just mentioned. I am told that in formal seminars and informal coffee conversations, the forensics community is much concerned and takes seriously the idea that the responsibility for intercollegiate debating rests on directors of forensics who, through their coaching and judging, provide a system of rewards and punishments. Perhaps the next twenty-five years may represent a renaissance in these activities.

In the realm of writing about forensics, some significant advances have occurred. Not only have general articles on argumentation theory and philosophy in *JAF*A improved considerably in the past twenty-five

years, so have articles that deal specifically with theories of contest debating. I do not wish to belittle authors of papers in the early issues of *JAF*, or in the preceding magazine, *The Record*, for which I wrote an article and served as associate editor. We did the best we could in those early years. But articles on academic debate theory are better during the past ten years than in the preceding ten, and articles are much better during the past twenty-five years than during the preceding twenty-five. Since articles about intercollegiate debate are still written mostly by forensics educators who regularly work twice as long as the rest of us, the increased quantity and quality is especially praiseworthy.

If one reasonably can date the renaissance of interest in the general study of argument at 1958, perhaps 1964 is as good a candidate as any for starting a renaissance in the theory of academic debate. In that year Patrick Marsh wrote an essay in *Speaker and Gavel* entitled "Is Debate Merely a Game for Conservative Players?"²² The essay questioned the traditional perspective on presumption and burden of proof followed for years in the name of Bishop Whately, and it proposed an alternative view that change is not necessarily evil nor the status quo necessarily a gem to preserve. Within a few years comparative advantages cases, once used only by a few eccentric teams, became the majority approach of intercollegiate debating.

Other developments in academic debate theory include some new thinking about inherency, counterplans, and the fiat; alternative perspectives on judging contest debates, notably that of hypothesis testing; and an increased interest in debating questions of value. Some of these topics will be explored further at this conference. In both the theory and the practice of intercollegiate forensics we have made some progress even though some problems remain to be resolved.

5. Workshop in Pedagogy and Curriculum Development

The word "workshop" in the title of this series of programs may suggest that work needs to be done in teaching methods and in argumentation and debate courses. I'm not aware that many writers have faced such objectives directly.

Clearly, textbooks have changed from 1959 to 1933, and I take the changes to constitute improvements, although I may have a vested

interest in thinking so. I know changes have been much greater from 1958 to 1983 than during the preceding twenty-five years. In 1958 a colleague of mine still was using the 1917 edition of William Trufant Foster's book.²³ Not many textbooks were available. By 1966 or so many new ones had emerged. They had a new look. For example, the obligatory chapter on the syllogism in the older books, which authors typically ignored when they got down to the serious business of discussing evidence, reasoning, and proofs, was replaced by informal approaches to reasoning, notably variations on the layout of argument by Toulmin. In addition, advances in thinking about theory and philosophy of argument in general and about academic theory in particular found their ways into many new textbooks.

During the past twenty-five years many courses and textbooks on argumentation and debate are becoming bifurcated. I'm not sure this change constitutes progress. Although some textbooks and courses still combine a general study of argumentation with a study of academic debating, some books deal exclusively with principles of argumentation, and others are concerned only with procedures and tactics of academic debating. But if forensics is truly to serve as a laboratory for argument, as the title of a program Saturday morning implies, one wonders why a course should not deal with the principles of argument useful for public and interpersonal debating *and* with the opportunity to apply such principles in academic debate situations. The advantages of such a connection are implied by the title of one of the papers on that program, "Rapprochement of World₁ and World₂: Discovering the Ties Between Practical Discourse and Forensics." Putting one world into one textbook and one course and a second world into another course and textbook may effectively conceal such ties from students.

I have two concluding observations. First, let me end where I began. Let us celebrate at this conference twenty-five years of solid achievement in the study of argument. The people and the titles of papers here represent many of our advances. I shall be surprised if some of the presentations do not honor Chaim Perelman by exploring new rhetorics that focus on argumentation and honor Stephen Toulmin by finding new uses of argument. As we celebrate past renaissance and enjoy present stimulation, we must realize we have not exhausted either our perspectives or our uses of argument, nor have we advanced adequately present perspectives or uses. We face a lot of hard but interesting work during the next twenty-five years to continue

improving our understanding of what argument is, where it applies, and how it works.

Second, we can rejoice as the applicability of an understanding of argument expands to new fields and as our perspectives on its study increase. Let us worry less about identity crises. We need not be overly concerned about hard and fast distinctions from which we must pick an *either* or an *or*. The study is rich enough to accommodate both public argument and interpersonal argument, both philosophy of argument and forensics, both theory and practice, both product and process and method; both naturalistic description and idealized visions; both the world of the classroom and the world outside. No one of us can deal with all these concerns at once and still engage in the kind of rigorous scholarship that truly advances the perspective of our choice. But in a community of scholars specialities can coexist harmoniously, especially if some of us try to build bridges between them so an understanding of one approach enriches an understanding of another.

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II

THE CONTEXT OF ARGUMENTATION SCHOLARSHIP

Chapter 3

Traditional Conceptions of Argument

William L. Benoit

This essay reviews certain developments in the history of argument. It begins in the fifth century B.C. and ends in the twentieth century. It would take too much time and space to review *all* of the developments in the long history of argument. However, only some of these developments are directly related to the issues raised in this book. The concepts covered here are important because they serve as the backdrop or context for most of the issues treated in this book, and because historical references crop up repeatedly in contemporary writings on argument. This essay discusses six classicists: Corax and Tisias (who initiated the Western tradition of rhetoric and argument) two sophists (Gorgias, Protagoras), Aristotle, and Hermagoras; one nineteenth-century theorist, Whately; and two contemporary theorists, Toulmin and Perelman.

1. Corax, Tisias, Gorgias, and Protagoras

While argumentation is generally considered to be a separate subject today, it was originally treated as part of the art of rhetoric, or persuasion. People have presented speeches and advanced arguments from earliest times, and most writers consider the birthplaces of the Western tradition of persuasion theory to be ancient Greece (especially Athens) and the island of Sicily. Many definitions of rhetoric have been proposed but most consider it to refer to the art of persuasion by words (and, to a much lesser degree, nonverbal forms).

The art of rhetoric was invented by Corax and Tisias in the 5th century B.C., on the island of Sicily in the Mediterranean Sea, not too far from Athens (the center of culture and philosophy at the time). Sicily was controlled by several dictators or tyrants who were overthrown in 467 B.C. A deliberative body (like our Congress) developed, presenting opportunities for speech and argument not

permitted under the tyrants. More importantly, a flurry of litigation filled the courts, much of it seeking restitution of property allegedly confiscated by the tyrants. The advice given by Corax and Tisias to advocates was especially important, because there were no lawyers at the time: all citizens had to plead their own cases in court (not until later - during the Roman empire - were lawyers permitted, although some speeches for the law-courts were "ghost-written" by others). Corax and Tisias responded to the need for assistance in making speeches, developing the first theory of rhetoric.

Although nothing written by Corax and Tisias survives today, we can reconstruct parts of their theory from later writers who mention them. An important part of their theory included the concept of argument from probability. Today, when property disputes arise, title searches and properly recorded deeds are employed to settle competing claims to ownership. Of course, in ancient times no such evidence was available (tyrants, of course, did not encourage documentation of property they confiscated). Corax and Tisias advised students or clients to make arguments from what would be thought probable by the jurors. For example, a litigant might point to a grave and headstone on disputed property and argue, "This was my property - my father is buried on it. How probable is it that he would be buried on my opponent's property?" Another might argue, "Everyone knows I was a blacksmith, while my opponent is not and never has been. Is it more likely that there would be a smithy on his property, or mine?"

It is important to realize that argument from probability could be employed to support both sides of an argument. In the first case the defendant could reply that "My opponent's father died in battle and, in accordance with our customs, was buried at the site of the battle - which happened to be my property - not on his own property". In the second case the defendant could argue that "While I am not a blacksmith, many of you know that my grandfather was, and if you examined the smithy, it is obvious that it hasn't been used for years - not since my grandfather worked it. It has never been worked in my opponent's lifetime, so it is clearly not his smithy." Of course, not all of these arguments are equally persuasive. The point is that, in the absence of direct, conclusive evidence it is possible to offer reasons for one's claim that are plausible (probable), and such arguments can be invented on both sides of almost any question.

After Corax and Tisias developed their theory of rhetoric, the next important developments in the history of rhetoric (and argument) were made by the sophists. One of Tisias' students was Gorgias, who headed an embassy from Syracuse (a large city on Sicily) to Athens.

He amazed the Athenians with his flamboyant speech style and techniques like argument from probability, which were entirely new to the Athenians. As a result, wealthy Greeks began to have a great demand for rhetorical instruction. Several traveling teachers, calling themselves Sophists (which meant "teacher of wisdom"), began to sell instruction in the techniques of persuasion. Since Athens was the cultural and philosophical center of the ancient world, the sophists visited it frequently.

Protagoras, who was the first to call himself a sophist, was also the first to charge for instruction. Gorgias, who made the Athenians aware of what they were lacking, followed suit, as did others. The sophists generally taught by example, declaiming a speech for students to learn and rehearse. Protagoras was also the first to have students give speeches on opposite sides of a question (debates). Some developed handbooks (like collections of speeches, or of introductions and conclusions) to help their students. There was little in the way of an organized, thorough theory of rhetoric or persuasion or argument which survives today. However, the sophists were very popular in their day, and they increased awareness of rhetoric or persuasion (and argument), developed some important basic techniques of persuasion and argument, taught students and stimulated others (including Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle) who tried to improve on their teachings – and, not so incidentally, attract their students. Kennedy (1963, 1980) discusses Corax and Tisias and the sophists, while Guthrie (1971) and Kerferd (1981) discuss the sophists.

2. Aristotle's Rhetoric and Argument

Isocrates, who once wrote speeches for others to memorize and deliver in court, opened the first stationary school for rhetoric in Athens in 392 B.C., announcing it with his speech or pamphlet "Against the Sophists." He taught rhetoric after studying with, among others, Tisias and Gorgias. He prepared young men for public service, teaching prominent generals, historians, and others. We hear little of him today, primarily because his textbook of rhetoric (if he actually wrote one) does not survive today, like so many other early works. A few years later Plato opened his Academy, a school in Athens which competed with Isocrates, but one which was more oriented toward philosophy and mathematics. Plato did write a few works about rhetoric, where he attacked the current practice of rhetoric and sketched a "true" art of rhetoric (these were the dialogues *Gorgias*, named after the famous

Sophist Gorgias, and *Phaedrus*, named after a pupil of the sophist Lysias). Plato's most famous pupil was Aristotle. After studying for several years at Plato's Academy, Aristotle began to lecture there himself. Among other topics, he began to lecture on rhetoric, and one story suggests that these lectures were intended as a reply or corrective to Isocrates' teachings on rhetoric.

One of Aristotle's most important contributions to argument is his development of the theory of reasoning. He distinguished between inductive and deductive reasoning, and developed subtypes of each according to where it was used (science, dialectic, or rhetoric). He developed the theory of the syllogism, which is a method of testing the validity (or logical soundness, or quality) of a deductive argument. The types of deduction and induction which occur in rhetoric are enthymeme and example, respectively. In order to understand these, it is helpful to understand the more general processes, induction and deduction.

Aristotle develops his notion of the two general types of reasoning in other works besides the *Rhetoric*. In the *Topics*, he briefly explains that "induction is the progress from individuals to universals; for example, 'If the skilled pilot is the best pilot and the skilled charioteer the best charioteer, then, in general, the skilled man is the best man in any particular sphere'" (105a13-15). He provides more detail in the *Prior Analytics*, explaining that induction examines all of the specific instances (C) of a class (B) in order to determine if the members of this class (B) possess a property (A). For example, we could ask all registered Republicans (specific Republicans are C's; the entire class of Republicans is B) if they agree with their Presidential candidates stand on a particular issue (A). If so, we can conclude that B is A; that the class Republicans agrees with their candidate's stand on that issue. Of course, it is difficult if not impossible to actually examine each and every instance (all C's) of any class (B). That is why today we have developed sampling techniques, like those used in public opinion polls. Of course, this procedure can be used in many different ways. For example, in drug or cosmetic testing, the subjects (individual C's) are given the drug or cosmetic product and then examined to see if they each remain healthy (A). If so, then it is concluded that the general class of all those who use that drug or cosmetic (B) will be healthy (A). Therefore, induction examines the particular cases of a class in order to determine whether all members of that class possess a certain property.

In the *Prior Analytics*, Aristotle defines the syllogism, the tool of deduction. It is an argument with three parts: a major premise,

a minor premise, and a conclusion. Assuming the first two premises are true, and that the rules governing the syllogism are correctly followed, the conclusion follows necessarily. The traditional example of a syllogism is:

Socrates is a man.
All men are mortal.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

If the first two propositions or statements are true (which they are) and if the form of the syllogism is correct (which it is in this case) then the third statement, the conclusion, must be true. The three statements in a syllogism can take one of four basic forms:

All A is B.
No A is B.
Some A is B.
Some A is not B.

Notice that the example concerning Socrates should be rephrased (even if somewhat awkwardly) into statements something like "All persons identical to Socrates are mortal" to conform with these rules, but the argument is obviously valid. This is not the place to discuss the rules of syllogisms, or the proper (and improper) combinations of them, but simply to understand that a syllogism deduces a conclusion from particular combinations of premises. It has to do with the *form* of an argument, not its content. For example, the following syllogism is valid (or has correct form), but the conclusion is false because one of its premises is false:

All cows have five legs.
Bossie is a cow.
Therefore, Bossie has five legs.

If the two premises were true (if all cows had five legs, and if Bossie were a cow), then the conclusion would have to be true as well. Notice that it has the same *form* as the Socrates syllogism (All A is B; C is an A; therefore C is a B). What is different about the Bossie syllogism, which makes it a bad argument, is that one of its premises is false. The conclusion of a syllogism is true only if (a) the premises of the syllogism are true *and* (b) the form of the syllogism is valid. This is a very important limitation on the usefulness of syllogisms, for

in arguments we rarely deal with absolute truths about every single members of a class.

Bitzer (1959) provides the a standard discussion of Aristotle's enthymeme, the rhetorical version of deductive logic. He rejects several previous definitions of the enthymeme: (a) it is always based on probability (it frequently, but not always, is based on probability); (b) it is concrete (it is often, but again not always, concrete); (c) it is formally invalid (it may be, but is not always formally invalid), and (d) it is a syllogism with a suppressed or implicit or assumed premise (it frequently has a suppressed part, but not necessarily). Then he offers his definition: it is a form of syllogism, one based on three sorts of proof: probabilities, signs, and examples. Its persuasive force stems from the fact that the advocate can use statements the audience already accepts as premises for the enthymeme. Thus, the audience agrees with part of the argument made by the advocate before it is even completed.

The example is the counterpart of the enthymeme. The example is an argument that takes something known about one instance of a phenomenon (a particular example, or a "part") and infers something about another, similar instance (another particular). Aristotle explains that example moves from "part to part." A question arose concerning whether this argument form contains an implicit generalization (in Aristotle's terms, does "part to part" abbreviate "part to whole to part"?). Benoit (1980) rejects the notion that the example reasons directly from part to part without using an intervening or mediating generalization. The example is similar to induction (as it should be, since it is one type of it), but there are differences between them: argument by example examines one (or a few) instances of a class concerning a property of that class, developing a generalization. Then it deductively applies that generalization to another instance of the class.

For example, Aristotle suggests that an advocate might argue as follows: Certain leaders, like Peisistratus and Theragenes, asked for bodyguards and become tyrants after they were given them. It appears that leaders who request bodyguards are planning to become tyrants. Therefore, our leader, Dionysius, in asking for a bodyguard, is scheming to make himself a despot (*Rhetoric*, 1357b30–1358a1). This argument begins by examining two instances of a class (leaders who request bodyguards) to discover a property (desire to become a tyrant), and applies the resulting generalization (all leaders who request bodyguards are scheming to become tyrants) to another instance (our

leader, Dionysius, must be scheming to make himself a tyrant because he asked for a bodyguard).

In addition to the two forms of rhetorical reasoning (enthymeme and example), Aristotle discussed recurrent argument forms, the *topoi* or topics. Ochs (1969) argues that these are based on relationships, which can be between terms, propositions, or past, present, and future events. The idea that certain arguments occur over and over means that if we can identify them once and make a list of them, we don't have to reinvent them each time we wish to use them.

One example of an argument topic is *a fortiori* argument, which claims that if we know that something harder or more difficult or longer can be done, then we can infer that something else easier or simpler or shorter can be done. We have at one time or another heard arguments like, "You can pass Dr. Welsby's class - after all, you got a 'B' from Dr. Harrison, and Harrison is a lot harder than Welsby." "Sure, coach, I can run the 220 yard dash - I run the 440 OK don't I?" Notice that each of these arguments attempts to establish something that we don't yet know: can the student pass Dr. Welsby's class? can the runner participate in the 220 yard dash? In each case we happen to have evidence about their performance on a related task: Dr. Harrison's class and the 440 yard dash. Furthermore, each of the tasks we have information about is harder (Dr. Harrison's class) or longer (the 440 yard dash) than the other task. Knowing (a) that one task can be accomplished, and (b) that it is somehow more difficult than a related (similar) one, and knowing the principle underlying *a fortiori* argument (that if we can accomplish the more difficult of two related things, we must be able to accomplish the easier of the two), all three together permit us to make the argument. Once an advocate learns the form of *a fortiori* argument, it can be used on many different specific arguments. Aristotle's work *On Sophistical Refutations* offers a list of weak or defective arguments. It is possible to attack (refute) an opponent's arguments by exposing their weaknesses, or fallacious arguments.

Aristotle recognizes that we persuade or argue only about things open to dispute, where we lack certain knowledge. Some would say that in theory, we could be mistaken or misled about almost anything, and that no matter how certain we feel we can never reach absolute certainty about anything. This is not the place to discuss these questions of knowledge, or epistemology. However, in order to avoid controversy here, we can rephrase Aristotle's statement in this fashion: "we persuade or argue only where we do not *think* we have certain knowledge". He develops the two fundamental types of reasoning: induction and

deduction, and their rhetorical counterparts: enthymematic argument and argument by example. He observes that certain kinds of arguments (topics) occur repeatedly. Finally, he recognizes that argument involves listeners, who may be counted upon to supply parts of the advocate's support. Kennedy (1963, 1980) discusses Isocrates, Plato, and Aristotle. Erickson (1975) offers a bibliography of works on Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

3. Hermagoras and Stasis

Hermagoras was a Greek rhetorician who lived in the second century A.D. None of his writings survive today, but we have reconstructed his ideas from reports of later writers, especially Roman authors. His most important contribution to the history of argument is his doctrine of *stasis*, or stock issues. He noticed that in disputes, the same questions or points of disagreement continually came up. They were places where resolution of the dispute came to a standstill because one side answered them in one way and the other side answered in the other way. In fact, the word "stasis" has the Greek root "sta" which means stand. The only way to get the controversy moving again so it can be resolved is to decide these points of disagreement. Thus, they are analogous to Aristotle's topics, but more general: topics concerns recurring arguments and stasis concerns recurring issues.

These were designed for (and used primarily in) the law courts, and it is no surprise that they are very similar to the important issues in trials today. For example, in a murder trial the prosecution must prove several things, including these: that the victim is in fact dead, that the defendant had a motive, means, and opportunity to kill the deceased. Disagreement in murder trials between the prosecution and the defense arises over these issues, and the trial is completed only when the judge or jury has decided them. The prosecution must win all of them and therefore must be prepared to argue all of them. The defense frequently will disagree about only some issues.

The issues identified by Hermagoras are conjecture (Is it?), definition (What is it?), quality (What kind is it?), and jurisdiction (Is this the proper forum or court for this controversy?). To illustrate with the crime of murder, the first question could become "Is there in fact someone who is dead?" The second asks "Is the death murder (as opposed to accidental death or suicide)?" The third might pose, "Is it justifiable homicide, or killing in self-defense?" The fourth question could be: "Is this state (or federal) court the proper place to decide these questions?"

These questions are in fact more similar to the ones for murder today than might first appear. There must be a *corpus delecti* (a deceased), which corresponds to the question of existence. A case will be thrown out of court, regardless of its merit, if it is brought to the wrong court (jurisdiction). The questions of means, motive, and opportunity, are refinements of the single question of definition ("Is this an act of murder?"). The defense is permitted pleas of self-defense, which is similar to the issue of quality. Finally, the litigation must occur in the proper court of law. So, the basic idea of stock or standard or recurring issues is still an important part of our judicial system, and these stock issues have been refined but not abandoned or replaced. Deiter (1950), Kennedy (1963, 1980), and Nadeau (1959) discuss Hermagoras and/or stasis.

The Romans adopted Greek rhetorical theory, extending and refining it but adding relatively little new. The Middle Ages were a time of conserving the ancient traditions, with little advances in the theory of argument (dialectic, related to logic, did receive some attention during this time). As the opportunity for oratory and argument declined (because of replacement of deliberative bodies by emperors, limitation and abolishment of law courts, and general loss of learning), the theory tended to stagnate. The Renaissance was a period of rediscovery of classical concepts and application of them to renewed opportunities for rhetoric and argument. Peter Ramus created quite a stir by arguing that invention (creation of arguments) and arrangement (organization) should be taken from rhetoric and assigned to dialectic (logic). The eighteenth century was a particularly important period for development of rhetoric. Howell (1971) provides an excellent discussion of this period. Some events relevant to argument did occur such as the rejection of the syllogism. This was a time where interest in scientific discovery was keen, and the syllogism was rejected as unable to create new knowledge. Of course, although some might have claimed it could do so, its primary strength is in its ability to check the validity (or accuracy or correctness) of deductive argument forms. However, the next important development in the history of argument discussed here concerns the development of a theory of presumption by Bishop Richard Whately.

4. Whately and Presumption

Richard Whately taught at Oxford University and served as the Archbishop of Dublin. Although Whately entered into the controversy

over the utility of the syllogism, without question his most important contributions to the history of argument and his interrelated notions of presumption and burden of proof, developed in his *Elements of Rhetoric*. He explains that in a controversy, the side which favors existing beliefs or institutions has an advantage. Things will remain as they are, and this side will win a dispute, "till some sufficient reason is adduced against it" (1963, p. 192). This concept is called presumption, and does not mean that current beliefs are necessarily *correct*, only that they will continue until a good enough argument for change has been made. The other side, which seeks to change the existing state of affairs, has the burden of proof.

We are familiar with legal presumption: the accused is presumed to be innocent until the prosecution successfully fulfills its burden of proof, showing that the defendant in fact committed the crime. Whately explains that "there was a Presumption against the Gospel in its first announcement... [but] Now, the case is reversed" (p. 116). In fact, scholars speculate that the concepts of "Presumption and Burden of Proof are introduced to acquaint the Christian apologist with his rights and obligations in controversy" (Ehninger, 1963, p. x). If Christianity is generally accepted, it does enjoy the advantages of presumption and its opponents must accept the burden of proof.

Whately recognizes that presumptions vary in strength, from weak to extremely strong conviction. While he does not explain what makes the difference, we can speculate about some of the factors which influence strength of presumption. The more important the belief or institution to the audience, the greater the strength of the presumption. To the extent that a presumption is linked with other accepted cognitions (beliefs, values, attitudes), it should be stronger.

Finally, Whately recognizes that presumption is not always a static, unchanging thing, but it "may be rebutted by an opposite Presumption, so as to shift the Burden of Proof to the other side" (p. 124). More importantly, presumption resides in the audience, as we saw from the fact that the strength of presumptions vary, so that "in any one question the Presumption will often be found to lie on different sides, in respect of different parties" (p. 118). In other words, Christianity has presumption because it is generally accepted. A Christian advocate can assume that Christianity will remain accepted until people have a sufficient reason to reject it - and that the burden of proof lies with his or her opponents. However, when addressing a group of atheists, presumption no longer rests with Christianity, and they will remain opposed unless the Christian advocate offers sufficient reasons to accept it. Hence, we can say that there is a *logical* presumption

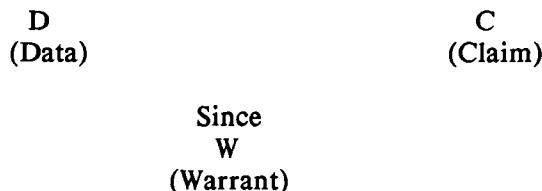
reflecting the way things *are*, and a *psychological* presumption, reflecting a particular audience's beliefs. Typically they are the same, but in cases like this, they are different. Kennedy (1980) and Howell (1971) discuss Whately, and Sproule (1976) discusses Whately's notion of psychological presumption in particular.

5. Toulmin on Layout of Argument and Argument Fields

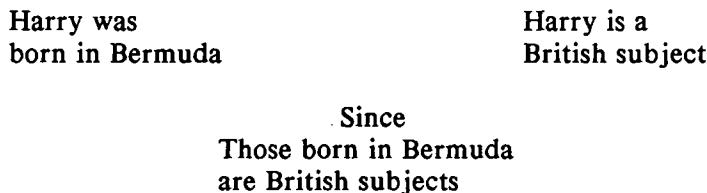
Stephen Toulmin is a philosopher who is concerned over limitations of formal logic. The standards of formal logic (necessity, certainty) take mathematics generally (and geometry specifically) as a model, which makes it unsuitable for use in understanding ordinary, everyday reasoning. We know from as far back as Aristotle that we persuade and argue about things where necessity cannot be our guide, and from as far back as Corax and Tisias that probability is a more practical standard for persuasion and argument than certainty. Not surprisingly, Toulmin rejects the syllogism as inappropriate for the analysis and study of everyday argument.

The Uses of Argument (1958) includes a treatment of probability, the layout of argument, and fields of argument. His layout of argument became influential in the study of argument quite early, and will be discussed first. A section of this text is devoted to this concept. His conception of fields of argument is now becoming an important topic in the study of argument, and will be discussed next. A section of the book is devoted to this concept as well. His treatment of probability, while interesting to note in the context of his argument that formal logic is not appropriate for analyzing ordinary arguments, has not had the same kind of impact as either of these other two topics.

Toulmin states that argument is intended to establish, or justify, a Claim (abbreviated "C"). This is essentially a conclusion, except that the word "claim" may connote more of the controversial nature of argument (a claim is in dispute until established) than the word "conclusion." It is supported by Data ("D"), and the relevance of D to C is established by the Warrant ("W"). The least familiar term is warrants, which are "rules, principles, inference licenses" (p. 98). This is represented in the following model:

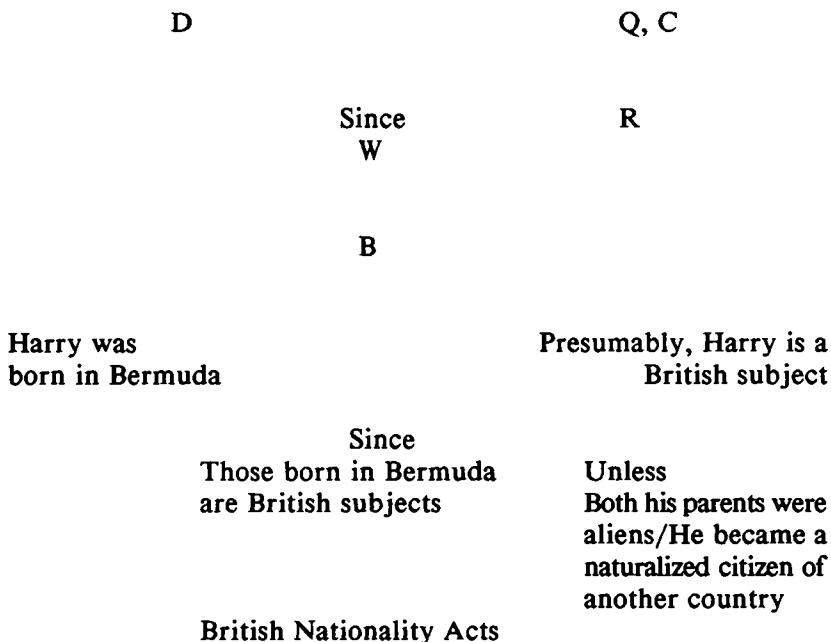


Consider the example used by Toulmin to illustrate this concept.



This is the basic Toulmin model of the layout of arguments. It is useful because it displays different parts of an argument, so that we can analyze each separately.

Toulmin has three other parts to his model. One is the Qualifier ("Q"), which is part of the conclusion. Its purpose is "indicating the strength conferred by the warrant" on the conclusion. In other words, terms like "probably," "likely," "almost never" and the like are qualifiers. Given the fact that argument deals with affairs about which we cannot hope to reach certainty, such a modifier to reveal the strength of the conclusion is very useful. Another is the Rebuttal ("R"), "indicating circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside" (p. 101). The final part is the Backing ("B"). This is support for the warrant, or evidence for it. As Toulmin explains, "Standing behind our warrants... there will normally be other assurances, without which the warrants themselves would possess neither authority nor currency" (p. 103). Hence, the full Toulmin model of the layout of arguments is this:



This is the entire layout of arguments.

What are the implications of it? First, it recognizes, by way of the qualifier, that arguments reach varying degrees of probability. Second, it is not clear that all arguments, especially the conversational act of two people having an argument, are amenable to this analysis. Third, it emphasizes the importance of data. Not only is Data a part of the argument, but Backing is data as well. Toulmin distinguishes the two (p. 106), but they are both factual information supporting the argument.

The second, and increasingly influential aspect of Toulmin's theory of argument, concerns argument fields. Toulmin suggests that some aspects of argument are the same everywhere, while others differ from setting to setting. Those that remain the same are field *invariant*, and those that differ are field *dependent*. Possible examples of "fields" include law, medicine, biology, politics, etc. This is an intriguing concept, for it suggests that there are some things that always apply to argument, but there are other things that only members of that field ought to or need to learn. It may also explain why disagreements between fields (e.g., issues like abortion, which involves lawyers, doctors, politicians, and philosophers) are difficult if not unproductive.

- each group has some standards of argument that differ from each other group.

Unfortunately, little progress has been made in (a) defining "field," (b) identifying (and distinguishing) specific fields, and (c) deciding which aspects of argument are field invariant and which are field dependent. Toulmin tells us, for example, that qualifiers are field invariant - that "probably" means about the same in all fields. This concept has the potential to be extremely useful, but has not been adequately developed so far. Brockriede and Ehninger (1960) offer an early discussion of the layout of arguments. A more recent one can be found in Foss, Foss, and Trapp (1985). Willard (1976) and Hample (1980) criticize the Toulmin model, and Burleson (1979) responds to Willard's criticisms.

6. Perelman's *New Rhetoric* and Argument

Like Toulmin, Chaim Perelman was a philosopher, and he too became dissatisfied with formal logic as a means to understand ordinary arguments. He explains that its standards of necessity and certainty or self-evidence are of no use in this work, because:

The very nature of deliberation and argumentation is opposed to necessity and self-evidence, since no one deliberates where the solution is necessary or argues against what is self-evident. The domain of argumentation is that of the credible, the plausible, the probable (1969, p. 1).

This is very reminiscent of Aristotle's notion that rhetoric deals with contingent affairs.

His approach highlights the importance of the audience in argumentation. The purpose of argument is to persuade an audience, through discourse, and it frequently tries to change the audience's behavior (1982, p. 12). Again contrasting argument with formal logic or demonstration, he explains that "the aim of argumentation is not, like demonstration, to prove the truth of the conclusion from the premises, but to transfer to the conclusion the *adherence* accorded to the premises," and it occurs through creating a "bond" between the premises and the desired conclusion (1982, p. 21). The advocate must start with data (recall that data was stressed in Toulmin's layout of arguments) acceptable to the audience, and if the data can be related

to the claim, the audience's acceptance of the data can be transferred to the claim.

Perelman has a great deal to say about specific argument forms. However, it is important to notice that Perelman rejects formal logic as inappropriate for understanding argument, and sees argument as the process of shifting the audience's acceptance of data (premises) to the claim desired by the advocate. Dearin (1969, 1982) and Foss, Foss, and Trapp (1985) are useful discussions of Perelman's theory.

7. Conclusion

This essay has described highlights in the history of the theory of argument. These concepts are a foundation for more contemporary developments, and frequently we encounter old concepts used in new ways, in new contexts. Kneale and Kneale (1962) provide a very thorough history of logic for those interested in pursuing this topic further. Other developments have occurred in the history of argument which deserve brief mention. A new approach to logic, informal logic, has been developing, guided in large part by Blair and Johnson (see the proceedings of the first conference on informal logic, which they edited, in 1980; or Johnson & Blair, 1983). This movement is interested in ordinary, everyday argument. Related to this is a fairly recent upsurge in interest in fallacies, or arguments which appear sound or strong but actually contain serious weaknesses (see Hamblin, 1970, and Engel, 1982). The critical thinking movement is focused on enhancing the ability of students to be "critical consumers" of argument encountered in every day life. A related enterprise, discussed later in this book, is the interest in describing and understanding everyday argument practices of ordinary people.

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Introduction: Kinds of Argument

These three papers, although they appeared over a period of ten years, are a kind of conversation among the authors. All three are interested in trying to discover what argument is. O'Keefe's answer is developed by critically examining Brockriede's proposal, and Hamble reviews both the Brockriede and O'Keefe essays in order to make his suggestions. Perhaps as you read these papers, assuming that you read them in order, you will be able to feel the way in which theory can develop by means of critique. All the papers in this book make arguments about argument, but in this series of three essays the "burden of rebuttal" is especially clear, and you might enjoy watching scholars debate.

In 1975, when Brockriede wrote the first of these papers, the field of argumentation was still dominated by an image of argument-as-public-speech. When scholars thought about argument, they tended to think of the content of a public address or an intercollegiate debate. These two settings are not very interactional ones: the public speaker or debater prepares his/her remarks, starts talking, and doesn't quit until s/he has said everything that was planned. Competent speakers will analyze their audiences and try to adapt to the audience's reactions during the speech, of course, but still the audience is relatively passive and the speaker is pretty much in charge of what gets said. Brockriede changed all that, partly with what he said and partly with what he started.

He begins the essay by saying that he has little "interest in logical systems, in messages, in reasoning, in evidence, or in propositions - *unless these things involve human activity rather directly*." With this statement, he announces that he does not find argumentation's tradition very useful because it locates argument in text. Brockriede insists, instead, that "Arguments are not in statements but in people." This doesn't mean that Brockriede thought that messages are utterly irrelevant to arguing - just that the key aspects of argument are interpersonal, not textual. He goes on to explore the implications of his break with tradition, and to spell out the "six characteristics of argument" that emerge from his analysis. This short essay made it feasible for scholars to link argumentation with interpersonal communication, and that may well be the paper's most enduring value.

Two years later, O'Keefe wrote an essay in response to Brockriede's. O'Keefe's paper may well be the most often cited, the most influential, of any contemporary publication on argument. The chief contribution of this paper was to force the argumentation community to see that the word "argument" has two senses, and implies two distinct understandings of argument. O'Keefe says that Brockriede (along with everyone else) fails to notice this distinction, and therefore ends up confusing some important issues.

These two concepts of argument are written as argument₁ and argument₂. Argument₁ is close to the traditional understanding of argument-as-public-speech. An argument₁ is something that a person *makes*: for instance, a newspaper editorial *argues that* readers should vote for a particular candidate. Argument₂, on the other hand, is something that people *have*: for instance, when a romantic couple *argues about* where to go on Friday night. Notice that argument₂ is always interactional; although the arguers produce a text (usually a conversation), it is a joint production, a collaborative effort. One person might state a request, the other might say that the request isn't legitimate, the first might revise the request, and so on. Together they have the whole argument, the whole series of claims and counterclaims. An argument₁, in contrast, is a thing normally made by one person. When you study an argument₁, you are usually looking at a single author's coherent message. But when you study an argument₂, you are probably examining a conversation. An argument₂ might well be composed of arguments₁, however. As an example of this, you might consider the three essays in this section. Each essay is an argument₁, but considered together, they are an argument₂. You may find these distinctions to be a bit subtle, but they are genuinely important, and have had a dramatic impact on the field of argumentation.

A few years later, Hample complicated the picture a little more. He says that argument₁ and argument₂ are not enough to define argument, that a third thing - argument₀ - is also required. "Argument₀ is the cognitive dimension of argument - the mental processes by which arguments occur within people." While argument₁ and argument₂ are public events, argument₀ is private: it is the thinking that must go on to generate or understand a public argument. Hample says that the nature of argument in general is to be found only in all three types of argument, considered together.

Just as O'Keefe developed his views by criticizing Brockriede, Hample begins by reviewing what both Brockriede and O'Keefe wrote, and trying to show that their thinking was unclear because they did not have an explicit recognition of argument₀. Then Hample turns

to conversational argument, to show that interactional argument research also requires the idea of argument₀ to be coherent (the Jackson and Jacobs paper, Ch. 34, is one of the essays Hamble critique).

Taken together, these three papers develop the ideas that argument is personal, interpersonal, and psychological. The essays represent a movement away from the traditional idea that an argument is the content of a public speech, and move toward a recognition that arguing is a uniquely human process, one that dominates our everyday lives and thoughts.

The Brockriede-O'Keefe exchange is not fully represented here, and some explicit commentary essays are also not reprinted, for reasons of space. Brockriede (1977) wrote an immediate response to the O'Keefe paper, and O'Keefe (1982) later wrote a follow-up essay. Both Burleson (1981) and McKerrow (1981) have written responses to O'Keefe's second paper (he gave them copies before it was published), and Hamble (1988) has recently addressed some of these issues again.

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Chapter 4

Where is Argument?

Wayne Brockriede

Before looking for the clues that may lead to the discovery of where "argument" is, perhaps I should state some of my biases so you may be less surprised if I don't go instantly to where you presume I could find the culprit without difficulty. My principal bias is a humanistic point of view that denies an interest in logical systems, in messages, in reasoning, in evidence, or in propositions - *unless these things involve human activity rather directly*. One of the most famous cliches during the past fifteen years in the study of communication, originated by I know not whom but popularized by David K. Berlo, is that meanings are not in words but in people.¹ Arguments are not in statements but in people. Hence, a first clue on the whereabouts of argument: people will find arguments in the vicinity of people.

Second, argument is not a "thing" to be looked for but a concept people use, a perspective they take. Human activity does not usefully constitute an argument until some person perceives what is happening as an argument. Although defining the term on this basis is not as neat as speaking of necessary and sufficient conditions, seeing argument as a human activity encourages persons to take into account the conceptual choices of the relevant people. Hence, a second clue: only people can find and label and use an argument.

Third, because arguments are in people and are what people see them to be, the idea of argument is an open concept. Seeing it as an open concept is consistent with the ideas that arguers are people, that people change, and that the filtering concepts people use when they make perceptions also change. Hence, a third clue: the location of argument may change, and so may the road map.

Fourth, because argument is a human process, a way of seeing, an open concept, it is potentially everywhere. During the past four years

some undergraduate students at the University of Colorado have found argument lurking in some strange places. We asked them specifically to look for it beyond the traditional habitats of the law courts (where textbook writers tend to find their doctrine) or the legislative assemblies (where teachers typically want students to imagine presenting their arguments). We asked them to look in such relatively exotic places as the aesthetic experience, the interpersonal transaction, and the construction of scientific theory or the reporting of research studies. I've read some interesting papers by students who have applied an argumentative perspective to a novel by Camus, to a symphony by Bernstein, to marriage and divorce, to Zen Buddhism, and to Thomas S. Kuhn's *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.² Throughout the reading of the arguments of such papers, I have been able to maintain my bias that "argument" has not been stretched out of shape, that it constitutes a frame of reference that can be related potentially to any kind of human endeavor (although, obviously, the idea of argument is not the only perspective that can be applied to a novel or a symphony). And until someone disabuses me of this eccentricity, I'm stuck with this fourth clue: the perspective of argument may pop up un-expectedly and usefully in a person's head at any time.

Fifth, but even though I appear to have constructed the idea of argument out of elasticity, I do not wish to argue that all communication is usefully called an argument. At this moment I see six characteristics that may help a person decide whether argument is a useful perspective to take in studying a communicative act. These characteristics, taken as six ways of looking at the same gestalt, define argument as *a process whereby people reason their way from one set of problematic ideas to the choice of another*.

The six characteristics of my construct of argument imply three primary dimensions. First, argument falls squarely into the realm of the problematic. What people argue about are nontrivial enough to pose a problem, but they are not likely easily to resolve the problem and so the issue remains somewhat problematic for a significant period of time. Second, each of the six characteristics of argument is a function of the variable logic of more or less and not a function of the categorical logic of yes or no. That is, each characteristic, and the construct as a whole, lies within the midrange of the more-or-less continuum. If an argument is not problematic enough or if any characteristic is too minimal - no argument. Too much of a problematic character or too much of any of the characteristics - no argument.

Third, as my preliminary biases imply, argument is based on the perceptions and choices of people.³

Characteristic One. -an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adoption of a new belief or to the reinforcement of an old one. One way to explain what I mean by an inferential leap is to contrast an argument of the sort I am talking about with a syllogism, the most famous member of the analytic family. Because its conclusion is entailed by the premises, no inferential leap is needed: nothing is stated in the conclusion of a syllogism that is not stated in the premises. As long as people stay within the closed system of a syllogism, nothing is problematic. To question a definition of a premise, people must leave that closed system by leaping inferentially into problematic uncertainty, and by doing so they may then make the kind of argument I am delineating in this paper. To function as an argument an inferential leap occupies the midrange of the more-or-less continuum. A person has little to argue about if the conclusion does not extend beyond the materials of an argument or extends only slightly; but one may be unable to make a convincing argument if the leap is too large, perhaps perceived as suicidal.

Characteristic Two. -a perceived rationale to support that leap. An arguer must perceive some rationale that establishes that the claim leaped to is worthy at least of being entertained.

The weakest acceptable rationale may justify saying that the claim leaped to deserves entertainment "for the sake of argument." A stronger rationale may justify a person's taking a claim seriously - with the hope that after further thought it may be accepted. A still stronger rationale may convince someone to accept a claim tentatively until a better alternative comes along. If a rationale is too slender to justify a leap, the result is a quibble rather than an argument; but a rationale so strong a conclusion is entailed removes the activity from the realm of the problematic and hence from the world of argument. If the perceived rationale occupies either polar region, it fails to justify the label of argument because the claim either appears ridiculous (not worth arguing about) or too risky to entertain.

Characteristic Three. -a choice among two or more competing claims. When people quibble or play the analytic game, they do not make arguments because they cannot see a situation as yielding more than one legitimate claim. The right to choose is a human characteristic, but people are not free to choose without constraints. They are limited

by what they know, what they believe, what they value. They are limited by how they relate to other people and to situations. They are limited by cause and by chance. But within such constraints people who argue have some choice but not too much. If they have too little choice, if a belief is entailed by formal logic or required by their status as true believers, they need not argue; but if they have to deal with much choice overload, then argument may not be very productive.

Characteristic Four. -a regulation of uncertainty. Because arguers make inferential leaps that take claims beyond a rationale on which they are based, because they choose from among disputed options, they cannot reach certainty. If certainty existed, people need not engage in what I am defining as argument. When uncertainty is high, a need for argument is also high, especially if people are uncertain about something important to them. Usually arguers want to reduce uncertainty, but sometimes they may need to employ a strategy of confrontation to increase uncertainty enough to get the attention of others. Only then may such people be receptive to arguments designed to reduce uncertainty. If people have too little uncertainty to regulate, then they have no problems to solve and argument is not needed. But if the regulation of uncertainty is too difficult, if people have too much trouble reducing or escalating the degree of uncertainty, then they may be unable or unwilling to argue.

Characteristic Five. -a willingness to risk confrontation of a claim with peers. In his evolutionary theory of knowing, Donald K. Darnell argues that scientists and other kinds of people gain knowledge by taking an imaginative leap from an accumulated and consolidated body of information on a subject and then by undergoing the risk of confronting self and others with the claim that results, a risk that may lead to the disconfirmation or modification of the claim.⁴ Arguers cannot regulate uncertainty very much until their claim meets these tests of confrontation. A person confronting self has no public risk (unless someone overhears one self arguing aloud with another self), but the private risk is that an important claim or an important part of a self may have to be discarded. When two persons engage in mutual confrontation so they can share a rational choice, they share the risks of what that confrontation may do to change their ideas, their selves, and their relationship with one another. If the leap is too little, the rationale too minimal, the choice too slender, the problem of uncertainty-reduction too minuscule, then the potential risk of disconfirmation

after confrontation probably is not enough to justify calling the behavior argument.

But if these characteristics are too overwhelming, the risk may be too great and a person may be unwilling to subject an idea through argument to confrontation and almost certain disconfirmation.

Characteristic Six. -a frame of reference shared optimally. The emergence of this characteristic is consistent with the idea that argument is an open concept. Until the spring of 1974 I knew of only five characteristics of argument, those I have just discussed. Then while working on a doctoral dissertation, one of my advisees, Karen Rasmussen, wrote a chapter on argument that added this sixth characteristic. She argued that arguers must share to an optimal degree elements of one another's world views or frames of reference.⁵ This idea squares with a position Peter A. Schouls took in contending that professional philosophers (and, one may presume, others as well) cannot argue with one another very effectively if their presuppositions share too little or are virtually irreconcilable; but argument is pointless if two persons share too much.⁶ It also squares with Kenneth Burke's doctrine of identification, which implies that polar extremes are empty categories - that the uniqueness of individuals makes for at least some divisiveness (which occasionally makes argument necessary), but on the other hand individuals are consubstantial in sharing at least a few properties (which occasionally makes argument possible).⁷

So this is my argument about where argument may be discovered: among people, by people, in changing forms, potentially everywhere, but especially where six characteristics are joined. I have contended that argument deals with the problematic and ignores the trivial or the certain, that it depends on the perceptions and choices of people who will decide whether viewing an activity as an argument is appropriate, and that it lies in the midrange of the more-or-less continuum of a variable logic and not an categorical logic.

I argue that what I have done in writing this essay is an illustration of my construct of argument. I have made some inferential leaps. I have presented what I perceive to be a rationale for supporting those leaps. I have made some choices. I may have succeeded in regulating some uncertainties. I have presumed throughout that our frames of reference overlap at some points but not at too many. I now invite your confrontation.

Notes

Versions of this essay were first presented as lectures at Ohio State University and Michigan State University and as a convention paper at the Speech Communication Association, 1974.

1. *The Process of Communication* (New York; Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1960), pp. 174-175.
2. 2nd e.d. enlarged (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).
3. An earlier exposition of five of these characteristics of argument, as applied to rhetorical criticism, appeared in my "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," *QJS*. I. (April 1974), 165-174. A more detailed discussion of the construct will appear as Chapter VII, "Argument," in Donald K. Darnell and Wayne Brockriede, *Persons Communicating* (forthcoming).
4. Chapter III, "An Evolutionary Theory of Knowing," in Darnell and Brockriede.
5. "Implications of Argumentation for Aesthetic Experience: A Transactional Perspective" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation. University of Colorado, 1974), Chapter III.
6. "Communication, Argumentation, and Presupposition in Philosophy," *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, II (Fall 1969), 183-199.
7. *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1950: rpt. Berkeley; University of California Press, 1969), pp. 20-23.

Chapter 5

Two concepts of argument

Daniel J. O'Keefe

Students of argument rarely acknowledge that the term "argument" has two importantly different senses. In this essay I attempt to show the importance of distinguishing these senses, taking as a focus for analysis Wayne Brockriede's recent discussions of the concept of argument. I will argue that Brockriede's view suffers from a failure to heed the distinction I emphasize, but that this failure signals important developments in the study of argument.

I

In everyday talk the word "argument" is systematically used to refer to two different phenomena. On the one hand it refers to a kind of utterance or a sort of communicative act. This sense of the term I will call " argument_1 ." It is the sense contained in sentences such as "he made an argument." On the other hand "argument" sometimes refers to a particular kind of interaction. This sense, " argument_2 ," appears in sentences such as "they had an argument." Crudely put, an argument_1 is something one person makes (or gives or presents or utters), while an argument_2 is something two or more persons have (or engage in). Arguments₁ are thus on a par with promises, commands, apologies, warnings, invitations, orders, and the like. Arguments₂ are classifiable with other species of interactions such as bull sessions, heart-to-heart talks, quarrels, discussions, and so forth.

Now I should immediately emphasize that the distinction I am pointing to does not turn on the number of persons involved. We might, for example, find it useful in some situations to speak of one person having an argument_2 (with himself); and we might similarly encounter cases where we would want to say that two or more persons had jointly made an argument_1 . But these cases seem secondary on the paradigmatic

sense of "argument₁" and "argument₂," and so I have in setting out the distinction referred to what seem to be exemplary uses of the two senses of the term.

This distinction is, I think, a plausible and natural one, as evidenced by our everyday ways of speaking. Certainly an argument₁ is very different from an argument₂. One speaks of arguments₁ being refuted, valid, or fallacious, while one does not ordinarily characterize arguments₂ in these ways; and one speaks of arguments₂ coming to blows, or being pointless or unproductive, while one does not usually characterize arguments₁ in just these ways.¹ There is, in short, an obvious distinction between arguments₁ and arguments₂ embedded in our everyday use of the term "argument." It is this distinction that underlies the curiosity in statements such as "Bob and I had an argument and it was refuted."

I might mention that this distinction is usefully extended to cover related forms, so that (e.g.) a person who is arguing₁, is making an argument₁, and a person who is arguing₂, is in the process of having an argument₂. The distinction here is evidenced in everyday talk by the difference between "arguing₁ *that*" and "arguing₂ *about*," the difference between the sentences "I was arguing₁, that P" and "we were arguing₂ about Q" (or "I was arguing₂ with myself about Q"). Similarly, one might use "arguer₁" to refer to a person in a way that highlights the fact that the person is to be understood as making an argument₁, and "arguer₂" to emphasize that the person is to be understood as engaged in an argument₂ with another person.²

The importance of distinguishing arguments₁ and arguments₂ can be displayed by examining Wayne Brockriede's recent analysis of argument.³ Brockriede offers six general characteristics of argument. These are not, he emphasizes, necessary and sufficient conditions for something's being an argument, but are rather general features to which one can appeal in deciding whether something is (or can usefully be seen as) an argument. My claim is that Brockriede's analysis unfortunately elides arguments₁ and arguments₂, to the detriment of his characterization of argument.

Brockriede's first characteristic is that argument involves "an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adoption of new beliefs or to the reinforcement of an old one."⁴ This first characteristic seems obviously to be a description of arguments₁.

A second characteristic of argument is "a perceived rationale to support that leap."⁵ This might initially seem to be an attribute of arguments₁. However, Brockriede's elaboration of this characteristic introduces complications. He writes:

An arguer must perceive some rationale that establishes that the claim being leaped to is worthy at least of being entertained. The weakest acceptable rationale may justify saying that the claim leaped to deserves entertainment "for the sake of argument." A stronger rationale may justify a person's taking a claim seriously - with the hope that after further thought it may be accepted. A still stronger rationale may convince someone to accept a claim tentatively until a better alternative comes along. If the rationale is too slender to justify a leap, the result is a quibble rather than an argument; but a rationale so strong a conclusion is entailed removes the activity from the realm of the problematic. If the perceived rationale occupies either polar region, it fails to justify the label of argument because the claim either appears ridiculous (not worth arguing about) or too risky to entertain.⁶

Now the locus of perception here is apparently the "persuadee" (i.e., the recipient of the arguments₁ initially advanced by the "persuader"). That is, Brockriede's claim seems to be that the persuadee must see the persuader's claim as "worthy at least of being entertained" before there is (or can be) an "argument." This analysis, it seems to me, confuses not only arguments₁ with arguments₂, but also arguments₁ with good (but not too good) arguments₁. I can best explain this as follows.

It is probably true that a persuadee must see at least a scintilla of support (for the leap) before he sees the claim as a serious one - one worth having an argument₂ about. But it does not seem to me that where the persuadee finds this support lacking he cannot recognize that the persuader *has* advanced *some* argument₁, however poor that argument₁ may be. That is, a bad argument₁ is still an argument₁. I might well recognize that someone has advanced an argument₁ (has offered putative reasons for a claim) yet also see that argument₁ (those reasons) as so unconvincing that I see no need for my advancing counter-arguments₁ (no need for us to have an argument₂). The person made an argument₁, but it was a terrible argument₁ - so terrible that I need not engage him in an argument₂. Conversely, if the persuadee finds the rationale so compelling that he utterly accepts it, he will

again likely see no need for having an argument₂. But the persuader has still presented an argument₁; a convincing argument₁ is still an argument₁. (I will return to this point shortly in the context of discussing "analytic arguments.") In sum, Brockriede's discussion of this second characteristic not only confuses the conditions that make an argument₂ likely to occur with the conditions for an argument₁'s having been made, but also unhappily limits the scope of arguments₁ in a way that excludes highly successful arguments₁ and utterly unsuccessful arguments₁.

Brockriede's third characteristic is "a choice between two or more competing claims."⁷ He suggests that "people who argue have some choice but not too much. If they have too little choice, if a belief is entailed by formal logic or required by their status as true believers, they need not argue; but if they have too much choice, if they have to deal with choice overload, then argument may not be very productive."⁸ The difficulties with this analysis are rather complex. Consider first this claim: "If a belief is entailed by formal logic, then people need not argue." As it stands, this claim is not well put. Any statement can be "entailed by formal logic" given the right kinds of premises. Perhaps Brockriede's intent here can better be expressed as follows: "If a person sees a claim as logically following from premises he accepts, then he need not argue." But this version of the claim will not do either. The fact that I accept the premises which formally entail a given claim does not ensure that others (whom I might wish to persuade) will also accept those premises. If I want those others to accept my claim, then I may well need to argue₁ (i.e., make arguments₁) for it. Perhaps, then, the point Brockriede wishes to make can be put this way: "If a person sees a claim as logically following from premises that he accepts and that he believes some other person *O* accepts, then he need not make arguments to *O* in support of the claim." Now this version might be acceptable if all persons reasoned in a strictly logical fashion, for if this condition were met then the knowledge that *O* accepts certain premises would give grounds for believing that *O* accepts claims that are logical consequences of those premises. Under such conditions, there would in fact be no need to make arguments₁ (to *O*) for those logical consequences. As it happens, of course, not all persons always reason in a strictly logical way.

I suspect that theorists of argument have been misled here by examples such as "Socrates is a man, and all men are mortal, so Socrates is mortal." This case presents a conclusion which is on its face acceptable to most

persons; one need not construct an argument₁ here. But not all conclusions of logically tight arguments₁ are so clearly unobjectionable. We are to the point of discussing what are sometimes called "analytic arguments," arguments₁ in which the conclusion is logically entailed by the premises. Brockriede, of course, is not alone in suggesting that analytic arguments₁ are not really arguments₁ at all. My claim, however, is that this exclusion of analytic arguments₁ from the realm of argument₁ is unwarranted.

Suppose, for example, that I wish to disabuse some philosopher of what Richard Taylor calls "simple materialism," the belief that persons are identical with their bodies. I might attack this belief this way.⁹

- (1) If two things are identical, then any predicate meaningfully applicable to one must be meaningfully applicable to the other.
- (2) Certain sorts of predicates (e.g., moral assessments and, roughly speaking, intentional characterizations such as "believes that *p*" and "hopes that *q*") are meaningfully applicable to persons but not to their bodies.
- (3) Therefore, persons are not identical with their bodies.

What are we to make of this? That I haven't really made an argument₁ here (by virtue of its analyticity)? But I certainly did something very much like presenting an argument₁. That my hearer (if he now abandons his earlier stand) really believed my conclusion all along (it being implicitly contained in premises he accepted)? But in a perfectly straightforward sense he did not initially believe my conclusion. No, I think the most plausible characterization of what I have done is that I have made an argument₁ - this, even though the argument₁ is "analytic." (Notice that nothing turns on my hearer having accepted my argument₁. I could properly be said to have made an argument₁, even if my hearer had rejected one of my premises as false. Indeed, I could properly be said to have made an argument₁, even if my hearer had not thought my claim worthy of being entertained even "for the sake of argument.")

Now to suggest that analytic arguments₁ are genuine arguments₁ is not to claim that analytic arguments₁ occur very often in everyday life, that naive social actors regularly employ logically tight forms of argument₁, that the "analytic ideal" is a useful framework for describing or understanding everyday arguments₁, or that only analytic arguments₁ are arguments₁. It is only to claim that analytic arguments₁

are in fact arguments₁, that there is no good reason for excluding (as Brockriede does) logically tight arguments₁ from the realm of argument₁.

So far I have discussed this third characteristic – "a choice between two or more competing claims" – in terms of arguments₁. But the same characteristic could be viewed from the perspective of argument₂. Thus, for example, if persons "have too little choice... they need not argue" – that is, they need not have an argument₂.¹⁰ If you and I are trying to decide what course of action to adopt, and we see only one plausible alternative, it may well be pointless for us to have an argument₂. Similarly, if we "have too much choice", if we "have to deal with choice overload, then argument may not be very productive" – that is, it may not be useful for us to have an argument₂.¹¹ Our alternatives are not sufficiently narrowed to permit productive arguments₂ to occur. The third characteristic, then, can be read as applying either to arguments₁ or to arguments₂, and hence it does not distinguish the two senses of "argument."

Brockriede's fourth characteristic is "a regulation of uncertainty." He indicates that "if certainty existed, people need not engage in what I am defining as argument. When uncertainty is high, a need for argument is also high.... If people have too little uncertainty to regulate, then they have no problems to solve and argument is not needed."¹² Brockriede notes that usually arguers will attempt to control uncertainty by reducing it, but that on occasion arguers might strategically choose to increase uncertainty.

When one speaks of "arguments" as designed to reduce or increase uncertainty, one seemingly is referring to arguments₁. One common purpose in making arguments₁ is to regulate the persuadee's uncertainty (especially to reduce his uncertainty about which of two competing claims to honor). Sometimes, however, arguments₂ are conducted for the same purpose. Institutionalized arrangements for arguments₂, as in the American judicial system, frequently involve purposeful clash where the point of having the argument₂ is to present the issues to (and thus regulate the certainty of) a third party; each arguer's arguments₁ and counter-arguments₁ are primarily directed at the third party (the audience, e.g. judge or jury), rather than at his opponent. Hence Brockriede's fourth characteristic of "argument," while apparently focused on arguments₁, can apply equally well to both

arguments₁ and arguments₂. Thus this fourth characteristic does not distinguish the two senses of "argument."

The fifth characteristic is "a willingness to risk confrontation of a claim with peers."¹³ This seems an attribute of the arguer rather than of the argument, and apparently focuses on persons who are making arguments₁ (i.e., arguers₁) but who are not yet engaged in an argument₂. Presumably those involved in an argument₂ (arguers₂) are already engaged in confrontation; for them, that risk has been actualized (though, of course, different risks may now arise).

The sixth characteristic advanced is "a frame of reference shared optimally." The suggestion is that persons "cannot argue with one another very effectively if their presuppositions share too little or are virtually irreconcilable; but argument is pointless if two persons share too much."¹⁴ In characterizing his own essay as an exemplar of "argument," Brockriede makes a telling commentary with respect to this sixth attribute: "I have presumed throughout that our frames of reference overlap at some points but not at too many".¹⁵ Now it might be true that for a person to advance an argument₁ he must presume that his frame of reference overlaps at some points with those of his listeners. (Of course, it seems that this is a requirement not merely for a person's advancing an argument₁, but for a person's speaking at all.) But this is not the same as saying that for two persons to have an argument₂ they must share a frame of reference. The second claim may be true as well, but it is not synonymous with the first.

Further, what I have called the "second claim" here is ambiguous. One is not sure whether Brockriede means to suggest that a shared frame of reference is required ("required" in the loose sense of being a "generic characteristic") for persons to have an argument₂, or whether such is required for two persons to have a productive argument₂. Now perhaps Brockriede wants to restrict the sense of "argument" (more carefully, "argument₂") in a way that includes only productive (worthwhile, good) arguments₂, preferring to reserve some other term (say "squabble") for unproductive arguments₂. But this is something left unclear in Brockriede's discussion.

In sum, Brockriede's treatment of "argument" elides two distinct senses of the term. As a consequence, his discussion of the generic characteristics of "argument" is confused. Characteristics one, two, and four

appear to focus on arguments₁; characteristic six seems to center on arguments₂; and the status of characteristics three and five is unclear.

II

I hope it is now clear that a confusion of the two senses of "argument" leads to unhappy consequences. Fruitful work in the study of argument will obviously turn on a recognition of the differences between arguments₁ and arguments₂. But Brockriede's elision of the two senses of "argument" is important, because it is indicative of shifting concerns in the study of argument.

Broadly put, most contemporary treatments of argument have had two central features: a focus on arguments₁ and a prescriptive orientation. Hence the emphasis of textbooks and coursework in argumentation is on teaching one to be a good (effective, ethical, strategic,...) arguer₁: Here is what a logically sound argument₁ is, here are some common fallacies in argument₁, these stock issues give you a clue as to what arguments₁ you will likely need to make, and so forth.

Brockriede, however, is obviously as concerned with arguments₂ as with arguments₁ (even while he does not differentiate these clearly). And accompanying this expanded interest is, I think, a descriptive or explanatory concern, rather than a purely normative orientation. That is, Brockriede seems more concerned with understanding and explaining "arguments" (of whatever type) than with offering prescriptions to "arguers" (of whatever type).

This same general shift from prescription to description can be discerned in Stephen Toulmin's *Uses of Argument*. Toulmin notes that logic, as he conceives it, "may have to become less of an *a priori* subject than it has recently been; so blurring the distinction between logic itself and the subjects whose arguments the logician scrutinizes."¹⁶ Toulmin continues:

Accepting the need to begin by collecting for study the actual forms of argument current in any field, our starting-point will be confessedly empirical.... This will seem a matter for apology only if one is completely wedded to the ideal of logic as a purely formal, *a priori* science. But not only will logic have to become more empirical; it will inevitably tend to

become more historical.... We must study the ways of arguing which have established themselves in any sphere, accepting them as historical facts; knowing that they may be superceded, but only as the result of a revolutionary advance in our methods of thought.¹⁷

Thus Toulmin suggests that students of argument undertake the task of "seeing and describing the arguments in each field as they are, recognizing how they work; not setting oneself up to explain why, or to demonstrate that they necessarily must work."¹⁸

Notably, much of the criticism leveled at *Uses of Argument* has focused on prescriptive questions. Thus, for example, Cowan charges that Toulmin "has not shown *how* conformity to the forms and procedures he outlines does provide any support or justification at all.... How are we to know whether a proposed backing *really* backs?"¹⁹ This line of criticism is somewhat off the mark, just because Toulmin is much less concerned with justifying the use of the kinds of arguments₁ he mentions than he is with simply describing and explicating those arguments₁. One might say that for Toulmin, like Wittgenstein, the central task is that of "clarifying those public standards of justification that we all employ in science and in everyday life."²⁰

One could, I think, point to many other indications within the study of argumentation of an emerging concern with the description and explication of argument, as opposed to a focus on prescriptive matters: the extensive discussions of the role of formal logic in argumentation,²¹ Perelman's work on types of arguments₁,²² Crable's recent textbook *Argumentation as Communication*.²³ But all of these discussions largely focus on arguments₁. Arguments₂ do not receive very much (explicit) attention. Brockriede's essay, however, makes it clear that a shift from prescription to description will very naturally include an (expanded) interest in arguments₂.

Unfortunately Brockriede does not clearly distinguish arguments₁ and arguments₂. Yet I think it is obvious that a coherent description of everyday "argument" will turn on recognizing that distinction: it is one thing to describe or explain an argument₁ that someone makes, and something quite different to describe or explain an argument₂, that two persons are having.

But to recognize the distinction between arguments₁ and arguments₂ is only to have a starting-point for analysis. Very thorny issues immediately arise concerning how one is to delimit arguments₁ and arguments₂, and how one is to characterize the relation between arguments₁ and arguments₂. For example: Do we want to say that an argument₂ necessarily involves the exchange of arguments₁ and counter-arguments₁ (so that what we might call "squabbles" or "quarrels," in which - if we define them this way - arguments₁ are not exchanged, are not arguments₂)? Or are quarrels genuine arguments₂, simply different from arguments₂ in which arguments₁ are exchanged? Again, would we want to say that someone has made an argument₁ if no argument₂ took place (so that making an argument₁ definitionally involves having an argument₂)? Or are we willing to allow that arguments₁ can be made even if no argument₂ ensues?

And beyond these initial questions, the distinction points to rather more direct inquiries concerning everyday argumentation: How are arguments₂ conducted in everyday life? What strategies are employed in making arguments₁? To what (if any) standards do naive social actors hold everyday arguments₁? Along what dimensions do arguments₂ differ (e.g., institutionalized vs. informal)?

I do not propose to answer these questions here. I am convinced, however, that questions such as these - questions predicated on the recognition of the distinction between arguments₁ and arguments₂ - are central to the understanding of everyday "argument." The emerging shift from prescription to description in the study of argumentation will come to naught so long as theorists of argument do not recognize the two senses of "argument".

Notes

1. Now I suppose that, for each characterization I have just mentioned, it could be argued that the description could be extended to apply to both arguments₁ and arguments₂. This might well be true, but I think that in each case it would be clear that the characterization was an extended one, that some shift in the meaning of the characterization had occurred.

2. These related distinctions are not quite as clear-cut as is the distinction between the two senses of argument. There are several reasons for this. One is that an arguer₁ (who is arguing₁, who is making arguments₁) will often at the same time be an arguer₂ (be arguing₂, be engaged in an argument₂). Another is that some might be inclined to say that a person who seems to be engaged in an argument₂ but who is not making arguments₁ is actually not engaged in an argument₂ at all, but rather is engaged in, say, a quarrel (that is, some might want to restrict the sense of "argument₂" so that quarrels and the like are excluded); this restricted sense of "argument," makes it necessarily true that an arguer₂ be an arguer₁. But surely one can be an arguer₁ without being an arguer₂, since one can make arguments₁ without becoming engaged in an argument₂ (if, for example, one's arguments₁ are ignored), and thus one can argue₁ without arguing₂. So while these related distinctions are somewhat murky, they still seem to have some merit.

3. Wayne Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 11 (1975), 179-82; See also Wayne Brockriede, "Rhetorical Criticism as Argument," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1974), 165-74.

4. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" p. 180.

5. *Ibid.*

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 180-181.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 181.

8. *Ibid.*

9. Taylor makes something like this argument in his *Metaphysics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), pp. 8-10.

10. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" p. 181

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*, p. 182.
15. *Ibid.*
16. Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 257.
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*, p. 258.
19. Joseph L. Cowan, "The Uses of Argument - An Apology for Logic," *Mind*, 73 (1964), 31.
20. John Turk Saunders and Donald F. Henze, *The Private-Language Problem* (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 19.
21. See, e.g., Ray L. Anderson and C. David Mortensen, "Logic and Marketplace Argumentation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 53 (1967), 143-51; Glen E. Mills and Hugh G. Petrie, "The Role of Logic in Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 54 (1968), 260-67; David W. Shepard, "The Role of Logic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 310-12; Hugh G. Petrie, "Does Logic Have Any Relevance to Argumentation?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 6 (1969) 55-60; C. David Mortensen and Ray L. Anderson, "The Limits of Logic," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 7 (1970), 71-78.
22. C. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), esp. Part Three.
23. Richard E. Crable, *Argumentation as Communication: Reasoning with Receivers* (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1976).

Chapter 6

A Third Perspective on Argument

Dale Hample

Argumentation is presently in a state of civilized rebellion against its past. The enthusiasm for scientific research which stimulated modern studies in persuasive, then interpersonal, and now organizational communication came late to students of argument. But it has arrived, and is promoting work which departs radically from the ideas and concerns which form the specialty's rhetorical tradition. For the most part, that heritage has been less rejected than ignored by modernists. Much contemporary writing from argumentation specialists focuses on problems to which the old insights seem not to apply. The structure of conversation, children's acquisition of argumentation skills, ordinary people's conceptions of what an argument is, and other current research topics have very new roots in our discipline. This new scholarship is widely seen as legitimate, but only because scholars no longer rely exclusively on a propositional view of argument. Self-conscious efforts have lately been made to redefine argument in ways which encourage such nontraditional research.

The seminal paper of this type is presently O'Keefe's, in which he distinguishes two senses of "argument."¹ Argument₁, the first sense, is a thing people *make*, as when an editorialist *argues that* some public policy is wrong. Argument₂ is a kind of interaction people *have*, as when two friends *argue about* where to have lunch. So argument₁ comes close to the ancient rhetorical notion of argument, while argument₂ legitimates the modern interactional research. O'Keefe's distinctions are commonly seen as laying out in broad terms the defining features of argument, and are consequently exerting appreciable influence in inaugurating, describing, and evaluating argumentation research and theory. Although some other useful sets of differentiations have appeared,² O'Keefe's two senses continue to be the dominant conceptual scheme.

This is not to say, however, that no further work remains to be done. O'Keefe himself has recently written an important elaboration

of his original essay.³ An early reviewer of that paper judges that even with the most recent emendations, O'Keefe's distinctions need to be revised to be fully useful for argumentation theorists.⁴ Another commentator, on reading O'Keefe's new essay, calls for "an organic conception of argument in which the 'senses' are collapsed in on-going discourse."⁵ That the two senses can actually be collapsed seems doubtful; the differences between argument₁ and argument₂ appear to be both clear and important.⁶ Nonetheless I sympathize with the desire to explore the elements common to both kinds of argument. Even one who wholeheartedly endorses O'Keefe's descriptions of the two senses of "argument" may be left wondering what it is we have two senses of. I offer this essay as an attempt to display the common ground of argument₁ and argument₂ and, in so doing, to put forth one "organic conception of argument."

My thesis is this: A third concept of argument, argument₀, is necessary to a complete understanding of argument₁, argument₂, and argument in general. Argument₀ is the cognitive dimension of argument – the mental processes by which arguments occur within people.⁷ I propose that argument-as-cognition be marked as argument₀ to emphasize the originative impulse of cognition, and to imply the foundational character of this kind of argument.

Argument₀ is a distinct and necessary way of studying argument. Like argument₁ or argument₂ it refers to a thing, and having the conception of it illuminates some theoretical problems.⁸

Argument₀ indexes a wide variety of cognitive accomplishments. These mental processes encompass everything involved in "thinking out" an argument: the perceptual and inferential experience of noticing an argument or the need for one; the memorial processes of storage, retrieval, and reconstruction of pertinent cognitive elements; the information processing which is applied to the argument and its potential parts; the creative energies that generate new arguments or responses to them; and the productive abilities that give form to utterance. The information processing which resembles a mental syllogism is uncontroversially labelled "reasoning."⁹ Other mental processes are less easily recognizable as reasoning because the "inferences" are associational, non-sequential, and generally not disciplined by formal logic;¹⁰ nonetheless, they are part of what happens when people process arguments. In principle, this third perspective on argument also includes the creative processes by which people invent arguments, even though we know little about the psychology of invention. So we have fairly distinct applications of this idea to argument receivers on one hand, and to argument generators on the other.¹¹

My method in this essay will be, first, to say what argument₀ is. This description, incidentally, will show that argument₀ is firmly grounded in the rhetorical tradition. As part of this development, I will reprise the O'Keefe/Brockriede dispute which originated the argument₁/argument₂ distinction. My commentary is designed to improve our understanding of the third perspective by showing that O'Keefe and Brockriede each muddled their analyses of argument, argument₁ and argument₂, because neither maintained a clear notion of argument₀. In the following section, I will examine Jackson and Jacobs' research on conversational argument. They object strongly to the psychological approach which this essay represents, but I will show that even their own work depends heavily on an implicit notion of argument₀. The paper's conclusion shows briefly how argument₀, argument₁, argument₂, and argument in general are related.

1. The Nature of Argument

An essential and unique feature of this perspective is its attitude toward the message. Most argument theorists view arguments (in either of O'Keefe's senses) as residing within messages, whether the message be a serial statement or a conversation. For these scholars, argument is a public, textual phenomenon, and is therefore studied using speeches, essays, or turns at talk as primary sources. But the textual view is not the only possible one. Several writers have noticed that communication may be usefully studied as having several *loci*.¹² Argument may indeed occur in talk or writing, leading many to the conclusion that argument is essentially a textual event. But the cognitive focus on argument finds arguments in another place: within the people who are arguing. This theoretical decision de-emphasizes the role of the message in argument.¹³ The only *necessary* role for message to play in a cognitive theory is to perform as a stimulus for the receiver's (cognitively generated) argument.

In earlier papers, in fact, I have argued that messages should be viewed *solely* as stimuli. While that minimal appreciation of message is the only essential facet of text for argument₀, I have come to realize that we should not ignore textual features on this account. Some characteristics of discourse reliably elicit certain styles of information-processing. For example, concretely worded passages are commonly converted into mental images.¹⁴ And, so long as we are cautious about it,¹⁵ we may actually find clues to receivers' cognitions by considering message assertions. Lakoff and Johnson express an even more general idea:

"Since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and acting, language is an important source of evidence for what that system is like."¹⁶ So message-as-merely-stimulus is a limited conception of the role of text in the third perspective, and full cognitive theories will tend to go further than this. But by its nature, the psychological perspective on argument involves a radical restriction on the theoretical value of the message; this will be plain whenever a cognitive description is compared to other accounts of argument. No cognitivist would study a message for its own sake. Such constriction is inherent to studies of argument₀, and is one feature which helps distinguish it from current understandings of argument₁ and argument₂.

Perhaps the discussion to this point is sufficient to give a general idea of what I mean by argument₀. To provide a more detailed account, I wish to show this view's importance in both classical and contemporary argumentation theories. Then I will close this section with a statement of strong and weak sets of claims about argument₀.

Argument₀ appears prominently in Plato's rhetorical theory. Near the conclusion of the *Phaedrus* Socrates consents to tell Phaedrus "how one ought to compose if he means to be as scientific as possible" in constructing a rhetorical theory: "the intending orator must know what types of soul there are," and must learn to match kinds of hearers with kinds of speeches. The orator will learn such things theoretically in school, but this is not enough. He must make persuasion practical by careful empirical observation of its effects on men's souls: "he must watch it actually occurring, exemplified in men's conduct, and must cultivate a keenness of perception in following it, if he is to get any advantage out of the previous instruction...." This combination of education and experience will enable the orator to say: "that character now actually before me is the one I heard about in school, and in order to persuade him of so-and-so I have to apply *these* arguments in *this* fashion..."¹⁷ Plato's dialogue illustrates both the nature of argument₀ and the research methodology required to study it. Surely it is plain that Plato's program requires the student to understand the cognitive mechanisms (the "soul") by which the audience will deal with the argument. To appreciate this process is to have a cognitive view of argument. And the final validation of theory is empirical observation. Argument₀ is therefore present in Plato's rhetoric; its importance in the theory is shown by the fact that it derives from the very function of oratory - "to influence men's souls."¹⁸ Plato's view of argument is not wholly cognitive, since he also insists that

oratory be based in truth and that it be designed to please the gods.¹⁹ Even so, argument₀ is pivotal in his rhetoric.

Aristotle, too, makes use of the third perspective in his theory. Like Plato, Aristotle insists that his pupils learn about psychology. Book II of the *Rhetoric* includes a long list of emotions about which the rhetor is enjoined to know the state of mind associated with each, the objects of the emotion (e.g., with whom does one get angry?), and the ground or stimuli for each.²⁰ The enthymeme, certainly a basic part of Aristotle's theory, is constructed with the audience's cognitive systems very much in mind: enthymemes ought to be simple because hearers have limited intellectual capacity; they must be based only on premises already believed by the audience; and familiar items may be omitted.²¹ Each of these properties is founded on knowledge of how the audience will think through the argument.

In addition to this common receiver-oriented use of argument₀ we also find in Aristotle the rarer speaker-based application. Careful attention to the first two chapters of the *Rhetoric* reveals that Aristotle did not see rhetoric as an essentially performative art. Instead, he seems almost exclusively concerned with *thinking of* arguments, in contrast to delivering them. He defines rhetoric as "the *faculty of observing* in any given case the available means of persuasion."²² In speaking of rhetoric's function, he says that it "is not simply to succeed in persuading, but rather *to discover* the means of coming as near such success as the circumstances of each particular case allow."²³ This is Aristotle's intentional use of argument₀. Surely we will misunderstand the *Rhetoric* if we cannot appreciate Aristotle's explanations of how arguments ought to arise in the mind of an orator, or how arguments are likely to be processed in the minds of audience members. So a careful reading of the *Rhetoric* illuminates the nature of argument₀.

While the evidence from Plato and Aristotle has considerably more weight in legitimating argument₀, I would be remiss if I did not note that modern theorists also use this perspective at times. Willard, for instance, holds that an argument "is a psychological phenomenon having no existence apart from the individuals who use it." He points out that one might consider argument from any of three different vantage points; the first would involve "the processes occurring in the mind of the source which result in the verbalized claim"; the second would concentrate on text; and the third would describe the "cognitive processes of the receiver as s/he hears the argument."²⁴ The first and third of these ideas are the audience- and speaker-based uses of argument₀ we have met in Aristotle, and are also those taken by Willard himself.

He says, for instance, that "the relationships between claims and the evidence for them is *always* psychological,"²⁵ and reaffirms his (partly) cognitive orientation throughout his work.

Burleson's work also involves argument₀ at critical turns. His attitude toward text is revealed in his comment that "no utterance may be regarded intrinsically as an argument, for arguments are always *constructed* in discourse by persons."²⁶ His empirical work on children's argumentation concentrates on the development of cognitive sensitivities, and so illustrates one modern approach to argument₀.²⁷ He comes close to expressing this essay's theme when he remarks that "understanding of both the act of 'making an argument' and the activity of 'having an argument' can be deepened by developing more sophisticated knowledge of human reasoning processes."²⁸ Burleson's papers, in short, are quite self-consciously cognitive in their orientation, and offer clear examples of the merit of argument₀.

Similar points can be made about the work of many other contemporary scholars. The role of argument₀ is not always as obvious or important as in the theories just discussed, but it frequently has a secure niche. In the *New Rhetoric*, for example, the adherence of the audience is a central notion. "Indeed, the object of the theory of argumentation is the study of the discursive techniques allowing us to induce or to increase the mind's adherence to the theses presented for its assent."²⁹ Wenzel, too, finds it expedient to explain argument-as-process in cognitive terms (among others). Within the process perspective, "we think of the man as situated in the real world of social-political action, speaking to other persons so situated, for the purpose of influencing their attitudes, beliefs, and actions. We conceive of his motive as persuasion, and our purpose in examining his behavior, its antecedents, and its consequences is to understand the process of persuasion."³⁰ Various of the words in this explanation – purpose, attitudes, beliefs, motive – require cognitive interpretations, and others – situated, influencing, actions, persuasion, antecedents, consequences – might be helpfully discussed in such terms. As I will show soon, I think Brockriede, O'Keefe, Jackson, and Jacobs all draw on argument₀ in order to build their theories as well. Argument-as-cognition continually reappears throughout the corpus of both modern and classical argumentation theory.

But I am not content to observe that argument₀ flits in and out of various theories. I claim that argument-as-cognition has an indisputable, if usually unrecognized, *centrality* in all our leading contemporary work. Since O'Keefe's 1977 paper is now in conceptual control of current argumentation theory,³¹ I can make my ambitious

claim about centrality plausible if I can show that his analysis requires a notion of argument₀. The historical occasion for the argument₁/argument₂ disjunction was O'Keefe's use of it to critique Brockriede's characterization of argument.³² Neither O'Keefe nor Brockriede³³ has any *explicit* sense of argument₀, and both make consistent mistakes because of that deficiency.

Begin by considering Brockriede's first three "generic characteristics" of argument. Argument requires "an inferential leap from existing beliefs to the adoption of a new belief or to the reinforcement of an old one," "a perceived rationale to support that leap," and "a choice among two or more competing claims."³⁴ O'Keefe, whose main objection to Brockriede's paper is that it conflates argument₁ and argument₂, offers these critiques; inferential leaps only describe argument₁, a perceived rationale is unnecessary for argument₂, and choice is a feature of both senses of argument.³⁵

Once one is familiar with the idea of argument₀, however, these first three characteristics seem obviously to be about cognition. Beliefs are mental events, not textual or conversational ones; so an inference from one to another must also be mental. O'Keefe's discussions of argument₁ make it clear that argument₁ is a completely public, documentary accomplishment,³⁶ so his assertion that Brockriede's inferential leaps are part of argument₁ now seems plainly wrong. Those inferences belong in the domain of argument₀.³⁷ To the degree that people say what they think (and think what they hear), these inferences may also appear in arguments₁ or arguments₂, but they are only a necessary part of argument₀. A similar analysis holds for Brockriede's "perceived rationale." This feature of argument is not necessarily public either. In the first place, the rationale is *perceived*, and perception is a private psychological activity. And second, the rationale supports (stands under, prepares the way for) the cognitive leap discussed a moment ago. So O'Keefe is right in saying that argument₂ can proceed without an explicit rationale, but he is wrong to think that argument₁ requires one. The cognitive support for the inference can be omitted or assumed in an argument₁ as easily as in an argument₂. Only argument₀ seems really to require support for the leap. Similarly, choice is not, as O'Keefe would have it, a part of both argument₁ and argument₂. Only humans can choose - texts cannot. Besides, the choice is between "competing claims," and the recognition that two different positions are competitive is a perception - another mental experience. So choice clearly belongs in the domain of argument₀.

If anything, the relevance of argument₀ is even clearer for Brockriede's final three generic characteristics. He says that argument

must involve "a regulation of uncertainty," requires "a willingness to risk confrontation of a claim with peers," and must proceed from "a frame of reference shared optimally."³⁸ All three of these, I think, precede public arguing, and are direct resident features only of argument₀. Uncertainty regulation is the *motive* for arguing, willingness to risk confrontation is a description of a mental state, and "shared reference frames" refers to a match between two people's cognitive organizations. None of these things will normally be displayed publicly, whether in an essay or an interaction.

Am I saying that Brockriede's six generic characteristics are not features of argument₁ or argument₂? Yes and no. Yes, if one is discussing whether or not these features are definitionally or immediately necessary (and that is the bias in the O'Keefe paper). TBhe public *text*, "arms control talks are notoriously slow and delicate, so we shouldn't lose heart," *does not itself contain beliefs*, a rationale, competing claims, uncertainty reduction, risk of confrontation, or reference frames. Readers or the author of that enthymeme *can* find all six features within themselves; but being in the participants is different from being in the text. However, in another sense, those six ideas do characterize argument₁ and argument₂. Argument₀ is the foundation of either kind of public construction, so anything essential to argument₀ belongs at least indirectly to the other two. Persuaded of the associations between public argument and the six generic characteristics, but lacking the theoretical resources of the third perspective, both O'Keefe and Brockriede wrongly claim that each characteristic typifies some kind of public argument. Applying argument₀ to their exchange results in a considerable clarification of the nature of argument, further illustrates the nature of argument₀, and goes a long way toward proving that we need an explicit sense of argument-as-cognition.

But argument₀ can be variously understood. Readers may well grant the necessity for a cognitive notion of argument, but remain unpersuaded by my description of argument₀. This is a perfectly legitimate reaction to this essay, because the assertion that "argument is cognitive" can be taken in several ways. To forestall needless objections to that assertion, I will distinguish here between weak and strong claims for argument₀. Individual scholars may of course take intermediate positions. Nonetheless, a discussion of the extremes - the least and the most which can reasonably be said of argument₀ - ought to explicate the idea of argument-as-cognition a little further, and help each reader to find a comfortable posture.

The weak set of claims is considerably more common than the strong set. The overall effect of the weak view is to restrict the scope

of argument₀. Theories that focus on argument₁ or argument₂ tend to allocate the active power of argument to the public domain, and so find less theoretical authority in cognition. The mental events of arguing are seen as a special kind of thinking, clearly distinct from, say, learning or remembering or imagining. To argue (mentally) is nothing more than to work through a public argument. Hence the text contains and dictates the essential structure of the private event. Advocates of this weak view hold that argument₀ is only a dimension of argument, and that the only real arguments are public. Given this point of view, the study of argument₀ is obviously of lower theoretical priority than work on public arguments. We will know the nature of argument-as-cognition if we first discover the features of argument-as-text, on this view.³⁹ Furthermore, public argument is almost self-sustaining. People's production and reception of arguments are driven by the text, plus some nearly automatic mental glosses, which the linguistic community provides. All competent adults, for instance, understand how to make requests, excuses, and pleas; everyone can do pre-sequences, dodge upcoming demands, hint, and so forth. Given a particular situation (the participants' motives would be conceived as part of the context), only a few strategies or types of argument are usefully available, and the eventual manifestations of these arguments are theoretically transparent as to wording, presentational style, and other such factors. For all practical and theoretical purposes, the situation and the text are all we need to explain argumentation, for the variability in human understanding of these is extremely limited in respect to the analysis the scholar constructs.

Nothing in the weak view denies that argument occurs mentally; nowhere is text confused with cognition; nor is it ever claimed that mental experience is irrelevant to argumentation. However, all the cognitive events are seen as being caused by public ones, and the cognitions are so common within the language community that they are easily predicted by virtually any other member of that culture. These scholars understandably see little merit in research focusing on argument₀ to the exclusion of argument₁ and argument₂. However, a study of public argument that fails to create a central and self-conscious place for cognition will seem entirely coherent to them. The Jackson/Jacobs work to be discussed later has many elements of this weak view.

Strong claims for argument₀ are more rarely encountered. Here, the mental process of arguing is not seen as special at all. It involves cognitive events of broad scope, such as perceiving, remembering, imagining, comprehending, associating, and so forth. Argument₀ may

be understood only if the whole of cognition is understood.⁴⁰ An explication of text is unlikely to satisfy the requirements for full cognitive analysis. At some risk of oversimplification, we may state our first contrast this way: the strong claim is that mental arguing is thinking; the weak claim is that mental arguing is private speaking. The status of text is also different for the strong view. Here, the public argument cannot sustain itself: it is supplied, moment by moment, through the agency of thought. Where the weak view sees public conventions controlling argument production and reception, the strong claim is that those conventions originate in, and are ratified by, the minds of individuals. Much of what we do is obviously not the product of immediate thoughtful attention,⁴¹ but we may diverge from routine any time we choose. Cognition produces discourse, not vice versa. Our interpretations will be reflected in our public arguments. Given a textual stimulus (i.e., an argument₁ or an argument₂), we may understand conventionally, may misunderstand, may "read between the lines," may disregard the utterance, or may do dozens of other things which are not dictated by text, and which can only be described in terms of private mental experiences. My own empirical studies and much of the recent work on children's argumentation skills typically represent the strong view.

These strong claims do not entail a repudiation of the regularities of discourse interpretation; nor do they regard text as a complete and redundant manifestation of thought. However, all that exists publicly is invented privately, and can only be captured theoretically by reference to cognition. More than a mere dimension of public argument, argument₀ stands alone as a distinct species of argument. But our only evidence regarding other people's arguments₀ is behavioral, so a scientific study of argument₀ which involves no text is impossible. The "texts" will often be responses to questionnaire items, however, and may be shunned by investigators preferring to study richer, more spontaneous public arguments.

Cogent objections can be made to both the weak and strong claims for argument₀. The weak view has a sterile conception of invention and seemingly little room for creativity. Its portrait of the arguing person seems deterministic and only vaguely humane. Here, arguments take their form and substance from public imperatives. In refusing a request, for instance, only a handful of possibilities exist for performing competently, as Jackson, Jacobs, and others have shown. The role of imagination is reduced to that of embroidering the refusal's rationale, and even the embroidery is very strongly influenced by public politeness and linguistic conventions. The strong view, on the

other hand, enmeshes argument₀ so thoroughly in psychology that arguing mentally ends up having no special character at all. Concentration on the cognitive processes inevitably diverts attention from textual events, which are the public vehicles for the subject matter of argumentation. The strong view could tempt one to disengage argumentation from communication, which is necessarily public, and ally it to psychology. Argument₀, partaking of perception, memory, editing, and so forth, would merge with various other cognitive activities, such as attributing, choosing, and problem-solving. This could divorce argumentation from much of its rhetorical heritage, and sacrifice whatever distinctness it has.

An individual scholar need not maintain that one set of claims is superior to the other. One reasonable tactic is to try to shade one set into the other, in an attempt to resolve the tensions between them. The discomfiture of textual and cognitive theorists in the presence of each other's work is not due to inevitable, irreconcilable differences; the inconsistencies are issues of emphasis, in which the scholar's view of argument₀ is adapted to his or her research topic, and vice versa. In another connection, Brockriede argues forcibly for the use of multiple perspectives in scholarship. He invites "alternative interpretive perspectives in which one dimension is featured and others, although present and functioning, receive less emphasis. Translating this conception through the metaphor of the figure and the ground, one may say that any one dimension is thematized as the figure and others ground the featured figure. Emphasizing one dimension does not require a reductionistic elimination of the others...."⁴²

That argument₀ should be the figure in one paper and nearly disappear in the ground of another is perfectly expectable, given the present range of argumentation theories. We should only be cautious about forming theories of argument₀ which merely rationalize a particular figure/ground decision. Students of texts may still hold strong views, and those interested in cognition may nonetheless be satisfied with the weak claims. I myself generally make the stronger set of assertions, partly because I am more comfortable with them, and partly because argument₀ is more clearly marked off from argument₁ and argument₂ in that way. As this portion of the essay implies, the weaker one's view, the less theoretically productive will be argument₀.

2. Conversational Argument

As readers are no doubt aware, the newest and most notable recent development in argumentation has been the emergence of a commitment to study interpersonal arguing. The early applause for Brockriede's paper, in fact, was due to its legitimization of a person-centered view of argument. This in turn opened the door to the study of one kind of interpersonal communication (arguing) within argumentation. O'Keefe's essay reinforced this bridge between the speciality of argumentation and the discipline of speech communication by insisting that argument-as-interaction has co-equal status with the more traditional concept of monologic textual argument. This accomplishment has made it so easy to move from argumentation to more general concerns and back again that some contemporary argumentation scholars are sometimes identified as "really" belonging to our discipline's mainstream. Especially prominent in this group are Jackson and Jacobs.⁴³

Their research is particularly pertinent to this essay. They are among a handful of argumentation scholars who have thought deeply about the relation between psychology and arguing, and their conclusions about the need for cognitive theory are completely at variance with mine. In this section, I will therefore examine the substance of their work, and show that it is unwillingly dependent on argument₀. Then I will review and answer their explicit objections to what they call "psychologism" in argumentation.

At first blush, Jackson and Jacobs seem to have little need for argument₀. Their work centers on analysis of text, and even began with a plea for more effort to understand message content.⁴⁴ They study collaborative argument, which is the public cooperative production of discourse in such a way as to produce meanings relevant to the actors' disagreements. In fact, they define argument as "disagreement-relevant expansion of speech acts."⁴⁵ These "expansions" are the possible moves conversants can make once they are involved with an adjacency pair (e.g., request/refusal-or-grant). These maneuvers are principled and rule-governed: they derive from the various felicity conditions which allow a favorable response to the first part of the adjacency pair (e.g., such a felicity condition for requests is that the respondent have the ability to perform the requested act). Jacobs and Jackson have therefore identified both a function (regulating disagreement) and a structure (speech act expansion) for conversational argument.

So Jacobs and Jackson interpret the texts (and contexts) of conversations, and this seems to involve nothing of argument.⁴⁶ O'Keefe characterizes their main interest as being "in the kinds of things that go on publicly, that is, in what happens overtly...."⁴⁶ Their analysis seeks the structural features of conversation: "The production of argument, as an interaction or as an act, is a particular realization of general conversational principles."⁴⁷ Others also identify the Jackson/Jacobs research as dealing with the (more or less) objective facts of discourse: "This research strategy begins with some general conception of discourse structures and defines or isolates arguments on the basis of general discourse principles; arguments have in common the actualization or operation of some particular discourse structure or process."⁴⁸ The Jacobs and Jackson papers are, therefore, clearly (and, as we will see, militantly) focused on text.

But the demonstration that they rely heavily on psychological explanations of public events is straightforward. No deep analysis of their studies is required here; we need only pay attention to the way they describe their goals and procedures, and the way they interpret their findings.

In an early paper, Jacobs identifies the participants' interpretive perspectives as a key concern: "the interests, inferences and personal knowledge" of the actors must be heeded if researchers are to appreciate the conversants' meanings for utterances. "It should be apparent that such [interpretive] frameworks must be *inferred from* the talk rather than *found in it*." To understand discourse, then, we must study participants' cognitions. "Conversationalists consult collections of socially, situationally, and personally distributed knowledge as a resource for making sense of conversation and as a resource for organizing conduct."⁴⁹

And these psychological concerns have not evaporated in more recent papers in the research program. Jackson and Jacobs stipulate that their data may be textual, but their analysis requires cognition. "We begin with concrete instances of talk which natural language users recognize as arguments or as related speech events. From these instances we reconstruct the tacit knowledge by which conversationalists organize such events, and thereby provide a technical description of their activities."⁵⁰ Note that their goal is to explicate a thoroughly cognitive thing: tacit knowledge. Their analysis of proposals and proposing requires an understanding of the "relationships among belief context, sequential contexts, and proposal context."⁵¹ Surely a study of belief context cannot be other than psychological. Throughout their work, we find repeated references to "commonplace understan-

ding of argument," the "beliefs, expectations, and intentions" of actors, conversants' "implicit theories of communication," "interpretation and reasoning by participants," and the "vast unreflective knowledge" actors must possess in order to argue competently.⁵² These phrases are neither careless nor incidental. The Jackson/Jacobs research is as thoroughly cognitive a program as we are ever likely to see, in spite of its use of a particular kind of textual data. "As theorists, we can't begin to understand the meanings people find in others' messages until we understand the assumptions about language use they impose on others' messages."⁵³

But if Jacobs and Jackson are as deeply committed to a cognitive model of discourse as I maintain, on what grounds do they object to other psychological work? In one paper, they offer themselves as an "alternative to the psychologization of the communication process."⁵⁴ This comment is directed against speaker centered psychological theories which give too little attention to the hearers. In such investigations the listener only enters the analysis covertly, as he or she is perceived by the speaker. True, such studies⁵⁵ do concentrate on the speaker, but that is reasonable considering these researchers' interest in invention. Invention is not all of argumentation; but by pointing this out, Jackson and Jacobs certainly have not indicted the cognitive perspective in general.

A year later, they describe their work as a possible "replacement for the fashionable but inappropriate identification of argument structure with reasoning process." We must not confuse "argument practices with the comprehension processes that make them possible. Just as the rules of chess are independent of the planning processes that allow people to play the game, so the rules of argument are independent of the comprehension processes that allow persons to see the relevance of data to claim...."⁵⁶ These passages reveal some odd understanding of argument, rules and chess. What can "independent" mean in the last sentence? Can one actually *plan* a chess move without knowing how many squares a pawn can travel at once? Now it is certainly true that the rules of the game are *different from* the players' plans, but that is a long way from the claim of independence. In fact the plans must *completely encompass* all the rules as a strategic resource. And each move will be cognitively worked out before it is made physically. Similarly with argument: On the assumption that arguments are purposive and consciously directed, we may say that an argument must exist psychologically before it is manifest publicly. The rules of conversation must reside in people's minds, where the arguments are formed. Just as there are non-rule elements in chess planning, so there may

be pertinent non-argument thoughts (for instance, our discussion of Brockriede's paper noted some motives for arguments). Study of argument₀ will focus attention on the argumentative cognitions, and reasoning is the traditional name for them.

So is "argument structure" the same as "reasoning process"? The answer depends largely on whether one means the structure of argument₀ or one of the public varieties. The reasoning process is argument₀, and so to know the structure of one is to know the structure of the other. Because of collaboration or personal editing, argument₁ and argument₂ are almost certain to appear in different language than their underlying arguments₀, so if "structure" means no more than language or physical features, Jackson and Jacobs would be correct. But structure is something abstracted from surface attributes. If I am right in claiming that there is a cognitive framework (argument₀) beneath public argumentation, then the structure of argument₁ and argument₂ will be the reasoning which generates and confirms them. And I find support for this view in Jackson and Jacobs' own work, which relies on the presumed reasonings of the participants in order to explain the meaning of conversations.

So I see considerable irony in Jacobs and Jackson's papers. Their strident objections to the application of psychology to argumentation are seriously overstated, and if valid, would do real damage to their own theoretical apparatus. A reasonably close reading of their papers reveals their consistent recourse to cognition-based explanations, methods and goals. Their work is, in fact, founded upon what an earlier section of this essay labeled the weak view of argument₀. They wish to locate the force of argument in discourse, rather than in people. But even one who granted them that language controls cognition would not thereby conclude with them that argumentation is independent of thought. Jackson and Jacobs' work therefore provides reluctant evidence for my thesis that argument₀ is essential to a complete and coherent theory of argument.

3. Conclusions

My central claim has been that a third perspective on argument is necessary in a full theory of argument. This third view represents our traditional interest in reasoning, and is the explicit research object in several contemporary bodies of work, my own included. I have also shown the centrality of argument₀ to the research now being done by contemporary theorists, and that it has a clearly discernible

place in the classical efforts of Plato and Aristotle. Refusal to legitimize a psychology-based understanding of argument would cause confusion, distortion, and superficiality in most, if not all, theories of argument.

By designating this third perspective as argument₀ I have signalled its foundational role. For me, argument₀ is the figure and public argument the ground for argumentation. For most of my colleagues, either argument₁ or argument₂ is the figure, and argument₀ recedes into the background. This does no harm, so long as the scholar restricts himself or herself to discussion of a specific kind of argument. But problems arise when someone with no explicit sense of argument₀ claims to be describing argument in general. As my reviews of papers by Brockriede, O'Keefe, and Jackson and Jacobs were designed to show, the unnoticed move from the public to the private domains of argument is a seductive and misleading temptation. It is seductive because argument₀ generates argument₁ and argument₂, and is manifest in both their structure and outward appearance. It therefore provides a natural resource for explanation. It is misleading unless clearly labeled because private processes are plainly different than public ones. To describe public arguments as though they were nothing more than private processes constitutes a radical reduction of argument₁ and argument₂. Though there is considerable virtue in the effort to find the cognitive skeletons for the flesh of public discourse, we ought not write as though these are exactly the same things.

We will profit by possession and use of an explicit notion of argument-as-cognition.⁵⁷ Argument₀ is easily distinguishable from argument₁ and argument₂; it is private while the others are solely public. I believe that argument₀ provides the structures for the other two, and is the reason that we can describe all three kinds of argument in similar terms – enthymematic, inference-containing, interpretive, and so forth. If we wish, we can conceive of all three types of argument as being information processors: each system, whether cognitive, monologic, or interpersonal, begins with evidence and draws conclusions from it. This processing, if it is persuasive, must have its origin in an effective argument₀ and this is what I mean when I insist that cognitive argument grounds the others. The frequency with which scholars uninterested in cognition make use of psychological terms shows the need for something like argument₀ in giving full account of any kind of argument. The main virtue of the term "argument₀," in fact, is simply that it names a recurrent feature of most argumentation theories.

Argument₀ also illuminates the nature of argument in general. One disconcerting result of recent efforts to distinguish different

kinds of argument has been the emasculation of the general notion of argument. What is it that we have different senses of? The answer this essay has been implicitly moving towards is this: Argument is both public and private. Its private mental character provides its inventionary resources and its basic probative force. Its publicness controls its presentational form (which modifies its essential persuasive power) and generates the human experiences of having and hearing arguments. Every scholar has the right to select a particular aspect of argument to study, but no full theory will omit either cognitive or textual analysis.

Notes

1. Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 13 (1977), 121-28.
2. Joseph W. Wenzel, "Perspectives on Argument," in Jack Rhodes and Sarah Newell, eds., *Proceedings of the Summer Conference on Argumentation* (Alta, Utah: Speech Communication Association, 1980), 112-33; Ray E. McKerrow, "Argument Communities: A Quest for Distinctions," in Rhodes and Newell, 214-27; Robert Trapp, "Special Report on Argumentation: Introduction," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 45 (1981), 111-17.
3. Daniel J. O'Keefe, "The Concepts of Argument and Arguing," in J. Robert Cox and Charles A. Willard, eds., *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 3-23.
4. Brant R. Burleson, "The Senses of Argument Revisited: Prolegomena to Future Characterizations of Argument," in George Ziegelmüller and Jack Rhodes, eds., *Dimensions of Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation* (Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association, 1981), 962.
5. Ray E. McKerrow, "Senses of Argument: Uses and Limitations of the Concept," in Ziegelmüller and Rhodes, 980. Also see McKerrow, "Argument Communities."

6. Compare Brant R. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 15 (1979), 140-41, with Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category: The Routine Grounds for Arguing in Conversation," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 45 (1981), 127-28.

7. Dale Hamble, "A Cognitive View of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 17 (1980), 151-58. This paragraph expresses some of the "strong claims" about argument₀. These, along with some weaker alternatives, will be discussed in a later section of this paper.

8. Argument₀ has a different theoretical standing than argument₁ and argument₂. The latter are two different kinds of argument, and O'Keefe's proof of that is that the word "argument" can mean either of those two different things. Thus argument₁ and argument₂ are senses of "argument." Argument₀ in contrast, does not encapsulate an ordinary meaning of "argument," and so it is not a third sense of the word. However, like argument₁ and argument₂, it does point to a kind of argument (that which occurs privately) and it does represent a way of approaching argumentation. So this paper describes a *concept* of argument, or a *perspective* on argument, but not a *sense* of argument as the word is usually understood. Even so, for argumentation theorists using "argument" in their professional capacities, it may be plausible to say that they have a cognitive sense of argument; see Burleson, "The Senses of Argument Revisited."

Where O'Keefe uses "making" and "having" arguments to help distinguish his two senses, I would offer "considering" or "inventing" or "thinking through" an argument as phrases which reflect a cognitive perspective. Argument₀ is not theoretically inconsistent with either argument₁ or argument₂ as is shown by the coherence of these sentences: "John invented and then made an argument against the tax cuts"; "Mary considered John's claims while the two of them were having an argument." That these sentences are sensible indicates that argument₀ is fully compatible with the two senses of "argument."

9. For sample studies, see Dale Hamble, "The Cognitive Context of Argument," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 45 (1981), 148-58; or Dale Hamble, "Models of Argument Using Multiple Bits of Evidence," paper presented to the International Communication

Association, Minneapolis, 1981 [ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 206 028].

10. See Dale Hample, "Dual Coding, Reasoning, and Fallacies," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 19 (1982), 59-78.

11. In one sense, the person who "receives" the argument also invents it, since reception is an active, inferential process. See Hample, "A Cognitive View of Argument."

12. James L. Kinneavy, *A Theory of Discourse* (New York: Norton, 1971), esp. 348; Charles A. Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Argument," *Communication Monographs* 43 (1976), 310; B. Aubrey Fisher, *Perspectives on Human Communication* (New York: Macmillan, 1978); Dale Hample, "Modeling Argument," in Cox and Willard, 259-84.

13. A similar cognitive bias has been noticed in broader communication theories, and has similar consequences for the theoretical importance of the message: "a strictly psychological perspective of communication would conceive of the message as 'created' by the interpreter; that is, the transmisional property of message is not necessary to conceptualizing communication within psychologism," Fisher, 271. Also, compare n. 11.

14. Alan Paivio, *Imaginary and Verbal Processes* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971). For support of this same idea from a different methodology, see Donovan J. Ochs, "Rhetorical Detailing in Cicero's Verrine Orations," *Central States Speech Journal* 33 (1982), 310-18.

15. For guidance, see Anthony G. Greenwald, "Cognitive Learning, Cognitive Response to Persuasion, and Attitude Change," in Anthony G. Greenwald, Timothy C. Brock, and Thomas M. Ostrom, eds., *Psychological Foundations of Attitudes* (New York: Academic Press, 1975), 147-70.

16. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3.

17. Plato, *Phaedrus* (trans. R. Hackford), in Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds., *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 271-72.
18. A further indication of Plato's awareness of argument₀ is his objection to writing, writing speeches, and sophists, all on the grounds that writing cannot defend itself against questions. Truth exists only in the mind and is tested by means of dialectical combat. See Tony M. Lentz, "Writing as Sophistry: From Preservation to Persuasion," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 68 (1981), 60-68.
19. Plato, *Phaedrus*, 273-74.
20. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, in *The Works of Aristotle* (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), 1378a 20-30.
21. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1357a 1-18. Generally, see Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 45 (1959), 399-408.
22. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1355b26; my emphasis.
23. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1355b10-12, my emphasis. Hauser's recent commentary on these passages clarifies the point: "when Aristotle tells us that the function of rhetoric is to observe in the given case the available means of persuasion, he is indicating not merely the end of rhetoric, but what is unique to rhetoric. It is not an art of persuading but a *habit of mind*, which realizes a capacity to find what in each particular case has the potential to gain adherence." Gerard Hauser, "The Most Significant Passage in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, or How Function May Make Moral Philosophers of Us All," paper presented to the Speech Communication Association, Anaheim, CA, 1981, 4 (my emphasis). Also see Larry Arnhart, *Aristotle on Political Reasoning* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1981), 34-35.
24. Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams," 313, 310. In the case of Willard, it is especially important to say that I am not maintaining that the psychological view of argument is his central one. His new book, *Argumentation and the Social Grounds of Knowledge* (University of Alabama Press, 1983), takes a decidedly more sociological turn than the passages I am quoting here. Even in the book, however,

he continues to preserve a tension between personal and social aspects of argument.

25. Charles A. Willard, "Some Questions About Toulmin's View of Argument Fields," in Rhodes and Newell, 369.

26. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," 146 n. 30; my emphasis.

27. For example, Brant R. Burleson, "The Development of Interpersonal Reasoning: An Analysis of Message Strategy Justifications," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 17 (1980), 102-10.

28. Brant R. Burleson, "A Cognitive-Development Perspective on Social Reasoning Processes," *Western Journal of Speech Communication* 45 (1981), 134.

29. Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. J. Wilkinson and P. Weaver (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1969), 4. Compare 14.

30. Wenzel, 115.

31. One bit of evidence for this is that Cox and Willard's entire discussion of the conceptual foundations of current argumentation theory seems to be little more than an evaluation of O'Keefe's paper. See J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard, "Introduction: The Field of Argumentation," in Cox and Willard, xxvi-xxix.

32. The sequence is Wayne Brockriede, "Where Is Argument?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 9 (1975), 179-82; O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument;" and Wayne Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 13 (1977), 129-32.

33. O'Keefe is much more at fault in this regard than Brockriede. In the abstract of his first paper, Brockriede says, "Argument is defined as a process whereby people reason their way from one set of problematic ideas to the choice of another." This certainly seems to be cognitive enough. However, in his reply to O'Keefe, Brockriede appears to abandon this cognitive ground, and moves over to O'Keefe's.

34. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" 180-81.

35. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," 122-25.

36. O'Keefe locates argument₁ in text, for argument₁ "is something one person makes (or gives or presents or utters)." O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," 121. More recently, he maintains that an argument₁ "is something that is conveyed by some speech act," O'Keefe, "The Characteristics of Argument and Arguing," 12. So argument₁ is inherently textual for O'Keefe.

37. "Domain" isn't quite the right word, but I seem unable to do better. The problem with it is that it implies exclusivity: that something belonging to one domain cannot also be a feature of another. In fact, argument₀, argument₁ and argument₂ do share many characteristics – otherwise, we would not describe them all as argument. But what I mean to be saying here with "domain" is that several elements of argument primarily and immanently characterize argument₀, and so are associated with argument₁ and argument₂ because of the dependence of public on private argument. Readers more comfortable with the "weak view" of argument₀ described later in this essay may well prefer a more moderate position here. One may reject the idea of arguments₀'s causal primacy, and maintain either of two alternate claims: that argument₀ shares these features because the nature of argument₀ is dictated by the nature of public argument (e.g. thought patterns may be held to be derived from linguistic patterns); or that the shared features do not imply any precedence among the three, perhaps because all three are incarnations of argument-in-general. Personally, I find these other two explanations less satisfactory than the one based on argument₀'s foundational character, and so I will continue to argue for the "stronger view" in the text. However, both of these "weak views" still justify the study of argument from the third perspective.

38. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" 181-82.

39. The most extreme statement of this perspective would claim that argument₀ is an epiphenomenon, having no generative or responsive power at all. However, one can maintain the weaker claims without going so far.

40. The most extreme view here would be that all cognition (seen as human information processing) is argument. Both, after all, move

from one belief to another. Cognition-as-argument, however, is not needed for the strong view of argument-as-cognition; less extreme views would still be ranked as strong.

41. See Charles R. Berger and William Douglas, "Thought and Talk: 'Excuse Me, But Have I Been Talking To Myself?'" in Frank E.X. Dance, ed., *Human Communication Theory: Comparative Essays* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982). 42-60.
42. Wayne Brockriede, "Arguing About Human Understanding," *Communication Monographs* 49 (1982), 137-38.
43. Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs, "Structure of Conversational Argument: Pragmatic Bases for the Enthymeme," *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980) 251-65; Jackson and Jacobs, "The Collaborative Production of Proposals in Conversational Argument and Persuasion: A Study of Disagreement Regulation," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 18 (1981) 77-90; Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category;" Jacobs and Jackson, "Conversational Argument: A Discourse Analytic Approach," in Cox and Willard, 205-37.
44. Scott Jacobs, "The Practical Management of Conversational Meanings: Notes on the Dynamics of Social Understanding and Interactional Emergence," paper presented to the Speech Communication Association, Washington, DC, 1977.
45. Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category," 122; italics omitted.
46. O'Keefe, "Characteristics of Argument and Arguing," 18. n.8.
47. Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category," 121.
48. Barbara J. O'Keefe and Pamela J. Benoit. "Children's Arguments," in Cox and Willard, 159.
49. Jacobs, 2, 9.; italics omitted.
50. Jackson and Jacobs, "Structure of Conversational Argument," 253. A similar comment is in Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category," 119.

51. Jackson and Jacobs, "The Collaborative Production of Proposals," 86.
52. Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category," 118 and 124; Jackson and Jacobs, "The Collaborative Production of Proposals," 84 and 78; Jacobs and Jackson, "Conversational Argument," 234.
53. Sally Jackson, "Conversational Arguments" (paper presented to the Illinois Speech and Theatre Association, St. Louis, 1981), 1.
54. Jacobs and Jackson, "The Social Production of Influence," 1-2.
55. They cite, among others, Bitzer; and Ruth Anne Clark and Jesse G. Delia, "Cognitive Complexity, Social Perspective-Talking, and Functional Persuasive Skills in Second- to Ninth-Grade Children," *Human Communications Research* 3 (1977) 128-34.
56. Jackson and Jacobs, "Structure of Conversational Argument," 251-52. Several other papers repeat the complaint about identifying argument structure with reasoning processes: Jackson and Jacobs, "The Collaborative Production of Proposals," 77; Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category," 123. The chess analogy reappears in several places, notably their new summary essay: see Jacobs and Jackson, "Conversational Argument," 214-18.
57. As an example of how we might profit theoretically, consider the controversy regarding whether arguments₂ require arguments₁. Some authorities insist that argument₂ necessitates either the exchange or the collaborative production of arguments₁. See Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," 129-30; Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," 140; Brant R. Burleson, "On the Foundations of Rationality: Toulmin, Habermas, and the a Priori of Reason," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 16 (1979), 126. n. 52; McKerrow, "Senses of Argument," 982. But other scholars claim that arguments₂, without arguments₁, are entirely possible, and have even offered examples. O'Keefe himself allows arguments₂, without arguments₁, as borderline cases. See Jackson and Jacobs, "Structure of Conversational Argument," 254-55; Jacobs and Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category," 119-21; B. J. O'Keefe and P.J. Benoit, 161-62; O'Keefe, "The Characteristics of Argument and Arguing," 9-11.

Do arguments₂ require arguments₁? My resolution of the problem is this. Neither argument₁ nor argument₂ can occur without argument₀.

That is, participants must process information in such a way as to make leaps, use rationales, decide on conclusions, plan utterances, and so forth. Whether, or how much of this cognitive material is physically represented in the textual message does not affect the prior phenomenal existence of argument₀. For argument₁ to happen, a person must "make an argument" - generate a text - such that the text stimulates an argument₀ in the hearer (or one might wish to say, ought to stimulate an argument₀). And similarly for argument₂: those "having an argument" must share enough material with one another via their discourse to stimulate arguments₀. If the rationale or the leap or some other feature is absent from text, we have two traditional choices: we may judge the passage deficient and so not an argument of either kind, or we may judge that the missing characteristics were supplied enthymematically. The absence of discourse features associated with argument₁ may be partial evidence against the presence of argument₂, but a final decision requires attention to the possible existence of argument₀ as well. So far, the scholars on both sides of this question have restricted themselves to discussion of the features, notably the rationale, which appear in text, and have not taken into account what I have been calling argument₀. So given the cognitive point of view, most of these previous claims and counterclaims are irrelevantly reasoned. Argument₂ requires only argument₀. This dependency often, but not always, results in the presence of a full textual argument₁ as well.

Introduction: Scholarly Perspectives on Argument

This section introduces two scholarly perspectives from which argumentation can be studied. In fact, many of the selections in this book, and all of those in Section II, explicate scholarly perspectives which students might reasonably internalize. But the papers by Wenzel and Ehninger have been set off from the others for several reasons. First, they are genuinely about perspectives – about ways of viewing and understanding human arguing. They are coherent, cogent descriptions of ways scholars might think about an ancient subject. Second, they are relatively self-contained. While both essays have been influential, neither has stimulated the sort of progressive debate and elaboration that, for instance, the Brockriede and O'Keefe papers (Ch. 4 and 5) did. This is unfortunate in one respect, for we would surely profit from more theoretical discussion centered on these contributions. On the other hand, the relative absence of commentary, combined with the continuing influence of these papers, is a testimony to their completeness.

Wenzel's purpose is to explain three perspectives on argument. These are not three different kinds of argument, nor are they three different senses of the word "argument." Instead, these are distinct points of departure for theorists and critics, different possible "construals" of a particular argument. The three perspectives are the *rhetorical*, which examines the process of persuading, the *dialectical*, which is focused on the procedures used in arguing, and the *logical*, which critiques the product of arguing (i.e., the text) according to the standards of logical soundness or validity. These three standpoints are each for criticism, for answering theoretically useful questions about an argument: is it effective? does it stand up to rigorous scrutiny? is it sound? These three are not the same question asked in different ways; they represent the "obvious" questions asked of argument by scholars who have unconsciously taken rhetorical, dialectical, or logical orientations. Wenzel's distinctions make it quite difficult for a modern argumentation specialist to confuse these issues, but as the closing discussion makes clear, the argumentation community had earlier made several mistakes by blurring these issues past the point of focus.

Of the perspectives, the rhetorical and logical are perhaps the most familiar, and require the least discussion here. In fact, you might reasonably read Wenzel's paper as itself showing the most interest in the dialectical perspective. Dialectic hearkens back to (an idealized memory of) Plato's dialogues (1961) for examples of argumentative discussions designed to find the truth. We casually recall these as conversations in which Socrates and others placed their deepest convictions in full public view, and invited serious philosophical criticism, conveyed by means of question-and-answer, challenge-and-rejoinder. The idea was to find the best philosophy, not necessarily to defend one's own. Beliefs which would normally be unspoken assumptions are uncovered and tested, to see if they are justifiable. This is different than rhetoric, which might emphasize one bit of evidence and divert attention from another, in hopes of persuading effectively. And it is different than logic, which abstracts a series of statements into propositional forms, in hopes of determining the soundness of one argument in isolation from other related ones.

This dialectical perspective draws not only on classical sources, but on some more recent work as well. Wenzel himself, as well as others, has introduced Habermas' philosophy into argumentation circles (Wenzel, 1979; Burleson & Kline, 1979). The Amsterdam school, led by Van Eemeren and Grootendorst and represented elsewhere in this volume (especially Ch. 29-34), has also provided us with some important and concrete theoretical studies of dialectics. Nonetheless, we have less literature on argument-as-procedure than we might wish.

But one of the seminal essays, and one which influenced Wenzel, is Ehninger's "Argument as Method." Though Ehninger's paper was written before Wenzel's, it might best be read as a specialized elaboration on Wenzel's argument-as-procedure. Ehninger decides to view argument as a method of correction. The arguer tries to correct what s/he perceives as another person's misapprehension, mistake, or wrong inclination. Arguing is contrasted with "coercive correction," in which someone (perhaps a parent or an armed robber) tries to force another person into behaving "correctly." The true arguer must necessarily have a mind partly open, partly committed. That is, s/he must be a "restrained partisan," firmly believing that correction is needed, but genuinely willing to consider the other person's arguments. This phrase, "restrained partisan," captures the tensions among commitment to one's own beliefs on an issue, commitment to engaging the other, and commitment to approaching the truth of an issue. Argument must be bilateral (see Johnstone, 1982): if a speaker is not open to response, not interested in the possible wisdom of the other person, the correc-

tion, if it occurs, can only be coercive. Ehninger finds an essential humanness about all this. We achieve personhood only by granting it to others; that is, by admitting that the other person may be right or at least reasonable, even in the midst of trying to correct him or her.

This tone is not one found in Wenzel's essay. Ehninger has a broader, more normative, message than simply how to understand argument. But in showing us how fundamental argument is to the human experience, Ehninger has elaborated some of the features of argument-as-procedure. That people must take turns, must consider seriously others' reasons, must seek a rational outcome rather than a convenient one, are not merely rules of the dialectical game. They are also features of an open, reflective life.

As you read these two essays, you may well notice that they have several sources in common. Both are influenced by earlier work by Ehninger and Brockriede, particularly their landmark textbook (1960). The ideas that argument may be thought of as a personal experience, rather than as merely a textual product, and that argument is part of a rational decision-making procedure, were modernized and made forceful in *Decision by Debate*, as well as in various essays written by Brockriede and Ehninger (e.g., 1960). Two philosophers, Natanson and Johnstone (1965; Johnstone, 1982), also made significant contributions to our current understandings of argument, especially argument-as-procedure.

Still, readers should not lose sight of Wenzel's main message. Whatever argument may be, we study it via our construals of it. The dialectical perspective is only one viewpoint, while rhetoric and logic are others. Scholars ought to be able to appreciate all three vantage points, and thus to know what kinds of questions are naturally posed from within each point of view.

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Chapter 7

Perspectives on Argument

Joseph W. Wenzel

The main purpose of this essay is to explicate three distinct but inter-related perspectives for the study of argument; taken together, they constitute a conceptual system which may give greater order and clarity to an area of inquiry that is presently characterized by a diversity of approaches and apparently incommensurable results. The conventional notion of argument as a formal logical construct has lately been challenged by new conceptualizations. One theme of this essay is that the very question posed in many of those efforts - What is argument? - is misleading. For recent scholarship in the field demonstrates that one single construct of argument cannot do justice to the several unique approaches taken by diverse scholars. If we are ever to develop anything like a "theory of argument," or to place argument within a larger theory, we will need conceptual schemes that recognize and clarify relations among the different sorts of questions, data, and explanations that scholars produce. This essay, therefore, poses a more appropriate set of questions along these lines: What are the several ways in which scholars construe argument? What different perspectives are thereby created? What interests or purposes inform each perspective? What can be gained from studying argument in each way? An analysis of the three chief perspectives that have guided the study of argument in fact (though often unconsciously) will yield a better appreciation of the uses and limits of each one and may pave the way to an eventual synthesis.

A second purpose of this essay is to apply the scheme of three perspectives to some recent problems in argumentation. I will argue that several such controversial issues will turn out to be pseudo-problems when examined from the standpoints of the three perspectives.

The distinctions drawn in this essay have been lurking about in the scholarship on argumentation for some time, and I claim no originality

for merely recognizing them. The three perspectives have never been analyzed in the sort of detail undertaken here, however; nor have their relationships as parts of a larger conceptual system been fully explicated. By way of preliminary orientation, it will be helpful to note where this essay stands in relation to some other efforts to conceptualize argument. In one recent exchange, Brockriede and O'Keefe made some progress toward describing the phenomena that are of interest to scholars in argumentation.¹ Brockriede's initial observations about argument as a person-centered, open, and variable concept are useful starting points, particularly his observation that "argument is not a 'thing' to be looked for but a concept people use, a perspective they take."² Although he offered a definition of argument based on six characteristics, I am inclined to discount the definitional approach in order to reinterpret Brockriede's purpose as characterized by his title, "Where is Argument?" What Brockriede offers, I believe, is a description of the kinds of situations where the study of argument will prove fruitful. Thus, I find it useful to recast his description to say something like the following:

The study of argument, however one construes it, is generally appropriate in situations where one or more members of a social group (i.e., persons who share a frame of reference) respond(s) to problems or uncertainties by advancing and justifying claims in order to facilitate decision or choice among alternatives. Incidentally, among other features of interest, is the degree to which such arguers put themselves at risk.

The point of O'Keefe's critique of Brockriede was not to reject the general characterization of places where arguments can be found, but rather to distinguish two different phenomena that may be discovered in such places. O'Keefe's argument₁ refers to a kind of speech act indexed in everyday talk by expressions like "making an argument," and argument₂ refers to an interaction indexed by expressions like "having an argument."³ Now, it does not follow necessarily that, because there are different phenomena, there must be different constructs of argument, and indeed Brockriede argued in his rejoinder that the six characteristics of his holistic construct of argument all applied to the two phenomena identified by O'Keefe.⁴ Nevertheless, from the recognition of discrete phenomena, as in O'Keefe's essay, there emerges a strong suspicion of the need for discrete constructs, conceptions, or perspectives for analysis. The purpose of this essay is to begin explication of three such conceptual schemes or perspectives that

have evolved to facilitate the study of the several phenomena comprehended by the term "argument." I am not concerned here with the phenomena, *per se*, but with ways of looking at them, and my analysis cuts across O'Keefe's distinctions.

As I observed earlier, this essay extends certain lines of thought that have been touched on, or partially developed, in other works on argumentation. Fisher and Sayles, for example, developed a distinction between the rhetorical and logical views of argument in a manner generally consistent with what follows.⁵ Finally, some ideas advanced in my essay – perhaps the most important ones – were expressed by Maurice Natanson in an essay tracing the movement from a naive concern for concrete arguments, to a philosophical concern for argumentation as the means for risking, and thus creating, the self:

Who moves from an argument to the logical form of arguments of that type turns from an argument to argument as such. Argumentation, we may suggest, goes a considerable step further: there is the total range of involvement of arguments – arguments as such – and the arguers participating in such proceedings are subjected to a theoretical order of scrutiny which seeks to arrive at a rationale for the entire enterprise. In these terms, an argument is a naive content of daily life; argument as such is the theme for a disciplined inquiry which must stand outside of common-sense affairs; and theory of argumentation is a distinctively philosophical entertainment.⁶

Natanson's discussion of this movement recognizes the rhetorical, logical, and dialectical impulses that have shaped our ways of construing argument. What follows is an effort to clarify the perspectives of rhetoric, logic, and dialectic as applied to the study of argument.

I will begin by describing the three perspectives, first sketching them broadly and then filling in finer detail. For the most part, I will describe the reflective outlooks of the scholar-critic-analyst on the relevant phenomena. At certain points in the discussion, however, it will be useful to comment on the perspectives of naive social actors as arguers. Certainly ordinary persons understand in a general way some of the distinctions that undergird disciplined inquiry, e.g., between a "persuasive" argument and a "sound" argument. The emphasis, however, will be on the scholar's understanding. In the final section of the paper

I will suggest how an understanding of the three perspectives sheds light on some recent problems in argumentation.

I

Of the several senses in which scholars use the term "argument" and its relations, three are of immediate importance: argument as *process*, argument as *procedure*, and argument as *product*.⁷ Although the three senses are indexed roughly in ordinary language (e.g., "presenting arguments," "engaged in argumentation," "judging an argument"), it is the scholar's application of the three senses that is of principal interest. When used by specialists, each sense of the term refers implicitly to a distinct perspective taken in the examination of arguers and their behaviors, and the perspectives are roughly aligned with the disciplines that have historically been concerned with argument. Thus, the three senses correlate respectively with the perspectives of rhetoric, dialectic and logic.

We speak of argument in the *process* sense whenever we apply the name argument or arguing to the phenomena of one or more social actors addressing symbolic appeals to others in an effort to win adherence.⁸ When we say, for example, "Clarence Darrow argued for social justice," we think of the man as situated in the real world of social-political action, speaking to other persons so situated, for the purpose of influencing their attitudes, beliefs and actions. We conceive of his motive as persuasion, and our purpose in examining his behavior, its antecedents, and its consequences is to understand the process of persuasion. To be more precise, when we speak of studying "argument" from the rhetorical perspective, we mean that we seek to understand certain elements embedded in the process of persuasion. Thus, the rhetorical perspective construes "arguing" as a persuasive process.

A second sense of the term is of argument as *procedure*, and it is in this sense that argument is allied with dialectic (and other ways of managing discourse such as debate and discussion).⁹ In ordinary language, we often mark this sense by expressions such as "conducting an argument" or "engaged in argumentation." The dialectical perspective construes argument as a procedure or methodology for bringing the natural process of arguing under some sort of deliberate control. The participants are understood, not as mere social actors, but as self-conscious advocates, and their motives are conceived as a uniquely

cooperative effort to reach joint decisions or understanding. The element of cooperation is revealed most clearly in their overt agreement on rules of procedure. The entry into a rule-governed method of discussion is presumed to alter the nature of an argumentative interaction.

Argument in the third sense may be thought of as the *product* either of naive social actors arguing, or of conscious advocates engaged in argumentation, but it owes its existence to someone's construing particular utterances as "arguments." In this, the logical sense, an argument is a set of statements (premises and conclusions or evidence and claim) by which someone chooses to represent "meanings" abstracted from the ongoing processes of communication. Such argument-things are partial and imperfect representations of human utterance, but they constitute significant efforts to objectify aspects of meaning which may be appropriately subjected to logical analysis and criticism. In everyday language we invoke the logical perspective when we speak of "laying out an argument" or "examining an argument."

It should not be surprising that there are different senses of the term "argument," or that they reflect quite different perspectives, for the word is used to refer to a range of phenomena associated with some of our most complex and significant human behavior. The contemplation of that behavior has given rise to the practical and theoretical interests which are historically associated with rhetoric, dialectic, and logic: the interest in adapting discourse effectively to particular auditors; the interest in devising and using methods of collective decision-making; and the interest in discovering and employing standards for rational judgment. Each discipline trains its lens on the same general range of human activity, but each highlights different phenomena. Thus, if one asks of each "What is argument?", the answers are likely to differ sharply: "An argument," says the logician, "is a set of statements consisting of premises and conclusion, or claim and support." "Argument," says the rhetorician, "is a mode of appeal, a means of persuasion, a behavior typical of symbol users communicating." "Argument," says the dialectician, "is a disciplined method of discourse for the critical testing of theses." To each of these statements, one is inclined to respond, "Well of course, that's right - as far as it goes." But just as the human body can be studied anatomically or physiologically or chemically, so the processes of argumentation can be studied rhetorically or dialectically or logically. In each case, the several studies complement and enrich one another.

Because their boundaries are inevitably obscured, however, a word of caution may be in order here. The categorization of perspectives is necessary to recognize the starting points of inquiry, the strategic questions of each discipline, and the sort of results to expect from each. But we must be prepared for that neat pattern to blur at just those points where one perspective merges with another, where questions of physiology, say, are transformed into those of biochemistry, where problems of logic become those of dialectic. A full understanding of the processes of argumentation will consist of an eventual synthesis of results achieved in the three perspectives.

To this point, the broad sketch of three perspectives merely recapitulates what has been recognized, to some degree explicitly, in recent analyses of argument. Some advance may be made on those analyses, however, if we focus more precisely on several elements that are commonly invoked in attempts to conceptualize argument, specifically, the notions of purpose, situation, rules, standards, and agents. The following finer analysis of those elements will enable us to build up a fuller understanding of each perspective. Moreover, such analysis will help to reveal how each perspective is informed both by the practical interests of a person acting within it and by the theoretical interests of the critic-scholar examining such action.

II

Purpose

The three perspectives are distinguished fundamentally in terms of the conception of purpose that features in each one. As I observed before, the modes of action and inquiry embodied in the conceptions of rhetoric, dialectic, and logic originated in the practical purposes of language users. In each case, theory seems to have followed upon practice. For that reason perhaps, although theory in each discipline has a descriptive element, it is ultimately applied for the sake of a prescriptive or normative interest. In the case of each perspective, therefore, it will be useful to keep in mind that the theoretical purposes of scholars are conditioned by the practical purposes for which the disciplines evolved.

The art of rhetoric was created to meet the needs of persons who sought to persuade others, and despite all the variations of definition by rhetorical theorists, their core conception of the purpose of rhetorical

behavior remains the same. Aristotle's "discovering the available means of persuasion,"¹⁰ Campbell's "adapting discourse to its end,"¹¹ Bryant's "adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas,"¹² and Perelman's "winning adherence to theses,"¹³ all come down to the same basic task: to marshall the resources of symbolic representation (typically linguistic) in order to express our understandings of how things are and how they ought to be in a manner that makes them attractive to other persons. Within the rhetorical perspective, therefore, arguments are construed as one mode of symbolic representation that has certain unique potentials for influencing people. When they observe persons making arguments, rhetorical theorists and critics are interested in the full communicative act (as opposed to an abstracted syllogism or whatever), in the expression in natural language (as opposed to some formal logical language), and in the relation of the communicative act to actual speakers and listeners (as opposed to some idealized rational being).¹⁴ It is the interest in argument as persuasion that undergirds these aspects of the rhetorical perspective that distinguish it from the logical.

"Rhetoric," says Aristotle, "exists to affect the giving of decisions."¹⁵ And so, of course, does dialectic; but the two disciplines serve the decision-making process in complementary ways. As an art of adaptation, rhetoric gives the ability to make one's views attractive to others. As an art of management of discourse, dialectic provides the means to make our expressions candid as opportunities are provided for question and answer, definition and clarification, refutation and response. The ultimate purpose of dialectic as a method of argumentation is to promote *critical* scrutiny of alternative expressions of understandings of how things are and how they ought to be. Granting the use of dialectical skill for intellectual training and casual encounters, Aristotle considered dialectic useful chiefly in the philosophical sciences "because the ability to raise searching difficulties on both sides of a subject will make us detect more easily the truth and error about the several points that arise."¹⁶ On a theoretical level, the dialectical perspective includes all studies of forms of discourse that seek to understand the conditions affecting critical decision-making.

The purpose of logic is also to render decisions, but on a microscopic level, for logic as a practical art applies rules and standards to specific, limited sets of statements offered as expressions of legitimate reasoning processes. In the logical perspective, therefore, arguments are construed as *things* or *products* that may be abstracted from the ongoing com-

municative interaction of rhetoric or dialectic. As a theoretical study, logic seeks to discover or develop canons of correct inference that enable us to settle on certain expressions as reliable knowledge.

Thus, the three perspectives are governed by distinct purposes. Students of argument adopt the rhetorical perspective in order to investigate the conditions of *effective* expression, the dialectical perspective to understand the conditions of *candid* and *critical* expression, and the logical perspective to seek the conditions of *soundness* in expressing our claims to knowledge.

Situation

The notion of situation is differently construed in each of the three perspectives. To begin with, one way to distinguish the outlooks of the rhetorical and dialectical approaches is to say that the rhetorical situation is "real," while the dialectical is "contrived." Arguments come to our attention in situations that everyone will surely agree are rhetorical. Ordinary arguments consist of real utterance produced by real social actors in situations of exigencies, constraints and potentialities that are part of a social reality.¹⁷ In the face of an actual exigence, utterance is aimed at producing action by listeners. The elements of the rhetorical situation are understood by the theorist or critic as real, concrete, particular, and immediate.

In contrast, the dialectical situation is characterized by an attitude of "let us suppose..." The natural world of social action is suspended (momentarily, at least) as persons enter into a special realm of dialogue. The rhetorical motive, to cope with an exigence through persuasive discourse, gives way to the dialectical motive, to criticize theses; and the real, concrete, particular and immediate substance of rhetorical appeal, gives way to the dialectical consideration of matter that is hypothetical, abstract, universalizable, and mediate.

The profound importance of this distinction between the rhetorical and dialectical situations is brought out by Jürgen Habermas who bases his consensus theory of truth partly on the possibility of genuine dialectic. Ordinary "communicative action" (rhetorical behavior), he explains, is founded on a tacit background consensus including agreements on facts and norms. When the latter are called into question, they can be redeemed or rationally established only by entering into "discourse" (i.e., dialectic):

In communicative actions, the factually raised claims to validity, which form the underlying consensus, are assumed naively. Discourse, on the other hand, serves the justification of problematic claims to validity of opinions and norms. Thus the system of action and experience refers us in a compelling manner to a form of communication in which the participants do not exchange information, do not direct or carry out action, nor do they have or communicate experiences; instead they search for arguments or offer justifications. Discourse therefore requires the virtualization of constraints on action. This is intended to render inoperative all motives except solely that of a cooperative readiness to arrive at an understanding, and further requires that questions of validity be separated from those of genesis. Discourse thereby renders possible the virtualization of claims to validity; this consists in our announcing with respect to the objects of communicative action (things and events, persons and utterances) a reservation concerning their existence and conceiving of facts as well as of norms from the viewpoint of *possible* existence. To speak as Husserl does, in discourse we bracket the general thesis. Thus facts are transformed into states of affairs which may or may not be the case, and norms are transformed into recommendations and warnings which may be correct or appropriate but also incorrect or inappropriate.

Solely the structure of this peculiarly unreal form of communication guarantees the possibility of attaining a consensus discursively, which can gain recognition as rational.¹⁸

For purposes of dialectical theorizing, therefore, the situation is construed as an arena for discourse that is created for the purpose of facilitating a critical process. Both the rhetorical theorist and the dialectical theorist would be interested in the situations in which argumentative interactions (arguments,₂) occur, but the foci of their attention would differ markedly.

The logical perspective brings into operation a third and quite different, conception of situation or context. For purposes of logical analysis and criticism, Burleson writes, "Toulmin's notion of field-dependence is a particularly useful and insightful way of conceptualizing context. Properly understood, the Toulmin diagram leads critics and theorists to consider what may be termed the *substantive context* of an ar-

gument."¹⁹ The logician focuses on a set of statements abstracted from communicative context, objectified and depersonalized, and contemplated as a construction of potential epistemic importance. To evaluate that construction, however, requires that it be re-situated in a "logical context" determined by the field of inquiry for which it claims significance. Burleson describes such a context as

a locus of ideas and relationships among ideas shared among members of a community. A consideration of this context dictates concern with issues such as: What constitute believable and relevant data and backings? What kinds of claims legitimately can be put forth? What factors determine the extent to which claims must be qualified? What types of warrants are permissible? Obviously, this list could be extended to encompass a variety of similar issues.²⁰

Of course, fields of argument may be extremely diffuse and unstructured or they may be compact and highly institutionalized disciplines. No matter how they may vary in formality or precision, however, all fields of serious discussion are distinguished by practical purposes that give meaning to their standards and rules of inference.²¹ That point is illustrated by the use of three perspectives on the study of argument, and the next section will touch on the standards appealed to in theorizing and criticizing in matters rhetorical, dialectical, and logical.

Rules and Standards

These elements serve to discriminate among the three perspectives in a straightforward way, from the standpoints of both practitioner and theorist. If the rhetor is a social actor in a real situation, he must be bound fundamentally by certain tacit social rules. This will be the case whether he is an unlettered rustic speaking up in the local tavern or a skilled parliamentarian in Congress. Such rules form a part of the background consensus that makes ordinary communication possible. Should they be called into question, e.g., by a bill to change parliamentary rules, or even by a claim to be justified in using objectionable language, equilibrium could be restored only by a suspension of ongoing communicative action and a resort to dialectic. The tacit, and usually unproblematic, understanding of such rules is a constitutive condition of rhetorical action. It is, of course, an important part of the "shared frame of reference" that Brockriede stresses as a basis for argument.²²

Turning to dialectic, it appears that the conscious articulation of rules is a defining characteristic of that perspective on argument. The decision to suspend the constraints of action, to enter the realm of discourse, to subject theses to searching examination, leads inexorably to the realization of a need for rules of procedure. Not just any sort of discussion will serve the interests of dialectic, but only that method or procedure that gives maximum opportunity for criticism of propositions advanced. If the touchstone criterion for the rules of rhetoric is "effectiveness," that of dialectic may be described as "candidness." Each step in a chain of reasoning is to be displayed plainly; nothing is to be assumed; certainly nothing is to be concealed. Thus, Socrates extracts from Gorgias a promise to make short answers, offers reciprocal questioning, and so on.²³ As Perelman and others have observed of the classical form of dialectic, the rules limiting dialogue to brief exchanges, or question and answer, insure that each premise will be examined before it is permitted to form part of a chain of reasoning. No rush of eloquence will be permitted to carry a weak point with an unreflective audience: "the reasoning here [in Platonic dialectic] advances step by step; each step has to be tested and must be confirmed by the approval of the interlocuter."²⁴ Thus, the dialectical view envisions argumentation as a procedure governed by rules that are overtly articulated and agreed upon rather than tacit and unexamined.

The rules characteristic of the logical perspective are perhaps too obvious to require extensive discussion, and it is equally obvious that they differ from those of the rhetorical and dialectical perspectives. The logical critic is determined to assess the worth of an argument abstracted from rhetorical process or dialectical procedure, and the logical theorist is concerned to formulate the rules and standards which permit such judgments. The key term here, parallel to the rhetorician's "effectiveness" and the dialectician's "candidness," is the logician's notion of "soundness."

Speakers and Audiences

The speaker features as an important element only in distinguishing rhetoric and dialectic, and something has already been said of how the speaker is construed in each of these perspectives. We may speak of a "rhetor" as a "naïve social actor" because one need have no particular awareness of role to act as, or to be construed as, an agent of persuasion. We are all rhetors. Our human nature is so bound up with language and sociality that we cannot avoid rhetorical action.

Not so with dialectic, however. In the face of opposition, we may invoke numerous strategies of avoidance. Thus, dialectic requires, first, a recognition of another who stands somehow opposed to us. The decision to talk about the conflict, to "air our differences," rather than breaking off the interaction, carries with it an implicit recognition of roles as advocates, and the development of a genuine dialectic entails a growing self-consciousness by the participants. For this reason, we may speak of the parties in dialectic as self-conscious advocates.

It is in their roles as receivers of messages that persons are more significantly distinguished in the three perspectives. The relevant roles construed by theorist or critic are those of the rhetorical audience, the dialectical interlocutor, and the logical critic, for these are the three who in various ways pass judgment on arguments. A useful set of distinctions derives from Perelman's characterization of audiences as particular or universal.²⁵ The rhetorical audience is understood as a particular assemblage of persons either in actuality or in the speaker's construal of persons he addresses. The act of rhetoric is an adaptation of ideas to particular persons in a particular situation.

The logical perspective, in contrast, has traditionally construed the receiver/examiner/critic as an impersonal embodiment of universal rules. Such at least is the idealized conception of the critic that follows from a purely formal logic. An uncharacteristic slip into that formalism seems to be the cause of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's remarks that "Argumentation addressed to a universal audience must convince the reader that the reasons adduced are of a compelling character, that they are self-evident, and possess an absolute and timeless validity" and "...maximally efficacious rhetoric, in the case of a universal audience, is rhetoric employing nothing but logical proof."²⁶ The conception of the logical critic that emerges from such a formalistic notion of logic is not so much that of a human exercising judgment as of a "logic machine" applying some invariant rules of validity. Moreover, one wonders what sort of propositions and arguments (excluding mathematical statements) could possibly be "self-evident" and "possess an absolute and timeless validity." So, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca seem to lapse into that uncharacteristic formalism because at that point they focus on the nature of the *appeals* as the ultimate grounding of validity and soundness.

An alternative reading of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca would emphasize the *persons* who make up the universal audience as the

basis for logical judgment. On this view an argument is sound only if it could win the approbation of the universal audience which is defined as consisting of all *qualified* judges.²⁷ On this view, furthermore, logical soundness is no longer construed merely in terms of formal structure and self-evidence, but rather is based as well on any substantive criteria that qualified observers invoke. Now, this is a much broader conception of logical criticism than that which is implied in traditional, formal logic. More importantly, perhaps, it is a conception of logical criticism that is considerably more difficult to envision in practice. After all, anyone of ordinary intelligence who can learn the rules of a formal system can apply them, and criticism becomes a relatively simple task. In contrast, it is much harder to conceive of a universal audience bringing to bear all the substantive knowledge relevant to a full critique – knowledge of the history of the subject, familiarity with all relevant evidence, awareness of special cases, and so forth. How, then, could this sort of logical criticism be realized? The historic answer has been: through dialectic.

The interlocutor in dialectic may be understood as an amalgam of the rhetorical auditor and the logical critic. The discussants are in fact particular persons, but the critical procedure enjoins them to represent the idealized universal audience. The dialectical interlocutor may thus be construed as a particular person "straining" for universality. Her/his particularity is undeniable and, indeed, influences every actual discourse. But the role of interlocutor, *qua* interlocutor, is just to endeavor to represent the universal audience of all qualified respondents. That role is intuitively understood by anyone who seriously takes on the role of devil's advocate and tries to raise every legitimate objection to a line of argument.

Table 1
Three Perspectives Summarized

Rhetorical Perspective focuses on "arguing" as <i>process</i>	Dialectical Perspective focuses on "argumentation" as <i>procedure</i>	Logical Perspective focuses on "argument" as <i>product</i>
Practical <i>purpose:</i>	Persuasion	Judgment
Theoretical <i>purpose:</i>	Criticism	
<i>Situation:</i>	To understand conditions for effective arguing	To establish standards for sound argument
<i>Rules:</i>	Natural rhetorical situations	Contrived arenas of discourse
<i>Standards:</i>	Tacit social rules	Explicit procedural rules
<i>Speaker:</i>	Effectiveness	Candidness
<i>Listeners:</i>	Naïve social actor	Conscious advocate
	Particular audience	Particular striving for universality
		Soundness
		Impersonal explicator
		Universal audience

Still, the problem of realizing full critique within a dialectical frame remains, for no one or any group can *actually* embody the capabilities of a universal audience. Because that problem is a fundamental one for any disciplined inquiry, solutions have in fact been devised which represent the application of the dialectical perspective. In democratic societies, the "free marketplace of ideas" is one such solution. In science, as Toulmin has explained, the maintenance of appropriate arenas for the testing of scientific concepts represents an application of the dialectical perspective.²⁸ None of these arenas presupposes a static universal audience, but rather each relies for full critique on the likelihood that every qualified person will have a fair chance to advance theses and to criticize them. Moreover, the certainty of critical response in such arenas generates a motive in every participant to endeavor to meet the standards of the idealized universal audience. Thus it is that the dialectical perspective informs all disciplined inquiry, and entails the view of participants or interlocutors fulfilling a critical role.

Summary

Table I provides a summary of the elements examined in this sketch of the three perspectives. In closing this section, it would be appropriate to take note of the instrumental relations among the practical arts from which the three perspectives developed. In any problematic situation where people must make choices, rhetorical skill enables speakers to present their views of the world in a manner that engages the attention of others. But rhetorical power, by itself, guarantees only the supremacy of the most eloquent or most clever. Dialectical procedures do not deny the functions of eloquence; but they do insure that alternative rhetorical visions can be created and considered. Dialectic requires, further, a periodic halt in communication so that premises and inferential leaps can be examined. Here, logic enters in to apply canons of correct inference to specific structures of argument that discussants "lay out" for public examination. Thus, the creative power of rhetoric is harnessed to the judicial power of logic through the critical procedures of dialectic. On this view, all three perspectives are embraced in a conception of argumentation as the rationale of critical decision making.

III

With that description of the three perspectives before us, it is now appropriate to say something about how that formulation might contribute to scholarship in argumentation. I will make four claims for the utility of the system and discuss them briefly.

First, the taxonomy provided by the three perspectives may, in itself, help to clarify the significance of previous work in argumentation as well as the potentialities of future lines of research. The significance of much previous research becomes clearer when framed within the purview of the three perspectives. Studies on evidence, for example, have sometimes been plainly focused on the effects of certain kinds of supporting material, thus contributing to our rhetorical understanding; other times they have dealt plainly with the probative value of evidence when tested by well articulated logical standards. But there have also been studies of evidence that confounded the rhetorical and logical perspectives, and hence, yielded questionable results. The use of Toulmin's model provides another example of the perspectival problem. Many students on first learning the model construe it as a rhetorical prescription; they can easily be disabused of that notion if someone explains to them how *The Uses of Argument* constitutes a refinement of the logical perspective. Finally, with respect to future research, an adherence to the three perspectives as an organizing principle enjoins scholars to specify clearly the location of their projects within the broad framework and the relation of their hypotheses and results to the general purposes of the perspective involved.

Secondly, a recognition of the three perspectives can be especially beneficial in clarifying the different sorts of critical or evaluative studies of argument. Just as the term "argument" may be construed differently, so the question: "What is a *good* argument?" may elicit at least three responses. (More than three, actually – but I am deliberately avoiding the matter of ethical judgment for the moment.) From the standpoint of rhetoric, a good argument is an *effective* one; from the standpoint of logic, it is a *sound* one; and from the standpoint of dialectic, it is a *candid* and *critical* interchange. The failure to distinguish those critical perspectives, grounded in different disciplines, has given rise to a number of issues in the literature that I would characterize as "pseudo-problems." One of these was the debate over the relevance of logic to rhetoric that involved most notably Mortensen and Anderson on one side, and Mills and Petrie on the other.²⁹ In

convention papers and articles, the adversaries took positions that they, and most of us presumably, believed to be inconsistent or incompatible. Mortensen and Anderson challenged the prevailing view by arguing that logic had little to contribute to the study of marketplace argument. Their position was grounded on assumptions and observations along these lines: that argument is to be understood as a means of persuasion; that such understanding requires a full comprehension of the social, material, and linguistic contexts of utterances; that the forms and methods of both context-invariant and context-variant logics precluded such a full comprehension; that logical analysis necessarily gave a distorted account of argument as communicative phenomena. Their position was, thus, located within and conditioned by a distinctly rhetorical perspective. What they had established was that *logical* methods do not yield *rhetorical* understanding.

Mills and Petrie replied with a defense of logic that recognized its necessary interpretation and abstraction from the fullness of marketplace discourse. "Thus by admitting the problems of translation," they concluded, "one can retain the traditional account of logic" and also "become sensitive to many facets of argumentation and to the total context of an argument."³⁰ The two positions in the dispute were not really incompatible (in their main features at least), and a just appreciation of their different emphases and values can be gained by placing them within the three perspectives sketched here.

Essentially the same dispute was reopened by Willard's attack on the Toulmin model. His two initial objections were (1) that there is confusion about what diagrams are supposed to represent, and (2) that persuasive arguments are too complex to be adequately depicted diagrammatically.³¹ By "persuasive arguments" Willard referred to events in the "phenomenal world of the social actor." He continued to explain,

When person A sends a message to person B, a myriad of complex variables must be brought into play to adequately describe 'what happened.' The source's perceptions of the situation, of symbol meanings, of other persons (and their motives), and of his available options for action all contribute to his choices of certain propositions over others. Paralinguistic, kinesic, and proxemic/managerial cues will have important effects upon the receiver's ultimate understanding of the propositions.³²

Now, if such phenomena can be adequately analyzed at all, it must be done from the perspective of rhetoric (or perhaps of interpersonal communication broadly construed), and the question of argument diagrams is simply beside the point. Thus, Willard's second objection seems to be directed against a straw-man.

Turning to his first point, however, one finds a more viable issue; can argument diagrams be used without conceptual confusion? Once again, the simple recognition of perspectives on argumentation provides the basis for a satisfactory answer, for the argument model is a straightforward application of the logical perspective. Burleson has argued this issue quite clearly, explaining how the Toulmin model can be employed, with sensitivity to the communication context in which claims are made and supported, for the sake of re-situating them in the logical context where they may be properly evaluated.³³ Thus, Willard's call for argumentation theorists and critics to "eschew the use of diagrams" is hardly warranted in light of an appreciation of what different perspectives can offer.

A second "pseudo-problem", based on a confounding of perspectives appears in the recent quest for that magical stuff that transmutes base sophistry into precious wisdom, i.e. "rhetorical validity." Farrell and McKerrow, in separate essays, each set out to win that goal.³⁴ Their journeys had several points in common. In the first place, each found his path strewn with the boulders of earlier philosophical traditions which necessitated awkward circumlocutions. Farrell, for example, overcame the hurdle of logical necessity this way:

To speak of *necessity* in a rhetorical context may seem rather unusual. Nonetheless, the first constituent of rhetorical validity would reinterpret "formal necessity" as the *necessary* participation of an audience in the elaboration of rhetorical "form."³⁵ (Emphasis in the original).

At later points in the essay, "valid" is equated with "relevant" and with "true."³⁶

McKerrow opened his essay with a straightforward confounding of logical and rhetorical purposes:

Argumentative discourse is reason-giving activity. Except in rare instances, the reasons advanced do not provide absolute

proof of the truth or rightness implied by the claim. In order that an advocate can accurately assess the efficacy of his discourse, a logic compatible with the requisites of such non-analytic activity is required. In more general terms, contemporary rhetorical theory requires a working logic compatible with the exigencies, constraints, and uncertainties governing situations defined as rhetorical.³⁷

This represents, I submit, a confounding of logic and rhetoric. It is not the business of logic to "assess the efficacy of discourse." McKerrow recognizes the danger of confounding perspectives, but still insists that a conception of rhetorical validity is necessary "for the determination of the bases of justifiable belief."³⁸ Granted, when we apply the logical perspective, we should employ models that respect the nature of substantive arguments, but we should not mix up the purposes of rhetorical and logical inquiry.

It must be said in Farrell's and McKerrow's defense, however, that each exhibits a certain embarrassment over the use of the term "rhetorical validity." Farrell takes explicit notice of the awkwardness of such usage.³⁹ Certainly, my purpose in these paragraphs is not to disparage the genuine insights contained in the two essays, but only to maintain that they would have been clearer and better focused if the authors had taken cognizance of discrete perspectives on argument. Such pseudo-problems as a conflict between the purposes of logic and rhetoric, on one hand, or a confounding of those purposes, on the other, should not be allowed to distract us from more significant inquiries.

A third claim I would advance for the three perspectives as an organizing principle is that they demand a more complete and candid treatment of the total field of argumentation by textbook writers and teachers. We have seen textbook treatments of the subject swing, pendulum fashion, from the constraints of an excessive concern for logical form to a stress on audience adaption (frequently with a concomitant loss of rigor). Doubtless, textbook writers and teachers are struggling to do justice to both logical and rhetorical aspects of argumentation, and future works are likely to improve the merger. One hopes that the dialectical perspective will begin to receive more explicit attention, and that the relations among the three will be clarified further.

The last remark introduces my final claim: that the dialectical perspective should now be recognized, analyzed, and investigated on an equal footing with the rhetorical and logical. It is my impression that works addressed to the concerns of the dialectical perspective have not been so well integrated into the scholarship and teaching of argumentation as have the other two.⁴⁰ Although I am not prepared to develop the argument here, I suspect that the dialectical perspective may deserve the central place in a conceptualization of argument, for it is only within the framework of a dialectical encounter that the resources of rhetorical appeal and logical rigor are combined for the critical testing of theses.

To return to an opening remark, these three perspectives have been around for a long time. This essay is intended to bring them into sharper focus. Doing so may help us to see better what we are about in the rich variety of studies in argumentation.

Notes

1. Wayne Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 11 (Spring 1975), 179-182; Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *JAF*A, 13 (Winter 1977), 121-128; Wayne Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," *JAF*A, 13 (Winter 1977), 129-132.
2. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" p. 179.
3. O'Keefe, p. 121.
4. Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," p. 130.
5. Walter R. Fisher and Edward M. Sayles, "The Nature and Functions of Argument," in *Perspectives on Argumentation*, eds. Gerald R. Miller and Thomas R. Nilsen (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1966), pp. 2-22.
6. Maurice Natanson, "The Claims of Immediacy," in *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation*, eds. Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965), p. 10.

7. Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, *Decision by Debate*, 2nd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), pp. 224-225.
8. To the extent that O'Keefe's argument₁ and argument₂ refer to acts and interactions, they both refer to argument as process. The rhetorical critic would examine both as instances of persuasive communication.
9. Douglas Ehninger, "Argument as Method," *Speech Monographs*, 37 (June 1970), 101-110; Ehninger and Brockriede, *Decision by Debate*, pp. 11-19.
10. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1355b26.
11. George Campbell, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, ed. Lloyd F. Bitzer (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963), p.1.
12. Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Functions and Its Scope," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 39 (December 1953), 413.
13. Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, translated by John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p.4.
14. Fisher and Sayles discuss these points.
15. Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1377b21.
16. Aristotle, *Topics*, 101a35.
17. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1 (January 1968), 1-14.
18. Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*, translated by John Viertel (Boston: Beacon Press, 1973), pp. 18-19. I have discussed Habermas' position more fully in Jürgen Habermas and the Dialectical Perspective on Argumentation," *JAFA*, 16 (Fall 1979), 83-94. See also Brant R. Burleson and Susan L. Kline, "Habermas' Theory of Communication: a Critical Exlication," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (December 1979), 412-428.

19. Brant R. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," *JAFA*, 15 (Winter 1979), 146.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke, and Allan Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning* (New York: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 195-202.
22. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" p. 182.
23. Plato, *Gorgias*, 449.
24. Chaim Perelman, "The Dialectical Method and the Part Played by the Interlocuter in Dialogue," in *The Idea of Justice and the Problem of Argument*, translated by John Petrie (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 161.
25. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, pp. 17-45.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
27. *Ibid.*
28. Stephen Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, Vol. I (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).
29. Ray Lynn Anderson and C. David Mortensen, "Logic and Marketplace Argumentation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 53 (April 1967), 143-151; Glen E. Mills and Hugh G. Petrie, "The Role of Logic in Rhetoric," *QJS*, 54 (October 1968), 260-267; Hugh G. Petrie, "Does Logic Have Any Relevance to Argumentation?" *JAFA*, 6 (Spring 1969), 55-60; C. David Mortensen and Ray Lynn Anderson, "The Limits of Logic," *JAFA*, 7 (April 1970), 71-78.
30. Mills and Petrie, p. 267.
31. Charles Arthur Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," *Communication Monographs*, 43, (November 1976), 309.
32. Willard, p. 313.

33. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments."
34. Thomas B. Farrell, "Validity and Rationality: The Rhetorical Constituents of Argumentative Form," *JAF*A, 13 (Winter 1977), 142-149; Ray E. McKerrow, "Rhetorical Validity: An Analysis of Three Perspectives on the Justification of Rhetorical Argument," *JAF*A, 13 (Winter 1977), 133-141.
35. Farrell, p. 144.
36. Farrell, pp. 146-147.
37. McKerrow, p. 133.
38. McKerrow, p. 135.
39. Farrell, p. 148.
40. The one notable exception seems to be Ehninger and Brockriede, *Decision by Debate*.

Chapter 8

Argument as Method: its Nature, its Limitations and its Uses

Douglas Ehninger

When A engages in argument with B he seeks not to enlarge his antagonist's stock of information, but to disabuse him of error; not to add to B's repertory of facts or data, but to reshape a belief or alter an attitude which B already entertains. Argument, in short, instead of being an enterprise in instruction, is an exercise in correction. Its purpose is not to extend knowledge, but to reform and to purify it.¹

To place an argument in the genus of correction is, however, but an initial step. It is the burden of this paper to refine the description by delineating the methodological assumptions upon which argument as a species of correction rests.² To this end, I shall, first, contrast the arguer's method with another and more familiar sort of correction - that designed to compel or coerce conformity with the corrector's view. Then, using this contrast as my ground, I shall examine the boundaries or limits within which argument is confined and review the uses which it may serve.

I

Correction designed to coerce conformity with the corrector's view takes a number of forms. The teacher points to the "facts" recorded in a standard textbook or reference work, the layman orders the skeptic to use his eyes and his ears, the father exercises the right of parental control, the propagandist employs psychic or social pressures, the bully resorts to threats and to physical force. In all of these cases in which the corrective act is designed to compel adherence, however, certain common characteristics are present.

First, viewed as a process, the correction is unilateral. The lines of influence flow in a single direction from the corrector at one pole of the transaction to the correctee at the other. Not only does the

corrector initiate the exchange and direct it throughout its history, but he also dictates the conditions under which it will terminate. His sole aim is to secure compliance, with the correctee's assent if possible, or without it if necessary. Although the corrector may hope that the reasons for his directive become apparent, and that the response will, therefore be voluntary rather than forced, under normal circumstances he will not hesitate to impose such penalties or offer such rewards as facilitate the achieving of his goal.

The correctee, by contrast, is cast in an inert and passive role. He is merely the "object" toward which the correction is directed, the sink or receptacle into which the approved information is poured, the "body" whose behavior is to be modified. In every respect, the relationship is one in which a person who possesses superior knowledge or authority admonishes another who is inferior in these respects.

Second, correction that is coercive in nature does not in principle admit of various levels or kinds of success. Either the correctee obeys as ordered, in which case the corrector succeeds completely, or he fails to do so, in which case the effort must be written off as a failure and punishments of one sort or another imposed. A compromise in which the correctee agrees to split the difference between his original response and the one required is not regarded as satisfactory: a qualified acceptance or a promise to consider the matter further is entirely beside the point - is *prima facie* evidence that the nature and purpose of the corrective act have been misunderstood.

Third, in coercive correction the corrector's own attitude toward the rule he is enforcing or the fact upon which he is insisting is not a relevant concern. He may be strongly convinced of its validity or importance, or he may regard it as invalid or trivial, and therefore require adherence only because a higher authority demands that he do so. Whatever his attitude, the desired alteration of belief or action still will be effected. The frequently heard excuse, "I do not make the rules or invent the answers; I only enforce them," stands as proof that in this species of correction the attitude of the corrector is not germane.

Fourth, because coercive correction is by nature unilateral - because the lines of influence and control flow only from the corrector as agent to the correctee as object - though the corrector may under certain circumstances expose himself to physical danger or social opprobrium, he runs no risk to his own integrity as a "person"; no risk that as a result of his action his own orientation and outlook, his own constitutive pattern of attitudes and convictions, will have to be radically altered. If, in spite of his best efforts, the correctee

stubbornly continues to resist, the corrector may attribute his failure to a breakdown in communication or to an inability to summon the necessary degree of authority; or he may write the correctee off as ignorant or incorrigible. At the worst, therefore, the corrector will only experience frustration or anger; he will not be obliged to readjust in any fundamental way the particular configuration of beliefs and values that mark him out as a discrete and identifiable "person."

II

Now by way of contrast, let us consider the case of the arguer who, convinced that another's beliefs are invalid or pernicious, attempts "to set that party straight" by engaging him in argument. In what ways does the arguer's method of effecting correction differ from the coercive or constraining sort of correction described above?

First, and of crucial importance, it should be observed that in this new situation the lines of influence, instead of flowing only in one direction, flow in two: that the corrective process, instead of being unilateral, is bilateral. In choosing to argue with another rather than employing some form of coercion to achieve his end, the protagonist enters into an agreement of a special sort: and this is to give his opponent an opportunity to correct him, not only by presenting the other side of the issue but also by probing the pertinence of the correction urged. Were this opportunity not offered and implemented by appropriate behavior on the antagonist's part, the interchange would die aborning, and even though the protagonist might present an abundance of evidence to support his view, he still would be attempting to gain his end unilaterally.

Because argument is bilateral - because as an essential aspect of its method the antagonist is granted an opportunity to weigh the case presented to him and to probe it for weaknesses or errors - the correctee, instead of being an inert object or sink, is an active participant in the correction process. Initiative and control, instead of resting entirely with one party, pass back and forth as each expounds his own view and criticizes the view of the other. Nor would the protagonist as corrector have it otherwise. In selecting argument as his instrument he announces to his opponent and to the world that rather than seeking compliance on any terms, he seeks a particular sort of compliance - one which because it rests on understanding and honors the principle of free choice may properly be called "assent." By employing only those facts and inferences for which he is willing

to be held responsible and by granting his opponent an opportunity to consider and to reply, the protagonist hopes that this party will, in effect, come to correct himself; will, as a result of his own efforts, see why his present view is wrong or the proposed alternative superior. Were this not the case, the protagonist surely would reject argument in favor of persuasion by the more dependable means or physical force of psychic coercion.

Second, the correction advanced by the arguer, unlike that employed by the teacher, parent, or propagandist, is enforceable neither by fact nor by fiat. Instead, it rests upon the unstable ground of probabilities and values - on estimates that in the end may turn out to be false and on judgments concerning not how the world is, but how in the opinion of the protagonist it ought to be. Where constraining proofs are available argument is superfluous, for here the proper procedure is at most to explain or review the proof by which the rule is established or the fact verified, and at the least to command adherence. Only when the evidence falls short of demonstration is argument an appropriate tool.

Third, in contrast to correction of the coercive sort, the correction engaged in by the arguer permits of various levels and kinds of success. For while total agreement in the form of capitulation may be the result the protagonist prefers, in those myriad cases in which there is much to be said on both sides of an issue it would be strange indeed to regard as a complete failure a "case" that eventuated in a compromise or won a qualified acceptance. Moreover, proof in the abstract as an accumulation of evidence and inference sufficient to establish a claim in principle must be distinguished from "proof to a person" as an accumulation of evidence and inference which does, in fact, effect conviction in a given instance. The arguer, no less than the person who engages in a rhetorical effort that is unilateral in nature, can hardly be said to have failed if within the limits set by his method he overlooks no possibility for attaining his end.³

Fourth, as contrasted with coercive correction, where the attitude of the corrector is irrelevant, in argument the attitude of the corrector is of crucial importance. In choosing argument as his instrument the protagonist at the outset sets himself off from the naked persuader, on the one hand, and from the neutralist, on the other, by assuming a posture of restrained partisanship. Because he believes that his opponent labors in error, and believes this so strongly that he is motivated to do something about it, he patently is a partisan. At the same time, by selecting the bilateral method of argument rather than the unilateral methods of force or suggestion as his corrective tool, he voluntarily

places upon his effort limits which curb its persuasiveness. In contracting to submit his directive to examination and rebuttal, he sets his case on its own legs - asks that it be given only that degree of credence which upon study it is found to deserve. Instead of avoiding or short circuiting the reflective process, the protagonist addresses it head on, and in this sense stands poised between the desire to control and the conviction that whatever control he achieves shall be achieved only in the right way and for the right reason. The antagonist also must play the role of a restrained partisan - must stand poised between the desire to maintain his present view and a willingness to accept the judgment which a critical examination of that view yields. Bilaterality, in brief, while a necessary condition for argument, is not a sufficient one. In addition, there must be a consciously induced state of intellectual and moral tension, precariously maintained in the face of strong drives to thwart it. When such tension is absent the motive to effect or to resist correction is lacking and no interchange occurs. When, on the contrary, tension becomes too great the bond of common interest by which the conflicting drives are held together breaks, and one or both parties, losing the requisite poise, resort to psychic or physical pressures to enforce their views. Just as the strings of a violin must be neither too slack nor too taut if the instrument is to perform properly, so must the threads which unite the parties to an argument be precisely tuned.⁴

Fifth, whereas correction that is coercive entails no risk to the corrector as a "person," correction through argument is, in a very real sense, a "person-risking" enterprise. By entering upon argument in any but a playful mood, a disputant opens the possibility that as a result of the interchange he may be persuaded of his opponent's view, or, failing that, at least may be forced to make major alterations in his own. In either case, he will emerge from the interchange with a different pattern of convictions, values, and attitudes than he held when he entered it, and to this extent will be a different "self" or "person." Yet, obviously, this is exactly what he does not wish to happen, for were he indifferent or passive - willing to be remolded as another desires - he would not have engaged in argument in the first place; would not have undertaken to uphold by evidence and reasoning the pattern of convictions or values which he originally entertained.

By laying on the line for examination and criticism a view in which he believes so strongly that he not only wishes to maintain it but also to impress it upon others, the arguer lays himself on the line also. Were he not willing to face these risks to his own orientation and

integrity as a "person," he would seek to avoid or to stifle opposition rather than to invite it.

In correction of the coercive genre, where commitment to end is paramount and commitment to method is secondary, the "person" may be sheltered or bypassed. In correction through argument, where the relative positions of end and method are reversed, there is no "exit" through which the "person" may escape from the risks which the encounter entails, no place where the "self" may hide.⁵

In review, then, the correction of the arguer is bilateral and non-enforceable, permits of various levels and kinds of success, demands a posture of restrained partisanship, and places the "person" in a position of genuine existential "risk."

III

Bearing these characteristics of the arguer's method in mind, let us next consider the limitations to which this method is prone. First, argument by nature is indecisive; second, it can encompass only those situations in which mutually exclusive alternatives present themselves; third, it is imprisoned in the "world of words"; and, fourth, it addresses itself exclusively to means, and never to ends.

Argument as method is indecisive because it has no built-in stage of resolution toward which it is directed and in terms of which it reaches completion as a logical and psychological whole.

Arguments as acts are initiated when an existing belief or condition is challenged with a view to substituting some alternative belief or condition which the protagonist as issuer of the challenge prefers. If supported by evidence and inference sufficient to make a *prima facie case*, such a challenge poses a threat to the party who favors things as they are or who prefers a reordering different from the one proposed. Unless this party is willing to see his cause fail by default, he is, therefore, obliged to bestir himself, and, assuming the role of antagonist, to come forth with responses which either will turn back the initiating challenge or will implant a preferred substitute in its place.

Such counteraction, however, merely arouses the protagonist to new efforts. Now it is he who must enter into the developing dispute additional probative elements capable of raising his cause above the obstructions introduced by his opponent. And so the interchange continues, each party alternately arousing himself as a result of action

by the other, in a series of moves and counter-moves the specific nature of which is determined by the history of the controversy itself.⁶

Moreover, so far as argument as method is concerned, no one of the foregoing moves or counter-moves is decisive in that it leaves the opposing party without an opportunity to answer. The answer that is made may be strong or weak, relevant or irrelevant. This, however, will be determined not by the resources of argument as such, but by the weight of the evidence with which the answer is supported and the acuteness of the disputant in directing his remarks to the point in question. Because a party to an argument can be beaten into submission neither by the "stick" of fact nor by the "stick" of formal demonstration, argument as a process theoretically is interminable.⁷

Arguments as acts end not because argument as method has completed a natural cycle; because the resources or possibilities of argument itself have been exhausted. Instead, they terminate for reasons external to argument as method. All of the available evidence may have been exploited; the disputants may weary of the fray or be called to some other activity; changes in the environment may render obsolete the problem agitated; hitherto overlooked or unknown facts may intervene to provide a mutually acceptable solution; a stipulated time limit may have expired.

If these or similar circumstances did not arise, however, arguments as acts could continue indefinitely: and because some controversial subjects command an endlessly fresh and varied body of evidence, never weary the interest, and are immune to the intervention of facts, they are indeed perennial.⁸

Because argument as method lacks a natural terminus - does not approach through progressive stages a point which by common consent constitutes a resolution of the problem that motivates it - unlike the analytic procedures of mathematics and logic, it does not of itself supply answers or decisions which men need but observe and record. It merely provides the grounds upon which decisions may be made, so that ultimately it is always man himself who must decide the problem out of which an argument arises: who, from observing argument as a bystander or engaging in it as a participant, must estimate what the optimum choice or decision will be.

Various criteria have been developed to aid in this judgmental task, so that in the law, for example, we have the standards of preponderance of proof on proof beyond reasonable doubt. But such criteria are not indigenous to argument as such. Rather, they are external or imposed: are artificially impressed upon a process which

itself has no resource for measuring or interpreting the significance of what it reveals.

Because argument as method does not supply answers to the problems that motivate it, the worth of any decision which may emerge from an argumentative exchange is to a considerable extent dependent upon the good sense and acumen of the individuals who make it. If they are wise and perceptive and read aright the signs and portents the argument provides, their judgment will be the better; if they are foolish, or inattentive, or prejudiced, or inexperienced in the process of dispute, it will be the worse.

Argument itself has no built-in guarantees that the persons who engage in it will interpret its findings properly or use them wisely.

A second limitation of argument as method is that the participants in any one argumentative act can consider but a single pair of alternatives and these alternatives must be mutually exclusive.

Arguments, of necessity, thus are limited because only such causes or parts of causes as are mutually exclusive can statiate, and causes or parts of causes which are mutually exclusive pose choice situations of such a nature that unless judgment is reserved, it is necessary to endorse one of the alternatives and to reject the other.

A dispute growing out of the claim "We should vote for Jones" as answered by the claim "We should not vote for Jones" statiates immediately on the cause level, for those statements are exclusive in the sense that one cannot both vote and not-vote for Jones. When the claim "We should vote for Jones" is answered by the claim "We should vote for Smith" as the ancients recognized, statiation is delayed until supporting contentions as appropriately responded to ("We should vote for Jones because he is better qualified." "He is not better qualified") give rise to a specific issue ("Is Jones better qualified?").⁹ Eventually, however, if causes are to statiate and controversy to become possible one or more pairs of mutually exclusive statements must be advanced by the contending parties.

A disputant may have various reasons for answering as he does the question which emerges out of the initial conflict of claims, or he may hedge or qualify his answer in various ways. But because the claims are mutually exclusive, unless he is to reserve judgment - which is tantamount to refusing to answer - in the end he always is obliged to affirm or deny; to say "yes" or "no" to the possibility which the statiation raises.

Argumentative interchanges which at first appear to be multilateral or unilateral actually consist of a series of bilateral encounters conducted consecutively. If, for example, friends dispute whether to

proceed to a common destination by train, by plane, or by car, he who chooses as his cause the claim, "We should go by train" must engage the advocates of plane and car separately, so that in reality there are two arguments centering in the sub-questions "Should we go by train or plane?" and "Should we go by train or car?" On the other hand, when an individual debates with himself in an effort to choose between alternative conclusions or courses of action, he adopts the roles of protagonist and antagonist successively.

Third, argument as method is limited because it is exclusively a verbal phenomenon - a creature imprisoned in the "world of words."

Non-verbal behaviors of various sorts - postures, facial expressions, gestures, and the like - may inform, persuade, or command: or they may be offered as responses to informative, persuasive, or imperative messages. Objects such as guns, clothes, or diamonds also may operate rhetorically. But physical behaviors countered by physical behaviors result in wars, gang fights, or games, not in arguments: and while inanimate objects countered by inanimate objects may pose choice situations, these encounters do not give rise to disputable questions until the alternatives have been verbalized. The question, like the negative, must be born of discourse, and without a question to which conflicting answers may be offered verbally, argument cannot exist.

Because argument is exclusively an affair or discourse, not only is it limited to such dealings as may be carried on among men, but it is able to affect "the world of not-words" only through the intervention of man as an agent. If he chooses to ignore its lessons or if he misinterprets them or is unable to devise the machinery necessary to put them into effect, argument is impotent. Moreover, it is the obligation of the disputants themselves to enter into argument those facts and experiences of the "real world" which prevent it from becoming an exercise in futility. Neither in the gathering of the resources with which it works nor in the effectuating of the results it produces is argument as such able to reach that world in its own right.¹⁰

Fourth, and last, argument as method is limited by the fact that it is applicable only to the selection of means and never to the determination of the ends toward which these means are directed.

Just as every act of argument lies within a certain problem or subject matter universe, so also it lies within a certain universe of values. This second universe is defined by a common end or goal at which the disputants aim, and no less than the problem universe to which it is related this end determines the boundaries beyond which the dispute cannot in reason wander.

If two friends differ on whether they will gain greater satisfaction from dining at Restaurant A or Restaurant B, because the causes are simple and immediate, the common end at which they aim - that of maximum enjoyment - will exhibit like qualities. When, on the other hand, as in a dispute concerning political persuasions or social philosophies, the causes are broad and complex, the end aimed at may be remote or abstract.

Always, however, some agreed upon end or goal must be present to define and delimit the evaluative ground within which the interchange is to proceed. When such ground is lacking, argument itself, let alone any hope of resolution or agreement, becomes impossible. The absence of a commonly accepted aim or value is what lies at the root of many of the breakdowns that occur, for example, in negotiations between the Communist and Western nations, and what accounts for the well known futility of most disputes on matters of politics or religion. When disputants hold different values their claims pass without touching, just as they pass when different subjects are being discussed. What one party says simply is evaluatively irrelevant to the position of the other.

An examination of the nature of ends or values need not concern us here. Perhaps at bottom they are matters of feeling, of personal style or taste. The important point is that they lie on a deeper stratum than argument is capable of penetrating; they are something which argument cannot shape or determine but which it must presuppose - something which any two disputants need to assume and agree upon as a necessary condition of argumentative interchange.¹¹

This limitation does not mean that argument as method is incapable of dealing with very broad and fundamental questions: that it cannot, for instance, compare democracy and totalitarianism as forms of government or wisdom-seeking and wealth-seeking as goals for human activity. What it does mean is that argument is incapable of exploring the value frame within which an act of argument arising out of these comparisons or out of the conflict between any pair of competing alternatives must, in turn be embedded. Whatever the range of the subject agitated or of the value questioned, a still more embracing value must in endless regress provide a common evaluative ground upon which the contending parties may meet to exchange their views.¹² At the extreme, this ground may consist of nothing more than a mutual preference for "talking it out" rather than "fighting it out," but to explore even these alternatives through argument presupposes an agreement that the first method is preferable to the second.

IV

Having, then, examined the nature of argument and reviewed the limits within which as a method it is confined, let us in concluding our discussion consider what the uses and values of argument may be.

We take as our premise the commonplace observation that there exist in the world as a given fact of experience an abundance of problem situations which call for a choice between mutually exclusive alternatives, and in which "facts" as such either are absent or are not coercively determining.

When confronted with problem situations of this sort, men may arrive at decisions on the basis of chance, or they may rely upon authority, intuition, or argument. For at least two reasons, argument is to be preferred to the other possibilities: first, it is more reliable than they are; and second, it is more humane.

Aside from its obvious superiority over chance, argument is superior to authority and intuition as a way of arriving at reliable decisions because it is self-regulative, while they are not.¹³

Irrespective of whatever controls may be placed upon argument from without, inherent in the method itself is that internal check which William James termed "the test of enlightened self-interest"; the provision that in addition to presenting his own view of the matter, the arguer is required to defend that view against the attacks of an earnest and informed opponent.

Nor would the parties who contract to this mutual examination of their provisions have it otherwise, for, as Johnstone properly has pointed out, unlike those forms of correction and control in which effectiveness is enhanced by denying power to others, the potency of argumentative appeals is enhanced by granting to another the same measure of power that one would reserve for himself.¹⁴ In freely submitting his own view to criticism, the arguer not only earns the right to criticize the view of his opponent, but more importantly, imposes upon his opponent an obligation to observe in the presentation of his case the same standards of adequacy and fairness which that party would impose upon him. Out of these mutual obligations and opportunities, the self-regulative character of argument is born.

But besides being reliable in a way that authority and intuition are not, argument also is more humane because it elevates and dignifies man, while the alternative methods minimize and degrade him.

Decisions arrived at by chance or intuition or by appeal to authority are "disrespectful" of man as a rational being. By contrast, argument

as a self-regulative method which promotes reflection honors those qualities that characterize man at his finest. This is not to deny that argument at times has been misused: that adherence to argument as a way of knowing or of choosing without an adequate appreciation of its limitations has resulted in periods when thought stagnated and prejudice ruled. Such misuse, however, as Adler reminds us, is to be charged not against argument as a method, but rather against those agents who out of ignorance or willfulness have perverted or misapplied it.¹⁵ Restricted to the uses for which it is fitted and practiced in the spirit of mutual inquiry which represents its finest tradition, argument, despite its limitations, deserves to stand beside science on the one hand and logic and mathematics on the other as a major instrument for arriving at decisions that not only are reliable but also are humane.

Finally, and of supreme importance, because argument is "person-risking" it is "person-making." By accepting the risks implicit in an attitude of restrained partisanship the arguer both bestows "personhood" on his opponent and gains "personhood" for himself. For to enter upon argument with a full understanding of the commitments which as a method it entails is to experience that alchemic moment of transformation in which the ego-centric gives way to the alter-centric; that moment when, in the language of Buber, the *Ich-Es* is replaced by the *Ich-Du*; when the "other," no longer regarded as an "object" to be manipulated, is endowed with those qualities of "freedom" and "responsibility" that change the "individual" as "thing" into the "person" as "not-thing."¹⁶

But this process also is reflective, for insofar as we treat the "other" as a person rather than as an "object," we become persons ourselves; while insofar as we fail to do so, our own "personhood" is to that extent diminished. The attributes of freedom and responsibility that are defining of the "person" are not absolutes with respect to the "other," but are states that are reached only in "relationship." Relation, inclusion, experience from the opposite side, the capacity to comprehend the contradiction which opposition entails, these are not merely descriptive of the human condition: they are constitutive. The *I* attains to its full potential only when, and only to the extent that, it meets the "other" as a *Thou*.

Argument as a way of "living through a common experience from the other side," as a reciprocal honoring of the "person" rather than a unilateral exploitation of the biological or economic individual, is, therefore, a way of gaining "freedom" and "responsibility" by granting "freedom" and "responsibility": a way of achieving "personhood"

for oneself by bestowing "personhood" upon another. Johnstone has remarked that the creature who refuses to argue or to listen to arguments must, of necessity, remain something less than inhuman.¹⁷ Because man is by nature a social animal he attains complete humanity only when he enters into such relationships as argument provides. The ultimate justification of argument as method, therefore, lies not in any pragmatic test of results achieved or disasters avoided. Rather it lies in the fact that by introducing the arguer "into a situation of risk in which open-mindedness and tolerance are possible,"¹⁸ it paves the way toward "personhood" for the disputants, and through them and millions like them opens the way to a society in which the values and commitments requisite to "personhood" may some day replace the exploitation and strife which now separate man from man and nation from nation.

Notes

1. Cf. in this connection Henry W. Johnstone Jr., *Philosophy and Argument* (University Park, Pa. 1959), pp. 13-14. Instead of viewing argument as a species of "correction," Johnstone prefers to regard it as a special form of "criticism."
2. The analysis here offered, it should be emphasized, is strictly of argument as "method" rather than as "act" and therefore is paradigmatic rather than descriptive. My concern is not with the movements that may or may not occur, the behaviors that may or may not obtain, or the attitudes that may or may not be present in any given argumentative interchange; it is with the defining characteristics of argument as a mode, or as I have said, a "method" of decision-making - with those abstract conditions or presuppositions upon which "acts" of argument are predicated. For an earlier and less fully developed statement of certain of the ideas advanced in Sections III and IV of this paper, see my article "Debate as Method: Limitations and Values," *ST.* XV (1966), 180-185.
3. Aristotle, *Rhetorica*, 1355b.

4. A somewhat different discussion of the same point may be found in Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, *Decision by Debate* (New York, 1963), pp. 18-19.
5. Conflicting interpretations of the "risk" element in argument are presented in Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., "Some Reflections on Argumentation," *Philosophy, Rhetoric and Argumentation*, ed. Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (University Park, Pa., 1965), pp. 1-9; and Maurice Natanson, "The Claims of Immediacy," *Ibid.*, pp. 10-19.
6. A more detailed description of this process may be found in James M. O'Neill, Craven Laycock, and Robert L. Scales, *Argumentation and Debate* (New York, 1923), pp. 33-41.
7. This point is discussed fully in Douglas Ehninger, "Validity as Moral Obligation," *Southern Speech Journal*, XXXIII (1968), 215-222; reprinted in *The Rhetoric of Our Times*, ed. J. Jeffery Auer (New York, 1969) pp. 165-171. Cf. Friedrich Waismann, "How I see Philosophy," *Contemporary British Philosophy*, 3rd series, ed. H. D. Lewis (London, 1956); reprinted in *Logical Positivism*, ed. A. J. Ayer (Glencoe, Ill., 1959), pp. 345-380. Also see John Passmore, *Philosophical Reasoning* (New York, 1961), p. 36.
8. Cf. Mortimer Adler, *Dialectic* (New York, 1927), pp. 101, 105, 198, 217, etc.
9. See, for example, *Rhetorica ad Herennium I*, xvi-xvii.
10. Cf. Adler, p. 33.
11. See in this connection A. Craig Baird, "Responsibilities of Free Communication," *Vital Speeches*, Sept. 1, 1952, pp. 699-701. Cf. Peter A. Schouls, "Communication, Argumentation and Presupposition in Philosophy," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 11 (Fall 1969), 183-199.
12. Cf. Aristotle *Rhetorica* 1362a, where deliberative speaking is limited to the selection of means as distinguished from the determination of ends.
13. See Ehninger and Brockriede, pp. 16-22.

14. Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., "The Nature of Philosophical Controversy," *The Journal of Philosophy*, LI (May 13, 1954), 295-296.
15. Adler, p. 185.
16. Martin Buber, *Ich und Du* (Leipzig, 1923). For an English translation of this work, see *I and Thou*. With a Postscript by the Author Added. Tr. Ronald Gregor Smith, 2nd ed. (New York, 1958). Readers interested in exploring further the relation between argument and "personhood" should see in particular Jacques Maritain, *Distinguish to Unite*, tr. G. Phelan (New York, 1959) and *The Person and the Common Good*, tr. J. Fitzgerald (New York, 1947); Gabriel Marcel, *The Decline of Wisdom* (New York, 1955); Soren A. Kierkegaard, *Meditations*, tr. T.H. Croxall (Philadelphia, 1955); Jean-Paul Sartre, "Consciousness of Self and Knowledge of Self," *Readings in Existential Phenomenology*, ed. N. Lawrence and D. O'Connor (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1967) and *The Transcendence of the Ego*, tr. F. Williams and R. Kirkpatrick (New York, 1957).
17. Johnstone, *Philosophy Rhetoric, and Argumentation*, p.3.
18. *Ibid.*, p. 7.

Introduction: Naive Social Actors' Perspectives on Argument

O'Keefe made it clear that there are two senses in which people use the word "argument." Arguments are a significant part of the everyday experiences of people. The papers in this section elaborate on what people mean when they say they're having an argument and how the event of arguing is recognized by participants.

In Ch. 7 Wenzel suggests that theorist's can adopt different perspectives to understand argument. When scholar's generate explanations of argument, they're striving for precision. An alternative way of understanding argument is to examine the meaning of the concept for ordinary people. These people are referred to as naive social actors to (a) distinguish their views of argument from those of scholars, and (b) to emphasize the active role that people take in interpreting events. In the first paper, Trapp labels this broad view of understanding argument as interpretive perspectives because it examines what events social actors are likely to interpret as arguments. He articulates the underlying assumptions of interpretive perspectives and advocates research on social actors' concepts of argument. The remaining papers are examples of this type of research and address two central questions: What are the characteristics of the activity social actors label as arguments? And, by what means do social actors come to jointly construe a situation as argument or not argument?

Trapp suggests that interpretive perspectives share a view of argumentation as a *human symbolic activity*, and that various authors within this broad perspective focus on the *human, symbolic, or activity* elements. Those who focus on the *human* element indicate that the activity of arguing is a human accomplishment, and thus social actors should decide when events count as arguments and how arguments are to be evaluated. Theories should describe social actors' concepts of arguing rather than theorists' judgments about what arguments are or how they should be evaluated. When concentrating on the *symbolic* element, interpretive theorists have emphasized the interpretation involved in assigning meaning to symbols. Willard's critique of Toulmin's diagrams of argument (Ch. 13) makes much of the diagram's failure to include situated meanings. Informal logicians (represented

in Ch. 19 by Blair) have grappled with the difficulty of translating from formal logic to natural language. An emphasis on *activity* in the view of argumentation as a *human symbolic activity* leads to consideration of argument as a process, since interpretation is itself procedural. The growing interest in argument₂, having an argument, reflects an orientation toward process rather than product.

The strength of Trapp's essay is that it integrates the work of several authors under the rubric, interpretive perspectives. In addition to the papers in this section, evidence of shared underlying assumptions are present in the contributions of Willard, Blair, van Eemeren, and Grootendorst in other sections of this book.

While Trapp's essay describes the similarities and differences among interpretive perspectives, Trapp and Benoit (1987) should be consulted for an advocacy and defense of the interpretive perspective in argumentation. They claim that this perspective is best able to reflect social actors' understandings of argument. See Burleson (1981) for an opposing position.

In the second essay, Trapp asks social actors to react to transcripts of interactions that might be construed as arguments. This exemplifies the interpretive perspective and focuses on the *human* element, for social actors are consulted about what events are to count as arguments. Those transcripts that elicit widespread agreement are "paradigm cases" of argument while instances that are "peripheral" are important in detecting generic characteristics, features which are commonly present but are not required. An analysis of both paradigm and peripheral cases leads Trapp to identify two generic characteristics of argument: disagreeing and reason-giving. Disagreement is direct when (a) a speech act is offered and (b) the response is a direct refutation or a dispute concerning underlying relational issues. Reason-giving allows individuals to compare and contrast their views and may result in an alternative interpretation of the situation to resolve the dispute. Benoit also adopts an interpretive perspective but highlights the *activity* element of argumentation as a *human symbolic activity*. Her essay addresses the process by which social actors come to define an event as an argument. Script theory suggests that interactants use organizing schemes to make sense of their activities so that recurrent situations become both recognizable and predictable. If social actors have stored a script in memory, then certain features should call this script in and out of play in a given situation. Benoit argues that two preconditions must exist before the argument script is appropriate: (a) interactants must perceive disagreement and (b) judge the issue as worth the effort required of an argument. This reaffirms Trapp's description

of the feature of disagreeing and also considers the relational aspects of argument. An argument script is no longer appropriate when the preconditions cease to exist or are explicitly renegotiated by the interactants. It is possible for interactants to define an activity as arguing or not arguing because there is shared understanding of when an argument script is in and out of play.

The belief that social actors should determine what events are to count as argument has engendered a controversy in the pages of the *Journal of the American Forensic Association*. If you're interested in this issue, Trapp (1986) initially argues that the instances of argument provided by Jackson and Jacobs (Ch. 34.) are not recognized as "having an argument" by social actors. Jackson, Jacobs, Burrell, and Allen's (1986) response indicates that the instances are recognized as "making an argument" and question the usefulness of social actors' judgments of transcripts. Trapp (1987) furthers his position by claiming that the features of argument in his theory are validated by social actors' judgments.

Additional reading on generic characteristics of argument are to be found in O'Keefe and Benoit's (1982) essay in *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*. They contrast ways that scholars have handled the fuzziness of the concept of argument (paradigm case, discourse genre, and structural properties) and endorse a generic characteristic approach. Other readings on social actors' perspectives of argument include Trapp and Hoff's (1985) description of serial arguments and Benoit and Benoit's (1987) treatment of everyday argument practices.

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Chapter 9

Characteristics of Arguing from a Social Actor's Perspective

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Everyday arguments are practical accomplishments for the social actor. "Having an argument" is a complex and organized event regulated by rules and refined through strategies that serve as lines of action for accomplishing everyday interactants' intentions. Everyday arguments have been approached from a language-games metaphor (Jacobs, 1982), as disagreement-relevant speech acts organized by adjacency pair structures (Jackson & Jacobs, 1980), and as speech events with generic characteristics (O'Keefe & Benoit, 1982; Trapp, 1982). An alternative perspective is to view arguments as scripts which detail appropriate lines of action for the social actor.

This paper combines an interpretive view of interaction with a script-based theory of argument as interaction. The social world is a place of created meaning and behavior becomes sensible through the application of interpretive schemes. Interpretive schemes organize the behavior of an interactant and provide a framework for understanding their lines of action. Human beings perceive behavior as being caused and consequently see their own actions and understand others' behaviors as linked to goals or intentions (e.g., plan-based). A powerful organizing scheme for producing and interpreting discourse is the script, a routinized plan that is recognized by the social actor and calls forth possible lines of action. Benoit (1982) argues that social actions have distinct scripts for arguing and discussing. Data collected from critical incidents and follow-up interviews suggests that the argument and discussion scripts are perceived by social actors as motivated from different goals and consequently producing distinct lines of action. This paper sketches a view of argument and focuses on describing scripts as an explanatory metaphor to view everyday arguments. Attention is given to a description and analysis of the headers which mark discourse as argument or non-argument.

The first section sets out the basic assumptions of an interpretive view of interaction and describes a script-based perspective. The second section sketches a model of argument as interaction derived from an interpretive and script-based perspective. This involves an examination of headers which mark discourse as part of the argument script or involving shifting scripts. The last section suggests hypotheses derived from a script-based theory of the naive social actor's conception of argument and deduces support for the usefulness of the perspective.

I

Human beings interact within a social world characterized by the creation of patterned meanings. The behavioral stream becomes sensical only when it is interpreted from a scheme that assigns subjective meaning to particular behaviors. O'Keefe, Delia, and O'Keefe (1980) outline the tenets of an interpretive view:

An interpretive view takes as its fundamental premise the idea that the human social world is a world of meaning. We see human actors as equipped with cognitive structures and processes through which they categorize and order events; such structures give meaning, rationality, coherence, and predictability to the individual's experience of the world (p.26).

Cognitive interpretive schemes serve as sense making mechanisms, providing structure to the social world by presuming coherence between events.

The social world is a place where events are perceived as caused. Behavior that is random defies the order necessary for making sense of events and will be massaged by social actors until it does make sense (Garfinkel, 1967). Schank & Abelson (1977) adopt a basic premise that states that social actors understand the action of others "because the other person is a human being with certain standard needs who lives in a world which has certain standard methods of getting those needs fulfilled" (p. 37). Prediction becomes possible by inferring that individuals' actions are guided by goals or intentions and the inverse, that actions can be interpreted as a display of goals or intentions. Intersubjectivity enters as persons share interpretations of behaviors by referencing the standard needs or goals which created the events observed:

First there are behaviors, events, and other fact like phenomena on the ground floor. Then there are individual "persons" that inhabit the world: and finally, there is, for each person, a system of accompanying interpretations, beliefs, and perceptions of the fact-world that parallel them on the second floor. Intersubjectivity (or a world known in common) results when the potentially distinct meaning structures in a group of individual persons turns out to be the same, become the same over time, or mesh in certain ways (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1979, p. 371).

Patterned meanings are created as social actors share schemes for organizing events and utilize discourse to reference those schemes to produce an ordered social world.

An interpretive view of interaction is outlined by O'Keefe, Delia, and O'Keefe (1980) and postulates organizing schemes as "coordinating devices which allow one person to produce acts with recognizable implications for another person's behavior and permit persons to respond coherently and appropriately to acts which have been produced" (p. 26). Interactions involve the fitting together of multiple lines of action and are understood through shared organizing schemes (e.g., plans, scripts). This position is developed through five characteristics of interactional organization:

1. Organization is schematic. Behavior makes sense through reference to shared organizing schemes.
2. Organization is local. The development of an interaction is dependent on the interactants' understanding of the interaction in progress. Organizing schemes are locally applied and relevant.
3. Organization is hierarchical. Layers of organizing schemes are embedded within one another. General schemes are activated, then call up specific local procedures.
4. Organization is historically emergent. Organizing schemes are procedures for interpreting and producing discourse but they do not provide the process for coordinating action and thus the organization is dependent upon the local unfolding of the discourse.
5. Organization is an interactional achievement. Order in interaction is executed through the active coordination of lines of action, the production of relevant discourse within shared schemes, and the interpretation of another's discourse within shared schemes.

In summary, interaction is produced and understood by social actors through shared schemes for organizing behavior. Interactions are organized by several schemes (e.g., plans or scripts) and by more specific schemes (e.g., openings within telephone conversations). Organizing schemes provide the social actor with a repertoire of appropriate lines of action and provide an interpretation of the behavior of a conversational partner by reference to the abstract schemes which produced the behavior. The collaborative work required to mesh interactants' lines of action is displayed through the emergence of the discourse. Communication coordinates the intentions of conversational partners (Burke, 1982).

The assumptions of an interpretive view of interaction can be allied with a script based theory. From artificial intelligence, Schank & Abelson (1977) describe the function of plans and scripts as coherent, general knowledge and specific knowledge are accessed. General knowledge (plans) links needs to lines of action that fulfill those needs and specific knowledge (scripts) detail knowledge of a repeated event. Plans are described as:

... the set of choices that a person has when he sets out to accomplish a goal. In listening to discourses, people use plans to make sense of seemingly disconnected sentences. By finding a plan, an understander can make guesses about the intentions of an action in an unfolding story and use these guesses to make sense of the story (p.70).

Plans function as organizing schemes by linking behavior to intentions. The behavioral stream is perceived as meaningful as lines of action are connected to the goals which generated the discourse. Behavior is thus seen as coherent within the framework provided by the plan.

Scripts are plans that have become standardized through repeated occurrence so that enacting the script keys up a sequence of expected behaviors. Scripts assume that memory is organized around episodes rather than semantic categories, which allows for the recognition of repeated lines of action. When a line of action is recognized as belonging to a particular script, it facilitates understanding of the story. In discourse, when both interactants know the script and agree that this particular script is appropriate, then scripts serve as "a great economy... because neither party need invest effort deciding what the actions

of others mean and how appropriately to respond" (Schank & Abelson, 1977), p. 61).

A script specifies the sequence of actions that occur in a well-defined situation. This implies that the script contains knowledge of each action required for completion and the temporal ordering of each action within the script. Each action is perceived as filling a slot that affects each successive action. Scripts are routine and thereby handle the standardized case, novelties require shifting out of the script to the apparatus of a plan to achieve understanding.

While the concepts of plans and scripts are useful in connecting discourse (i.e. linguistic action) to intentions to explain the process of understanding stories, these concepts require revision to be consistent with the assumptions of an interpretive view of interaction. Scripts are viewed as pre-determined temporally ordered sequences of events. Schank and Abelson's (1977) restaurant script embodies a series of actions that occur in a specified order (e.g. Patron seated at table, waitress provides menu, patron orders...). The pattern is set and each action must occur in the order specified for the script to be enacted. To understand the story, the appropriate script is enacted and further lines in the story are interpreted within the frame provided by the script. When scripts are unavailable, plans represent general knowledge that relate action to intentions to produce understanding. But, interactions are a more complex matter. The recognition of a plan or script in the story of a single teller is considerably easier than the meshing of individual plans and scripts across the development of discourse. While plans and scripts serve as resources to interactants, the situational context is an additional resource and complication. Burke (1982) argues that the cognitive science orientation to plans is rigid and static "because it neglects the extent to which interactional goals and plans are shaped by the concrete situations in which interactants find themselves" (p. 14). The interpretive view of interaction recognizes that interactional organization is emergent so that an interactant's intentions may shift during the discourse affecting the talk used to accomplish the goals, plans or scripts that are appropriate at any given point may be negotiated, or particular plans to accomplish intentions may be unsuccessful and alternative lines of action must be created by the interactants. Schank and Abelson's description is simplistic in assuming that a plan or script is simply recognized and enacted independent of contextual influences that could change its course. Plans and scripts

are organizing schemes but the coordination of these devices in discourse is an interactional phenomena.

Scripts become conventionalized by the repeated sequencing of actions. Schank and Abelson (1977) appear to shift away from a functional description to a temporally ordered scheme to achieve understanding. It is reasonable to argue that even though there is not a direct correspondence between actions and intentions, social actors develop methods for displaying intentions and these methods begin to exhibit regularities. But, the coherence does not come from regularity in the sequencing. Rather, these sequencing regularities are to be taken as displays of the functional relationships being articulated. This distinction may appear minor but it has implications for the analysis of discourse (O'Keefe, Delia & O'Keefe, 1980). If the analyst is interested in functional relationships the intentions expressed through the discourse are of primary importance. The analyst does not expect those relationships to be expressed through a rigid temporal pattern although convention may lead to sequential patterns. Multiple lines of action are viewed as possible to achieve an actor's intentions, actions may be accomplished in a single turn or over a series of turns, actions may be collaboratively built by interactants through the process of discourse, and the actions of a single interactant affect the discourse which follows. In this sense, scripts are conventionalized norms for lines of action given certain intentions but the selection of particular lines of action exert considerable influence on the actual sequencing of the discourse.

To integrate an interpretive view of interaction with a plan/script based theory, the following assumptions have been sketched:

1. Interactants make sense of the world by applying interpretive procedures to sense data.
2. Interactants perceive the social world as a world of causality; discourse is perceived as caused by interactants' intentions. Therefore, to understand discourse the hearer infers the intentions of the speaker and to communicate the speaker attempts to display intentions to the hearer through the discourse.
3. Plans and scripts are general organizing schemes that are affected by the situational context of the interaction in progress.
4. Interaction is a collaborative activity. The coordination of intention is evidenced through the negotiated unfolding of discourse.

5. Scripts specify a functional relationship between intentions and linguistic action. Scripts designate appropriate lines of action to interactants. Therefore, scripts suggest behaviors that could be followed given certain intentions and those behaviors are recognized by hearers as conveying particular intentions and calling forth possible lines of actions as responses.

II

An interpretive perspective contends that social actors create subjective meaning. A theorist interested in an event in the everyday world becomes committed to an examination of the "individual, his actions and interpretations" in order "to explain the actions and interactions of those members" (Schwartz & Jacobs, 1980, p. 188). Trapp (1982) argues that the analyst must bracket his presuppositions by "having naive social actors sort data into categories" (p. 9) instead of imposing the researcher's conception of the nature of argument on the data.

The methods adopted for this study seek to display the naive social actor's characterization of argument. The data is derived from three sources. Fifty undergraduate students were asked to recall a critical incident of argument (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and follow up questions probed their interpretations of the reconstructed events. Students were paired and instructed to argue or discuss an issue and follow-up interviews explored their perceptions of this event and their characterizations of arguments and discussions in general. In addition, the author collected naturally occurring instances of argument to further substantiate the claims being made in the paper. This data provides a sense of the social actor's perception of the intention underlying argument, the preconditions necessary for the occurrence of argument, and the headers which signal an argument in progress.

Viewing arguments as scripts commits the theorist to the assumption that naive social actors recognize commonalties in episodes that take on the label "arguments". When social actors were asked to describe why they characterized incidents as arguments, it became apparent that there is a shared orientation to the nature of argument. Social actors characterize arguments as expressions of disagreement accompanied by negative nonverbal, emotional displays, one-sided positions, and communicating negative relational messages (Benoit, 1982). Through repeated experience and the storage of such experience in

episodic memory, the naive social actor is able to recognize "characteristic" lines of action which signal an argument script and intentions for characteristic arguments. In an interview following an argument, the social actor (P) makes clear a conscious recognition of an argument script:

- I: OK. If I'd given you the instructions to discuss instead of to argue what would you have done differently if anything?
- P: Probably in my thinking, I would look at things I have, I argue that I'm right rather than being willing to just listen to what he had to say. It's kinda like in my head, when I hear the word argue, its kinda like, I have to fight for something I believe in...

When an argument script is recognized, it provides a framework for understanding discourse, for predicting the development of the interaction, and for preparing responses based on the prediction of possible lines of action by a conversational partner. In one sense, scripts operate much like frames (Goffman, 1974) in that their recognition provides an explanation of what follows consistent with the perception of the event being framed. Perceiving that an argument script is in play consequently leads to the perception that discourse occurring within that frame is argumentative. Since arguments can achieve intentions through multiple lines of action, there is not a rigid temporal or structural ordering to argument. There are a variety of acts to accomplish a single intention and the choice of acts (e.g., insult vs. assertion) have implications for the development of the discourse. Discourse is viewed as collaborative and consequently the enactment of a script is a jointly produced event and shifts in scripts during an interaction require the coordinated efforts of the interactants.

Figure 1 sketches a brief model of argument as interaction utilizing an interpretive perspective and a script based theory as explanatory metaphors. The model originates at the level of intentions. Social actors generally perceive arguments as intending to induce conversational partners to recognize the rightness of their beliefs or actions (Benoit, 1982). Follow-up interviews elicit such typical comments as "We both felt the other was wrong and we were right," Neither of us would look at the other person's views or reasons for thinking that way," "This is my stance and that's got to be it," and "It has to be something you're not willing to change no matter what the other person says.

That you're going to try so hard to convince them that you're right." This intention may be pursued through such subsidiary goals as establishing that the conversational partner is wrong or making the conversational partner feel guilty or stupid for holding a position discrepant from the speaker. Grice's (1975) maxim that an interactant should believe what is said appears to have a corollary which posits that an interactant should argue for that which is believed. Beliefs and actions represent the portrait of an individual's image to others (Schlenker, 1980) and arguments about their rightness are perceived as attacks on the self which elicit defense (e.g., "I had to defend my actions to the point where we were both mad," "I felt like I made my partner defensive," and "I have to fight for something I believe in.") Thus, arguments may become emotional and bitter (e.g., "out of control," "an outpour of emotion," and "bitter voices") and exert long term effects on the relationship between the interactants. Even arguments about inconsequential beliefs can be perceived as communicating underlying relational messages with considerably more effect than their content would suggest (e.g., "It seems as though the words themselves have a lot more meaning behind them – besides argument. The anger builds up and frustration"). Consider this instance, in which an argument generated by disagreement over the severity of an injury left these interactants at the point where "not another word was said for three weeks and still no 'I'm sorry.'"

- A: I don't think you will die ((B hurt herself in a softball game)).
- B: Why don't you go the hell?
- A: Oooh. Forgive me.
- B: If you don't have anything nice to say to me, then keep your mouth shut.
- A: You only get what you give.

While the content of the disagreement would not predict consequential effects on the relationship, an intention perceived as a challenge to an interactant's created identity of "injured party" does exert considerable impact on the development of the relationship. The data also yields instances of arguments about who does more dishes that leave interactants "angry and defensive" or instances where controversy over the definition of a word leaves interactants "hurt and feeling stupid for having argued about it." Arguments are linked to a speaker's intention to promulgate their own beliefs while rejecting the hearer's beliefs. The connection to such an intention provides force to an argument that the content may not reveal.

The intent to induce the conversational partner to recognize the rightness of beliefs or actions leads to a particular script for discourse in which overt disagreement is appropriate (Trapp, 1982; O'Keefe & Benoit, 1982; Benoit, 1982). When the speaker accomplishes an action or states a belief that is inconsistent with the hearer's view, an argument script may ensue by the production of an act that expresses that disagreement. This act is taken by the hearer as evidence that 1) the interactant holds a belief perceived as inconsistent, 2) the interactant believes that his own belief is right and the partner's belief is wrong, and 3) the interactant is willing to engage in an altercation to correct the partner's belief. Jacobs & Jackson (1981) and Benoit (forthcoming) have described the open ended quality of the arguable for virtually any statement or action may be taken up as the issue of an argument if an interactant perceives it as standing in opposition to personal beliefs.

To express overt disagreement, the interactant may choose from a variety of speech acts (e.g., criticism, insult, threat, challenge, etc.). The choice of the particular speech act is strategic. The acts are capable of conveying the intensity of the disagreement (e.g., criticism vs. insult), and may be selected to accomplish subsidiary goals (e.g., challenge may be adopted if the interactant wants to make the conversational partner feel stupid), and carry pragmatic implications (e.g., an argument initiated with an insult has a different course of development than an argument initiated by a challenge).

The speech act is used by the interactant to infer the speaker's intentions. The discourse serves as an indication of the goals sought by the speaker. So, when a speaker issues a challenge, it is seen by the hearer as an expression of disagreement that is motivated by the speaker's intent to induce negotiation of the rightness of their views. But, the speech act is not the only resource for understanding the speaker's intent. As Burke (1982) notes the situated context and background understandings influence a hearer's interpretation of the discourse. Since correspondence between form and intent is indirect, it is possible for the same utterance to be interpreted as motivated by distinct intentions. In this example previous conversation between A and B has indicated A's frustration in postponing a book order. Given this background understanding, A's statement is understood by B as an implied criticism. The action adopted (criticism) is linked to A's intention to exert dominance by prodding A to look for the book list and an argument ensues.

A: We were going to order books last week. Have you looked for your list ((of books)) yet?

The point here is that this act is interpretable in light of previous discourse and that an analysis of the act alone could have heard this utterance within a discussion script. The situated context within which the utterance occurs is another resource. For example, when an argument script has preceded, future discourse is frequently interpreted in light of this script:

1. A: And then I gotta work on my paper, but I don't know where I'm going with it yet.
2. B: I know. I mean *where* are we going to do it?
3. A: Why are you so frustrated with me? I don't know what I'm going to do so I don't know where I'm going to do it.
4. B: Why don't I take her and come back and you'll know?
5. A: Why am I the one deciding here? Do you need to work in the office?
6. B: There or in the library.
7. A: Yeah. You've got to work on your paper. Not on that response. What's the matter?
8. B: I don't think I like you telling me what I have to work on.
9. A: God. I was just kidding.

In lines 2 and 3 it is apparent that an argument script is in place while at line 7, A attempts to introduce a tease which is interpreted as a criticism and order consistent with the argument script.

To deal with argument as interaction requires an extension of this thinking to utterances produced by a conversational partner. When a speaker make a statement of overt opposition, it opens a slot for the conversational partner to respond. What resources does the hearer have in formulating a response? At this point, the hearer has made an inference about the speaker's intentions and any response will be directed at those intentions. As an argument, a response may be motivated to protect beliefs which could generate lines of action such as denials, justifications, counter-beliefs, counter-examples etc... The conversant chooses an utterance which responds to the intentions of the partner and to the particular act used to convey those intentions. Communication becomes the coordination of interactants' intentions.

The model makes these claims: 1. Social actors utilize argument scripts which set out expectations about the conventional relationship between statements of overt disagreement and the intention to prove one's own belief as right, between intentions and particular acts which express disagreement, and between lines of action which are likely to generate conventional responses. 2. A speaker's intentions are inferred from the act, its situated context and the background understandings, 3. Multiple acts can convey an intention and choices between acts are strategic, 4. Arguments are collaborative productions.

After sketching this model, it is possible to take up two important issues in understanding the argument script. The first asks what calls up an argument script. Schank and Abelson (1977) describe four types of headers which define when a script is to be called into play: precondition, instrumental, locale, and internal conceptualization. A precondition header triggers the script by referencing precondition for that script. The line "I'm hungry" in a story calls up the restaurant script since hunger is a precondition for going to a restaurant. An instrumental header involves inputs about multiple contexts in which one can be interpreted as instrumental for the other (e.g. driving to a restaurant is instrumental to the restaurant script). A locale header specifies a place where the script typically occurs and internal conceptualization headers reference roles recognized as part of the script (e.g. waitress). The precondition header is the only type prompting the argument script into play.

Data from social actors indicate two preconditions for the argument script. The argument script requires that interactants view their positions as in opposition. If the precondition is not satisfied an argument can not take place:

- I: Your instructions aid that you were to have an argument.
Do you think it was an argument?
- P: No.
- I: What was it?
- P: It was just a discussion and we-there wasn't anything I could argue. We were in agreement on the same end. So it was not a conflicting argument... we were just discussing.

The opposition must be perceived by both interactants since the argument script is a joint production. In this instance, A forwards an

act which could generate an argument, but B's agreement short circuits the script:

- A: Well I think that were going to get ourselves over-extended.
B: Well you know, I think I agree with you.

A's remark is intended as a criticism and assumes that B will disagree, but an argument is avoided by indicating a shared orientation to the issue. It is recognized that it takes two to argue.

A second precondition states that an argument must be worth the investment required to accomplish the script. This precondition notes that arguments do not occur in every instance where a perceived disagreement is observed. A conversant may allow a minor disagreement to pass "because it wasn't worth arguing about." Even when there is a disagreement and one of the interactants has initiated the argument script, it may be declined by the partner if the argument is not perceived as worth the investment:

- A: Are we going to talk about it yet?
B: Not now ok? I'm not up to it.

B has avoided talk on a subject and A's request to talk about it is taken as a criticism by B: yet, B decides to decline the argument at this point. It is worth noting that if the interactants do not share this perception, an argument may ensue over that issue. A recognition that the investment exceeds any benefits from the argument can function to terminate the argument:

- S: Can we coordinate this? I stopped for that car and you kept on walking.
B: Ok. Let's coordinate this. ((sarcastic tone))
S: Don't be a snit.
B: Well I felt like you were blaming me.
S: No. I just want to coordinate this. Why are we fighting about this? This is stupid. Let's not fight about this anymore.
B: Ok.

S makes the claim that the argument is not important enough to invest the effort and risk the costs and closes down the argument script by claiming a violation of precondition. This is not to suggest that arguments do not occur about seemingly "trivial" matters, but that the

interactants must perceive the argument as worth the effort required at the time at which it occurs.

The preconditions must be referenced to signal that an argument script is being called up. The precondition which states that there must be perceived opposition is apparent through the discourse. There are conventional forms of discourse for the expression of disagreement and the occurrence of these forms is recognized as signalling an argument and its correspondent intentions. Insults, criticisms, challenges, threats are all explicitly seen as displaying disagreement. In addition, the social actor recognizes that disagreement is conveyed through the nonverbal channel and an increase in volume, a sarcastic tone, or short staccato delivery are taken as evidence of disagreement. Background understandings are also used to key argument scripts. Knowledge of controversial issues that "always start fights" or previous discourse on the same issue which was argumentative will color the interpretation of discourse. The precondition concerning the investment required to engage in an argument is apparent by the discourse. A speaker choosing to issue an action heard as disagreement has implicitly agreed that the issue is worth arguing about and the partner who responds to the disagreement has agreed to enact the script. The joint production required for an argument script demands a pair of statements that are perceived as in opposition and by the issuance of their utterances also perceived as worthy of argument.

The instrumental header is of little use in activating the argument script since there are rarely a series of subgoals needed to reach the primary intention of an argument. An exception to this generalization may be the case in which an argument is sought but must be preceded by a series of discussions to find something to disagree about. The locale header presupposes that the script is more likely to occur in a particular location but arguments have no such boundaries. Arguments may occur anywhere although the conventions for appropriate lines of actions may be restrained by the situation in which the argument takes place. The internal conceptualization header references roles that enact a script. Parties in an argument as interaction do not have particular social roles to accomplish. They do have expected behaviors but these are derived more from their intentions than from a particular role.

Once argument scripts have been called into play, they will be used to interpret all successive discourse until they are called out of play.

Social actors indicate that arguments are terminated when one of the interactants ends the interaction (e.g., walks out, hangs up), the partner gives in, the interactants reach some agreement, the interactants recognize that the argument is pointless, the interactants change the topic, or change the nature of the interaction (Benoit, 1982). These termination strategies can be understood within the model of everyday argument that has been sketched. An argument script is called out of play when the preconditions are no longer satisfied. An implicit precondition for argument in interaction is that it requires at least two parties. When one of the parties abruptly leaves the interaction, the argument must come to an end at least until the parties meet again. Arguments require overt opposition and this precondition is violated when the partner gives in, both interactants reach some agreement or the topic is changed to an issue where there is no disagreement. The argument script also requires joint agreement that the script is worth continuing and so perceiving the argument as pointless is enough to call the argument script out of play.

Schank & Abelson (1977) describe distractions which involve unexpected states or actions that serve to initiate new goals that temporarily or permanently move the actors out of script. Lines of action that signal a change in intentions to the hearer may take the argument script out of play. In this example, A levels a criticism and B responds with a hostile nonverbal look enacting the argument script but an unexpected line of action for the argument script by A shifts the discourse away from the argument script.

- A: You want her ((their child)) to hold her bowl up like that?
((mocking tone: B has recently criticized A for the very same action))
B: ((horrible look))
A: ((walks over to B)) We love mommy. We love mommy. ((A gives B kisses, and their child starts to also give B kisses))

An argument script can be called out of play through explicit negotiation to move another script or plan to direct discourse. Metatalk occurring within arguments appears to suggest that the argument script is inappropriate and should be replaced by a different course of action. In this example, the argument is perceived as not getting anywhere and that script is then replaced by a discussion script:

- A: We're not getting anywhere by yelling. Let's cool off and talk this out rationally.
- B: If we can.
- A: Let's make a list of the pro's and con's and we'll try to keep the emotion out of it, OK?
- B: OK.
- A: Well, there's... ((A begins to make a list))

Interactants jointly produce the move to an alternative plan or script by "procedure" talk.

Argument scripts are called into play by referencing preconditions. Arguments must include two parties, contain perceived disagreements, and be considered worth the investment. They are called out of play when the preconditions are no longer satisfied, lines of action occur which are recognized as out of script, or metatalk negotiates an alteration of scripts.

III

This paper has attempted to outline a framework that explains everyday argument consistent with naive social actors' characterizations. At most, it is suggestive of the usefulness of a perspective relying upon an interpretive script based view of argument. Such a perspective leads to the formulation of other speculations to be investigated in further research:

1. What are the conventional lines of action for argument?
What acts do social actors perceive as appropriate for argument scripts?
2. What are the strategic implications of choices between lines of action? How does the selection of a particular line of action affect the development of the discourse?
3. What are the functions of metatalk within argument? Does metatalk indicate violations of conventions adopted in the script, when the script is appropriate, or when it is dysfunctional? Are there individual differences in the recognition and production of argument scripts?
4. If argument scripts are cognitive representations of repeated events, will persons with greater differentiation skills have more refined scripts? Are there individual styles of arguing so that particular lines of action are preferred and arguments become routine?

5. How are arguments scripts learned? How are argument scripts between persons with long term relationships developed? How does the nature of the relationship influence the conventional vs. negotiated aspects of the argument script?

6. How are argument scripts a collaborative effort by the interactants?

7. Are there subscripts within argument with a particular structure? Jacobs' (1982) discussion of the confrontation pattern may be the description of a single form of the argument script.

This approach provides a useful framework for viewing everyday argument. It is generated from the characterizations of everyday argument provided by the naive social actor and suggests a variety of issues to investigate in order to develop a theory of everyday argument.

The paper outlines the assumptions of an interpretive view of interaction and a script based theory of discourse. A meld of these perspectives is presented and applied to everyday argument. A model of everyday argument drawing the relationships between intentions, acts, and interaction is discussed. The social actors' perceptions of the intentions of an argument, the preconditions operating for an argument script to be in play, and the consequences of an argument are examined, and special attention is given to the issues of calling an argument script in and out of play.

Figure 1. A model of argument as interaction.

Production of First Move		Understanding
Intention	Lines of Action	Intention
1. primary	Expression of	Act
2. subsidiary	disagreement	situated context
		Background understandings
Production of Second Move		Understanding
Intention	Lines of Action	Intention
1. primary	Reaction to	Act
2. subsidiary	disagreement	Situated context
		Background understandings

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Chapter 10

Generic Characteristics of Argumentation in Everyday Discourse

Robert Trapp

One contemporary approach to the study of argumentation involves examination of how ordinary social actors engage in arguments.¹ Some theorists have focused attention on the most clear-cut cases of the concept. These cases are called "paradigm cases"² of argument because they "elicit widespread agreement that these *are* in fact examples of the concept in question."³ Characteristics of these cases can be called paradigmatic characteristics. Others have chosen to focus on a combination of paradigm and peripheral cases.⁴ Characteristics derived from these cases are called "generic characteristics" because they are more general than paradigmatic cases. In this essay I will examine both paradigm and peripheral cases of arguments in order to illustrate two generic characteristics of argument as accomplished by ordinary social actors engaged in face-to-face interaction.

1. Methods

The data for this study consisted of sixty transcripts of conversations. These transcripts were gathered from two general sources. First, some of the transcripts were recorded by this investigator. Second, some of the transcripts were gathered from published sources on argument and dispute. One hundred and forty-one persons then were asked to sort these transcripts into three categories described simply as "argument," "not argument," and "not sure." These persons were students in communication and speech communication classes at the University of Denver, the University of Northern Colorado, and Red Rocks Community College.

Instead of asking each of the persons to read each of the sixty transcripts, the transcripts were divided into six sets of transcripts,

and each person was asked to respond to one set of ten. In order to compensate for the fact that all persons did not see all transcripts, yet all persons' judgments were combined, the transcripts were randomly assigned to the sets of ten and then were randomly assigned to persons for categorization. The above procedure yielded twenty-three or twenty-four responses to each transcript. The frequency with which each transcript was placed in each of the three categories was counted and subjected to analysis by Chi Square.⁵

The .05 confidence was established as an initial screening level, with the .001 confidence level established as the final probability level. This higher confidence level was desired because the Chi Square statistic was repeated sixty times. At the .05 level, one would expect to find three cases departing from the expected due to random variation alone. For this reason, the .001 confidence level was selected to insure greater confidence that the selected cases were in fact "paradigm cases." The use of these two confidence levels yielded five final categories:

1. Paradigm cases of argument. In this category were eight transcripts sorted into the argument category more frequently than expected. The confidence level for this category was .001.
2. Cases between paradigm and peripheral cases. This category contained three more transcripts that were sorted into the argument category more frequently than expected. The confidence level for this category ranged from .05 to .01.
3. Peripheral cases of argument. In this category were fourteen transcripts apparently sorted at random. These cases were neither clearly arguments nor not arguments.
4. Conversations other than arguments. this category included ten transcripts sorted into the category of "not argument" more frequently than expected. The confidence level for this category was .05 or .01.
5. Paradigm cases of conversations other than arguments. In this category were twenty-five transcripts sorted into the category "not argument" at the .001 level of confidence. These clearly constitute the cases of conversation that persons did not consider to be arguments.

These data were then analyzed using a variation of the grounded-theory approach.⁶ The primary aim of this analysis was to discover how the

various examples were alike. The characteristics that bind these examples together are the generic characteristics. The goal of this essay is to *illustrate* rather than demonstrate the findings of this study.⁷ In illustrating the findings of this study, I intend to make visible the theoretical explanations that are implicit in the data. In Schultz' language, these are my second-order constructs derived from the first-order constructs of naive social actors.

Generic Characteristics of Argument

Two generic characteristics of argument were derived from the twenty-five cases ranging from paradigm to peripheral cases of argument. The first characteristic involves disagreeing and the second involves reason-giving. Argument is a process whereby persons attempt to manage the amount of disagreement and agreement between them. Generally they attempt to move from disagreement to agreement, although they occasionally attempt to maintain disagreement. In either case, reason-giving is the method by which they attempt to manage agreement and disagreement. Thus the two characteristics of argument are dramatically interrelated.

Disagreeing

Potential disagreeing involves one person making a statement that risks invoking disagreement from another person. It also can involve asking a question, the answer to which one of the persons engaged in the interaction can find objectionable. Potential disagreeing can be recognizable from the perspective of a speaker when that person realizes that a speech act might invoke a disagreeing speech act from another person. Potential disagreeing is recognizable only retrospectively from the point of view of an observer. Only after actual disagreeing occurs are we given any hint of the speech act that might have provoked the disagreement. Indeed, in some instances, potential disagreeing is recognizable only retrospectively even to the speaker. In those cases the speech act as not intended to invoke disagreeing.

People can disagree without arguing. Arguing only occurs when disagreement is actualized. Actual disagreeing occurs when two or more persons make and/or support statements that they construe to be mutually incompatible.⁸ Actual disagreement therefore involves both potentiation and actuation. This disagreement is indicative of persons construing their statements and/or positions as being mutually incompatible.

The enacting of disagreeing is clear in the following example:

Example 06 (Paradigm case of argument)⁹

- 01 S: Pam those Spanish People gonna tell on *you!*
- 02 P: *They ain't Spanish. They Portariccan.*
- 03 S: *How ya know they Portariccan.*
- 04 P: They TALK PORTariccan.
- 05 S: AH: YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW PORTARICCAN PEOPLE *talk*. So shut up.

When S said to P "those Spanish People gonna tell on *you!*" S may have expected P to disagree about whether or not the people would in fact "tell." S probably did not expect P to disagree about the nationality of the people. Nevertheless, P's typification of them as "Spanish people" potentiated an actual disagreement about whether they were "Spanish" or "Portariccan."

Disagreement can be described as clear and direct or as involving the clash of taken-for-granteds. Clear and direct disagreement occurs when a speech act is offered which then is followed by a second speech act that directly refutes some part of the first speech act. A common type of this argumentative form is the familiar "Yes it is," "No it isn't" construction. This clear and direct disagreement between two speech acts is visible in example 06. In turn 02, P's response that "*They ain't Spanish. They Portariccan,*" directly refutes part of S's turn 01 statement that "those Spanish People gonna tell on *you!*" This clear and direct disagreement displays people maintaining what they construe to be mutually incompatible views of reality.

Six of the eight paradigm cases of argument involved clear and direct disagreement. Four of those six cases involved clear and direct disagreement that was sustained over at least four turns. These four cases follow the pattern of assertion, denial, reassertion, and redenial. Thus both of the people involved in the argument stated and restated the positions that they had construed as mutually incompatible. To provide a more graphic illustration of the parallels among these four examples, portions of the transcripts were reproduced in Figure 1.

As noted, the four examples contain five instances of clear, direct, and sustained disagreement. This pattern of clear, direct, and sustained disagreement occurred only in the paradigm cases of argument. It never occurred in the examples of argument in categories two and three.

Much more interesting are the argumentative constructions involving speech acts that, while they might not clearly and directly refute one another, include taken-for-granted assumptions that display speakers to be maintaining views of reality that they construe as mutually incompatible. Two of the eight paradigm cases of argument readily illustrate this clash of taken-for-granted assumptions and how this clash displays the incompatibility of the positions construed by the arguers. The following is a brief description of the taken-for-granted assumptions in these examples and how those taken-for-granted assumptions display the arguers' views of reality.

Example 20 (Paradigm case of argument)¹⁰

Husband and Wife cohosts of a radio news/talk program talking about the wife's answer to one of the daily quiz questions.

- 01 W: Prove it.
- 02 H: I don't have to prove anything.
- 03 W: Who says?
- 04 H: I do.
- 05 W: Who made you the big sheriff around here?
- 06 H: Look, I'm the producer of this show=
- 07 W: =then let's hear you produce something.

Lines 01 and 02 display the arguer's competing views of reality. These views of reality concern the question of whether or not W has a legitimate right to request that H "prove it." "Prove it" in turn 01 is heard as a request to perform some action. The response in turn 02 "I don't have to prove anything" is heard as a denial of the request "prove it" only when one understands the taken-for-granted assumption

underlying W's request. In order for "prove it" to be a felicitous request,¹¹ W must take for granted that she has some right to make such a demand or request. "I don't have to prove anything" denies the statement "prove it" by denying the taken-for-granted assumptions underlying that statement.

Relevant to the disagreeing present in conversational argument is the occurrence of derogatory comments such as insults, threats, name-calling, and the like. While such derogatory comments usually are not considered central to traditional conceptions of argument, they are unavoidable in the transcripts of the paradigm cases. Seven of the eight paradigm cases of argument contained one or more instances of clear and unambiguous derogatory comments. T (Figure One, example 54) refers to E as "you dummy." Some of the examples contained rather clear and undisguised threats such as, "You gonna get shot too you come over here" (Figure One, example 27), "I'm warning you" (Figure One, example 58), and "Play and you gonna get knock down" (Figure One, example 56). Only one of the paradigm cases of argument was free of clear and unambiguous derogatory comments. On the other hand, such clear and unambiguous derogatory comments were absent from all but one of the examples in categories two and three.

An intriguing aspect of disagreement in argument concerns the relationship between content and relational aspects of disagreement. Theorists of interpersonal communication insist that all interpersonal communication has both content and relational aspects. If this is true of interpersonal communication in general, it should also be true of argument in face-to-face interaction. One difficulty with describing the content and relational aspects of disagreement from transcripts is that we are privy only to the linguistic aspects of the conversation. A disagreement that on the surface might appear to a content disagreement might be interpreted by one or both of the participants as a relational disagreement because of extra-linguistic aspects of the argument such as the context of situation.

Some instances include language about the relational aspects of the disagreement. Such is the case in example 12:

Example 12 (Peripheral case of argument)¹²

E is J and B's ten-year-old daughter. J, B and E are talking while J and E are cleaning E's room.

- 01 J: Will you get that calender down?
- 02 E: What calender?
- 03 /J points to calender pinned above a window./
- 04 E: I like my calender it's got *doggies* on it=
- 05 J: =E the thing about it that kind of gets to me -
- 06 E: *Geeee* that's not very *nice*.
- 07 B: What isn't - She didn't even say anything.
- 08 E: She's saying mean things about me.
- 09 B: She didn't say anything yet - let's see what she was going to say.
- 10 J: I didn't say anything.
- 11 B: What were you going to say?
- 12 J: Well I was going to say - I like most everything you have on your wall=honest=everything in the room -
- 13 E: Except for all my *stuff*.
- 14 J: Now except the only thing I don't like is it's just too spread out we need to - Dad and I need to come up with something=
- 15 E: Why do you have to do it?--/sobbing/
- 16 J: Come on let's finish cleaning.
- 17 E: *Why can't I do it?*

- 18 J: You can=come here--okay now you can help=see like all that little / unintelligible / can you find=maybe you can get ah something to put in a drawer like this-- put em in there to keep em all together--ribbons, clips--you know-- that would help lots okay--you need a little organization.
- 19 E: Mom!!
- 20 J: I'm trying to be very helpful E.
- 21 E: I know but

The first eight turns of this conversation are important to the present discussion. If we limit our analysis to the content aspects of this disagreement we would view this as a disagreement about whether or not the calendar should be taken down. In turn 08 E accuses J of "saying mean things about me." A quick review of the language of the previous turns reveals that J said nothing at all about E. If one takes a relational perspective on this argument, one might conclude that E interpreted J's comments about the calendar as an attack on her instead of a comment about the appropriateness of the calendar. Further, since mother/daughter relationships are supposed to be positive, the ten-year-old might have been upset at her Mother for making what she considered to be negative comments about her.

While example 12 is perhaps a rare example where the relational aspects of the conflict are actually indicated in the language of the argument, the possibility that relational aspects entered into most or all of the other examples is a distinct probability.

Consider, for instance, Example 07:

Example 07 (Peripheral case of argument)¹³

- 01 B: Will you help me plant the trees this afternoon?
- 02 J: No, I could help you tomorrow.
- 03 B: But I need help today.
- 04 J: I have to clean the house.

05 B: The house is clean.

06 J: No, you see, that's the difference between men and women.

An analysis of the content aspects of this argument would lead one to believe that B and J were arguing about the relative importance of cleaning the house and planting the trees. This might well have been an important aspect of the argument. Another possibility is that either or both of the arguers might have seen the relational aspects of the disagreement as equally important. A possible interpretation of this argument is that it includes a disagreement about the importance attached to the roles that are typically performed in this family. Both persons might have felt the need to defend the importance of their certain tasks because those tasks are indicative of the importance of their role vis-a-vis the other person. Such interpretations are, of course, only speculations at this time, but point to the theoretical utility of considering relational aspects of disagreement.

All of the examples of argument (categories one, two, and three) involved some type of disagreement - whether clear and direct disagreement or disagreement resulting from the clash of taken-for-granted. In the paradigm cases, disagreeing was often accompanied by derogatory comments such as threats and name-calling. One therefore can consider disagreement to be a generic characteristic of argument.

Reason-Giving

A second characteristic of argument in face-to-face interaction involves reason-giving.¹⁴ The process of reason-giving in interpersonal argumentation involves persons comparing and contrasting views of reality. This involves an attempt on the part of the arguers to find some shared view of reality other than the original disputed view that one person can then link to the original disputed view of reality. When one has succeeded in locating some other view of reality that both arguers agree is shared and is linked to the original disputed view, one has succeeded in producing a "good reason"¹⁵ for the other person to change his or her position regarding the original disputed view of reality. This process of linking the disputed view of reality to some other shared view of reality seems to constitute the nature of good reasons. Once a person has convinced another that a disputed

view can be linked to a shared view, that person can be said to have presented a good reason for the second person to accept the first person's view of the disputed reality. In this sense, we might say that the linking of a shared view of reality to a disputed view of reality counts as a good reason for changing the disputed view of reality into a shared view of reality.

Reason-giving can either focus on the construal of some separate view of reality, or the linking of that separate view of reality to the original disputed view of reality, or both processes. The examples that follow illustrate how arguers use reality that is separate from but related to the original disputed view. In all of these examples this attempt to come to a shared view fails.

Example 54 (Paradigm Case of Argument)¹⁶

Two inner-city black children talking

- 01 E: ((singing)) You didn't have to go to school today,
did you.
- 02 T: Yes we *did* have to go to school today!
- 03 E: ((singing)) No you *didn't* have to go to school (1.0 sec.
pause) was on strike.
- 04 T: We had our school today! The strike is *off* you dummy.
- 05 E: *uhuh*. The strike- // came *on*.
- 06 T: The strike is *off*.
- 07 E: The strike came *on today*.
- 08 T: I don't wanna hear it. I don't wanna hear it.
- 09 E: I know. Cuz, I betcha I won't go to school tomorrow.
- 10 T: Take a biscuit.

In example 54, the disputed view of reality concerned whether or not two children had "to go to school" on that particular day. In lines

03 through 07, both of the children attempted to link the disputed view to a related view of whether or not there was a "strike."

Example 07, reported earlier, involved B and J arguing about whether J should help B "plant the trees" or "clean the house." In that example the disputed view concerns appropriateness of a certain action rather than the truth or falsity of a proposition.¹⁸ B has requested that J help him "plant the trees." J has refused this request because her view was that she needed to "clean the house." That she needs to "clean the house" is a view of reality that is separate from but potentially linked to the disputed view regarding whether or not she should help B "plant the trees." As we see in 05, this never gains the status of a "shared" view of reality since B believes "the house is clean." Nevertheless, reason-giving in this example focuses on the construal of a separate view of reality.

Example 06, reported earlier in this essay, involved S and P arguing about the nationality of a family. In this example the disputed view or reality concerned whether a family was "Spanish" or "Portariccan." The person who believed the family to be "Portariccan" attempted to link this view to another view of reality when in line 04 she said, "They TALK PORtariccan." This is a separate view of reality that P hopes S will share and see as relevant to the original disputed reality concerning the nationality of the Venezuelan family. In 05, S rejects P's attempt to construe this view of reality as "shared."

Even when arguers are able to share a separate view of reality, disagreement continues unless the arguers see that separate view as linked to the original disputed view of reality. In the examples that follow, the reason-giving focuses on whether separate views of reality are relevant or irrelevant to the original view that is the subject of dispute:

Example 03 (peripheral case of argument)¹⁹

- 01 A: If you have time, why don't you get the car washed too when you get the gas.
- 02 B: But I gotta go to the grocery store and I gotta do laundry and I got // classes.
- 03 A: Yea::h, but it'll only take about five minutes to do that.

04 B: Ohh O::Kay.

05 A: It's not really that much time.

06 B: Okay.

07 A: It's awfully dirty.

08 B: Oka:y! I'll do it when I get the gas.

Turn 02 is heard as a tentative attempt to refuse A's request in 01 that B "get the car washed." B does not directly refuse the request, but offers an alternative view in the hope that A will consider this alternative view related to and inconsistent with the request to "get the car washed." In earlier examples, argument proceeded over the correctness of the alternative view of reality. However in this example, A does not question the fact that B has "to go to the grocery store... do laundry and /go to/ classes." Instead A denies that this view of reality is related to the question of whether or not A should "get the car washed" by asserting "it'll only take about five minutes to do that." Thus, from the perspective of A, B has failed to provide a good reason for refusing the request. In turns 04, 06, and 08 B reluctantly grants A's request. In 05 A reinforces the lack of a relationship between the viewpoint expressed by B in 02 and A's initial desire to refuse the request. In 07 A provides a view of reality (one that B might have already assumed), that is related to the initial request. Thus A "won" this argument because B failed to provide a "good reason" for refusing a request.

Example 14 (Between Paradigm and Peripheral case of argument)²⁰

01 E: Maybe you don't like it but I like it.

02 J: Shall we ask Dad for a compromise?

03 E: It's my room.

04 J: I know-but god E=you can't=there's no *space* in this room=you can't put anything=

05 E: =not when you scooped everything out in the middle of the floor there isn't.

/pause/
some of it isn't even mine.

- 06 J: what isn't your's/unintelligible/?
/pause/
get everything that isn't yours in the hall get all the clothes
up off the floor.

Turns 01 through 03 are relevant to this discussion. From the introductory material and from E's statement in turn 01 we learn that E and J hold what they consider to be mutually incompatible views regarding the proper arrangement of E's room. In turn 02 J suggests where a separate view of reality might be found when she suggests "shall we ask Dad for a compromise?" Without even waiting to find out what Dad's view might be, E rejects the position that Dad's view is relevant to the disputed view by saying "it's my room." Thus Dad's point of view (whatever it might be) is seen as irrelevant to the dispute over the arrangement of E's room. No matter what Dad might say, E would not consider his opinion a "good reason" for rearranging her room.

In most cases reason-giving is used as a tool to change disagreement to agreement. In these cases the goal is the production of "good reasons." In other cases, one or more of the arguers might attempt to maintain disagreement. In these cases the goal of the arguer is to avoid allowing the other participant to produce a "good reason." In the example that follows one person seems to be attempting to move to agreement by producing a "good reason" while the other seems to be attempting to maintain disagreement (or at least ambiguity) by disrupting the process of producing "good reasons." In the example that follows, one of the person's actions might be interpreted as a deliberate attempt to preserve the ambiguity of the situation perhaps so later she could not be held to an agreement:

Example 15 (peripheral case of argument)²¹

E is J and B's ten-year-old daughter. They are discussing remodelling E's new room.

- 01 J: If you could do anything to that room what would you do?

- 02 E: Take down all the paneling=rip out all the carpet=take out//
- 03 J: I don't think we can take out the carpet but//
- 04 E: *The carpet is disgusting!!*
- 05 J: Okay listen - it's pale blue.
- 06 E: *I hate it.*
- 07 B: I don't think we can afford it.
- 08 E: *Well just rip it out--don't put any new in*
- 09 J: You've always wanted carpet in your room.
- 10 E: *I don't want-Mom-If I want carpet I want carpet I like*
- 11 J: Okay look at it like this--try this one on--in that we don't have lots of money and can't do everything right away--if we could like take out the paneling and paint the room the color that you like and get curtains that you like--do all that stuff--do you think you could live with the carpet until we can afford it?
- 12 E: Not unless the door shuts.
- 13 J: Dad'll fix the door.
- 14 E: But it's an ugly door.

The disputed view displayed in this conversation concerns divergent viewpoints regarding what ought to be done about the carpet in E's room. The point of presenting this example is to examine not the dispute, but the ambiguous conclusion of this conversation. In turn 11, J summarized what to her appeared to be a reasonable compromise and one that she hoped E would accept. In turn 12, E completely changed the topic from the carpet to the door. Turns 12 through 14 focused on the door. This resulted in an argument that, through turn 11, looked as if it might be resolved, but it turned into an argument, the conclusion of which was very ambiguous. One interpretation of

this tactic would be the implication that E has changed the subject deliberately in an attempt to avoid agreeing to the compromise offered in turn 11. While reason-giving is normally a technique used by arguers to move from disagreement to agreement, it can also be used to maintain disagreement when that is to the advantage of the arguer.

Thus the production of "good reasons" in interpersonal argument can be viewed as involving two elements. First, arguers attempt to construe shared views of reality separate from the original disputed views. Second, arguers attempt to link those shared views to the original disputed view so that the other participant in the argument will change his or her position regarding the original disputed viewpoint. In most instances the goal of reason-giving is to move from disagreement to agreement. In others it is to maintain disagreement.

Summary

If this research has accomplished nothing more, I hope it has at least established the viability of the concept of argument from the perspective of everyday arguers. Considerable disagreement has existed regarding whether or not the concept could usefully be studied from the perspective of naive social actors.²² If I have succeeded in describing argument from the perspective of naive social actors in a manner that is both manageable and heuristic, this theoretical controversy can now be supplanted with empirical evidence.

From the data I have examined, I believe interpersonal argument can be generally described by two characteristics. The first characteristic is disagreeing. Disagreeing results when persons construe their views of reality as if they were mutually incompatible and continues until they construe those views as compatible. The second characteristic of interpersonal argument involves the process of reason-giving. In general, this process of comparing views of reality allows us to view argument as an attempt to move our views of reality from a position of disagreement to a position of agreement. This process of comparing views of reality includes both searching for some shared view of reality and linking that shared view of reality to the original disputed view. When both of these elements occur, an arguer has presented a "good reason" for his or her viewpoint.

These two generic characteristics of interpersonal argument are clearly interrelated. Argument is characterized by disagreement. Disagreement is something that people generally attempt to move away from. The process whereby this move is attempted involves comparing views of reality. Hence a constant tension exists between these two processes. More of one characteristic seems to result in less of the other - the more persons disagree, the less likely they might be to engage in reason-giving. Conversely, as persons become more successful at reason-giving, they might find their disagreement diminishing.

Throughout this essay, I have made a variety of claims that are based on data. These claims represent potentially disputable views of reality. The data themselves represent shared views of reality since, at the very least, researchers must be trusted to present their data accurately. The potential disagreement inherent in my claims may become actual disagreement if others come to view my claims as incompatible with the claims they would make about the same data. Should such an argument occur, I would be in a position where I would be required to compare our views of reality. I would be required to link my view of the disputed reality (my characteristics of argument) to the shared view (data) and to show how others' view of reality was not incompatible with my own. Stated differently, the success or failure of this essay hinges on the degree to which I have been able to link potentially disputable views of reality (characteristics of argument) to shared views of reality (data). This study has involved both the "talking about argument" and the "doing of argument." The credibility of the former is dependent on the latter.

FIGURE 1
CLEAR, DIRECT, AND SUSTAINED DISAGREEMENT

Form	Example 27	Example 54	Example 54	Example 54	Example 56	Example 58
Assertion	I'm on <u>Michael</u> side	You didn't have to go to school today, did you.	The strike is off.	Play and you gonna get knock down.	[I'm] making coffee.	
Denial	No you <u>not</u> .	Yes we <u>did</u>	Uh uh. The strike- // came on.	Nuh <u>uh</u> ,	No.	
Reassertion	Yes I <u>is</u> .	No you <u>didn't</u> .	The strike is // <u>off</u> .	Mm <u>hm</u> ,	Yes.	
Redenial	No you <u>aint</u> .	We had our school today	The strike ca// me on <u>today</u> .	Nuh uh, y'all	No!	
Reassertion				Yes you are playin.	YES!	

Notes

1. Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs, "Structure of Conversational Argument," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), 251-265.
2. Daniel J.O'Keefe, "The Concepts of Argument and Arguing," in *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, eds. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale, Illinois: Southern Illinois Press, 1983).
3. O'Keefe.
4. Wayne Brockriede, "Where is Argument?," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 9 (1975), 189-192, and Barbara J. O'Keefe and Pamela J. Benoit, "Children's Arguments," in Cox and Willard.
5. The expected frequency was obtained by dividing the total responses to each incident by three (the number of categories). Those transcripts categorized by twenty-four persons had expected frequencies of 8.0 per category and those categorized by twenty-three persons had expected frequencies of 7.67.
6. Barney G. Glaser and Anselm L. Strauss, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research* (New York: Aldine, 1967).
7. The space required to adequately demonstrate the findings of a qualitative investigation is often not commensurate with the space allotted for publication. Hence, illustration seems to be a satisfactory alternative for the presentation of these initial findings.
8. I have chosen to use language very similar to that used by Willard. He writes that argument is "a specific genre of interaction (occurring within certain kinds of rhetorical situations) in which the participants perceive mutual incompatibilities in their respective positions and attempt to 'hash out' the differences or to persuade the other individuals to adopt more consistent beliefs or positions on the issues." Charles Arthur Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the

Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1976), 132.

9. This example is from an unpublished and undated paper by Marjorie Harness Goodwin.

10. This example is from Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "Conversational Argument: A Discourse Analytic Approach," in Cox and Willard.

11. A felicitous request is one that is appropriate given speakers' definitions of context. For a discussion of felicity conditions and conversational argument see Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category: The Routine Grounds for Arguing in Conversation," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 45 (1981), 118-132.

12. This example was recorded by the author. All such examples will hereinafter be referred to as Trapp samples.

13. Trapp sample.

14. Robert Trapp. "Characteristics of Argument in Interpersonal Communication," Unpublished Dissertation, University of Denver 1982, p. 108. I had originally called this characteristic "comparing views of reality" but have been persuaded to adopt language more in line with that used by other argumentation theorists. The change in terms certainly does no violence to the concepts.

15. I have chosen the term "good reasons" because of the interesting possibilities raised by comparing this process in interpersonal argument to other approaches to the nature of "good reasons." See for instance Karl R. Wallace, "The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 49 (1963), 239-249; Walter R. Fisher, "Toward a Logic of Good Reasons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 376-384.

16. This example is from Marjorie Harness Goodwin, "Processes of Dispute Management among Urban Black Children," *American Ethnologist*, In Press.

17. Trapp sample.

18. Jackson and Jacobs refer to this as disagreement at the performative level rather than at the propositional level.
19. Jackson and Jacobs, 1981.
20. Trapp sample.
21. Trapp example.
22. Brant R. Burleson, "The Senses of Argument Revisited: Prolegomen to Future Characterizations of Argument," *Dimensions of Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation*, eds. George Ziegelmüller and Jack Rhodes, (Annandale, Virginia: Speech Communication Association, 1981), 955-979.

Chapter 11

Everyday Argumentation From An Interpretive Perspective

Robert Trapp

While informal logic and speech act theory present clearly identifiable perspectives on everyday argumentation, an interpretive perspective does not. Instead, the term "interpretive perspective" identifies a broad range of viewpoints unified by the view that argumentation is a *human symbolic activity*. At first, the term "human symbolic activity" seems so broad as to encompass all or most views of argument except that of formal deductive logic. In this essay, I will add some further specifications to each of those terms in order to distinguish interpretive from non-interpretive approaches. Even so, some non-interpretive perspectives may share one or more of these presuppositions. Thus, I will not attempt to describe these presuppositions as a set of necessary and sufficient conditions of an interpretive perspective, but to identify some wholistic characteristics shared by interpretive views.

Still, the term "interpretive perspective" is broad enough that it legitimately applies to a wide variety of views of argumentation. According to the way I have define the term, perspectives of such varied scholars as Wayne Brockriede, Charles Arthur Willard, Daniel J. O'Keefe, David Siebold, Walter R. Fisher, Pamela Benoit, myself, and many others can legitimately be labeled as interpretive. Thus, a description of interpretive perspectives on argumentation cannot possibly involve a description of a specific theory of argumentation; instead I will describe some of the philosophical presuppositions upon which these approaches are based.

In this essay, I will describe some of these presuppositions and discuss the speech act perspective of Frans H. Van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst and the informal logic perspective articulated by J. Anthony Blair and others in an effort to determine areas where they share the presuppositions of interpretive perspectives and areas where

they depart from them. Finally, I will argue that interpretive perspectives are useful because they narrow the distance between first- and second-order constructs, and thus, can provide a viewpoint that corresponds to actual argument in everyday life. The usefulness of discussions of this sort is that they allow us to determine the extent to which various perspectives share fundamental presuppositions. To the extent that they do, the concepts from one perspective may be useful to another.

We can focus on the term "interpretive perspective" in two ways; as *interpretive perspectives* and as *interpretive perspectives*. In each case, one term is the figure and is examined against the background of the other. Since I will be focusing on *interpretive perspectives* in this essay, let me say a few words about *interpretive perspectives*. A perspective is a set of conceptual lenses that influences the way we see things. To take a perspective on something is to focus on one aspect of a concept while deemphasizing, but not ignoring others (Brockriede, 1982: 142). Thus, using the term "human symbolic activity," an interpreter can, for example, focus on the human aspect of argument while holding the symbolic and activity aspects of argumentation in the background. In this manner Brockriede has shown how one can examine the personal dimension of argumentation as the figure while holding situational and ideational dimensions in the background (Brockriede, 1982). Many of the approaches I will discuss do just that; while one approach may focus on the *human* nature of argumentation, another focuses on its *symbolic* function, and still another may on argumentation as an *activity*. While particular interpretive approaches deemphasize one or more of the presuppositions, the others are always there - as a ground against which the figure is pictured.

Thus, as I attempt to describe argumentation as a *human symbolic activity*, I will attempt to do so by describing it as a *human symbolic activity*, as a *human symbolic activity*, and finally as a *human symbolic activity*. In this manner, I hope to emphasize that these three aspects of argumentation are interrelated and that persons who take interpretive perspectives will focus on one of these aspects but will always hold the others in the background.

1. Argumentation as a *Human Symbolic Activity*

As a general statement, this appears trivial since everyone or almost everyone agrees that argumentation is something in which *humans* engage. But earlier I promised to add further specifications to this phrase, so I now claim that argumentation is not only a inherently human activity, but humans decide when an event counts as an argument and whether or not that event counts as an effective and appropriate argument.

Argument As an Inherently Human Activity

While some people seem to believe that argument is merely an esoteric area of study that we subject on ourselves and "a few hapless students" (Burleson 1981, 959), I believe it is an activity that exists in the everyday lives of ordinary people. Children argue with parents, husbands with wives, scholars with one another at conferences, and citizens with their elected representatives. Argument, as Brockriede noted, "is potentially everywhere...[including] such relatively exotic places as the aesthetic experience, the interpersonal transaction, and the construction of scientific theories or the reporting of research studies" (1975, 179).

Advocates of the speech act perspective and the informal logic perspective agree that argument is an inherently human activity. In fact, one of the things that motivated the informal logic movement was the fact that formal deductive logic was not relevant to everyday human life. Blair (1986) recalled a frustrated student who was concerned that his course in logic could not help him prove that the war in Vietnam was wrong and noted that the need for a course that taught argumentation skills that were relevant to concerns of everyday life was one of the motivating factors behind the informal logic movement.

Humans Decide When Events Count As Arguments

Since arguments are an everyday event in the lives of ordinary people, they are in the best position to decide when an event is to be interpreted as an argument. Of course, argumentation theorists also are ordinary people. But the theories they build supposedly are applicable to ordinary life in general. For argumentation theorists only to rely on their own

preconceptions is to close ourselves to the possibility that others see argument through different lenses. Thus, when naive social actors see an event as an argument, an interpretive scholar does not brush that interpretation aside with the Monty Python comment "That's not argument, that's contradiction." As Brockriede noted, "Human activity does not usefully constitute an argument until some person perceives what is happening as an argument" (1975, 179).

In a similar vein, O'Keefe objected to defining the concept of argument "precisely because definitions include or exclude disputable cases more or less by fiat" (1982, 6-7). Instead, he focused on the "paradigm case" method of describing arguments, a method that "exploits – and rests upon – our common everyday understanding of terms" (8). Paradigm cases of concepts are examples "which would elicit widespread agreement that these *are* in fact examples of the concept in question" (6). By using this method O'Keefe demonstrates that his interest in the concepts of argument and arguing rest on "ordinary understandings" of those terms (8).

Willard is also interested in how naive social actors understand argument: "'We are having an argument' is a co-orientation, a definition of a relationship, an episodic attribution. My assumption is that actors act in unique ways when 'arguing.' The focus of argumentation research should be on the ways they do so" (1979, 188).

In addition to these individuals, Pamela J. Benoit and I (In Press) have argued that interpretive theorists take the language of naive social actors seriously. Thus, examples of discourse count as "arguments" when they are so labeled by naive social actors.

Speech act theorists Van Eemeren and Grootendorst are concerned with whether or not their concept of argument matches the concept as it is ordinarily understood. They examined various lexicographical descriptions of various words like "argumentation," "argument," and "to argue." Their conclusion was that "the meaning we attach to the term *argumentation* certainly does not conflict with the meaning that such words as *argue*, *argument* and *argumentation* have in colloquial language and, indeed, that if one digs down a little deeper one finds that our meaning is even confirmed by ordinary idiom" (1984, 30).

Most informal logicians are unconcerned with whether or not their concept of argument is isomorphic with that of ordinary social actors.

In fact, some of them explain quite clearly that they are dealing with a different concept. In the introduction to his text *Understanding Arguments*, Robert J. Fogelin wrote that "this book is about arguments. It considers arguments, not in the narrow sense of quarrels or squabbles, but in the broader, logician's sense of giving reasons in behalf of some claim" (v). Alternatively, interpretive theories must be open to a variety of events that are construed as arguing whether those events are quarrels or philosophical disputations, whether they involve reasons in the traditional sense, in some other sense, or in no sense at all.

Humans Decide When Arguments Ring True

Because argument is a human process, some concept of audience is essential. Whether interpretive theorists use the term "audience" or not, they locate the responsibility for determining whether or not arguments "ring true" in other human actors. Since it is a human process, argumentation cannot be judged by completely objective standards. Once completely objective and external standards are rejected, some concept of an audience as the ultimate arbitrator of good and bad argumentation becomes essential.

The concept of audience is most associated with the work of Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969). Since, according to their approach, the ultimate judge of an argument is an audience, either particular or universal, this concept is useful both as a tool for invention and as a method to distinguish bad arguments from good ones. The quality of an argument is as good as the quality of audience that gives its adherence. For them the ultimate is the "universal audience" whose membership is constituted by all reasonable and competent people.

While many informal logic approaches avoid explicit discussion of a concept of audience, it is central to the approach of Blair and Johnson; especially to their latest thinking. A careful reading of *Logical Self-Defense* will indicate that the concept was implicit, even if the authors were uncomfortable with it. One of the standards of good argument was called the standard of acceptability. This standard involved the fact that "a logically good argument, therefore, must start from premises that the audience is prepared to accept - or ought to accept" [emphasis added] (Johnson and Blair: 47). Being uncomfortable with the relativistic implications of saying a premise was good if listeners find it acceptable,

they added that final caveat. But once they rejected formal deductive logic as the ultimate authority, no other authority was left to dictate what one "*ought to accept*." In their latest writing, however, they adopt a very clear audience standard of argument while still trying to avoid the perils of complete relativism. They conceive of an audience as a "community of model interlocutors" who are knowledgeable, reflective, open, and dialectically astute (Blair and Johnson: 50-1). While this audience is more elite than Perelman's universal audience, Blair and Johnson note that they are "flesh and blood people; though they are outstanding exemplars, they are nonetheless only 'role models' - not gods" (52). Since this model audience is a collection of experts on particular propositions, its membership "will vary from proposition to proposition" (51).

A variety of other interpretive theorists adopt notions of audience even though they may use some other term to identify that group of persons who evaluate arguments. For instance, according to the views of Brockriede (1982), argument consists of a dialogue between or among persons as they negotiate human understanding. For Walter R. Fisher (1984 and 1987), the narrative fidelity and narrative probability of arguer's stories is judged by persons with an "inherent awareness of *narrative probability*, what constitutes a coherent story, and their constant habit of testing *narrative fidelity*, whether the stories they experience ring true" (1984: 8).

A close cousin to the concept of audience exists in Willard's constructivist/interactionist theory of argument. One of his aims is to determine how arguers "pass muster" on ideas in dissensus by objectifying their knowledge. For Willard, objectifying knowledge is a social process and thus requires an audience. This social process is at the center of any attempt to assess arguments as good or bad, as effective or ineffective, as sound or unsound. He writes that "whether or not an argument is valid is less interesting for these purposes than the reasons actors in a particular field think it valid" (1983: 15).

I have started a line of research aimed at discovering the criteria persons use when they judge each other as competent or incompetent arguers (Trapp, Yingling and Wanner In Press; Trapp 1986). Preliminary results indicate that two of these criteria are effectiveness and appropriateness. This research presumes that the authority for judging argumentative competence lies with the persons involved in the argumentation process rather than with formal standards.

So one of the commonalities of many interpretive perspectives on argument involves some kind of a concept of audience. This may involve the specific attention paid to audience by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca or it may involve others descriptions of how persons involved in the process of arguing decide whether or not arguments ring true.

Thus, scholars who focus on the human aspect of argumentation attempt to discover how humans use the concept of argument. They attempt to discover how people decide what constitutes an argument as well as their rules for determining when arguments are sound.

2. Argument as a Human *Symbolic* Activity

Although a thread running through most views of communication is the centrality of symbols to human communication, many views of argumentation have managed to ignore this thread. In this section, I will describe the general nature of human symbolic processes and show how those processes are essential to a view of human communication and argumentation.

Gary Cronkhite (1986) distinguishes symbols from symptoms. While symbols are abstractly related to their objects of reference, symptoms bear a natural relationship to that for which they stand. I will define symbols as conscious, abstract, sermonic signs produced by humans. Symbols and symptoms are not qualitatively different kinds of signs, but in my opinion, are opposite poles of a continuum. Thus, symbols are more or less conscious, abstract and sermonic when compared to symptoms.

For my present purposes, the most important aspect of symbols involves their abstractness since this is the characteristic most associated with symbolic interpretation. If symbols were concrete rather than abstract, interpretation would be unnecessary and even impossible.

Interpretation of symbolic processes involves internal as well as external processes. As Brockriede has written, "Exponents of alternative views, sometimes unified under the label 'interpretive' argue that empirical data are perceived through the interpersonal constructual lenses [internal processes] and transformed by the language used to talk about them [external processes]" (1982: 140). Thus, the locus of interpretation

is not solely in externalized speech - it is in the persons engaged in arguing as well.

When I say that argumentation exists in the realm of the symbolic, I assume my readers understand that by this statement I intend something very different than would someone whose field is "symbolic logic." I mean that the symbols in which everyday argument is cast are inherently abstract and thus require interpretation.

Most persons who take an informal logic perspective recognize the abstractness of ordinary argument. In fact, one of the clearest distinctions between formal and informal logic seems to be that the latter deals with argumentation in ordinary language. One of the issues that is debated within the informal logic perspective involves the ease, or lack thereof, with which arguments can be translated from natural symbolic language into premises which can more easily be criticized by the methods of the informal logician.

Willard's (1976) argument, that those who translate ordinary arguments into a Toulmin diagram do so only with great distortion, applies equally well to many of the informal logic approaches. Most adherents of the informal logic perspective recognize that arguments that occur in natural symbolic language can be translated into logical form only with great care. But their approach to the problem is different from Willard's. Informal logicians make translations using great care to preserve the original meaning; Willard does not make translations at all, but takes the actors' situated meanings seriously.

For a moment I want to focus on the internal and external processes involved in argument interpretation because these seem to me to involve issues that are controversial to both the speech act and informal logic perspectives. To avoid returning "argumentation to philosophically extinct eras" (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst: 6), the speech act perspective insists on limiting itself to arguments that are externalized in speech (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst: 4-7). At least many interpretive theorists are unconvinced that speech is so central to interpretation that one can afford to ignore other aspects of the symbolic process.

As the chief spokesperson for what he calls the nondiscursiveness thesis, Willard maintains that all communication modalities, discursive as well as nondiscursive, play an important role in argument

interpretation. One of these internal, nondiscursive processes involves the arguers' definition of the situation. Arguers' definitions of the situation determines how they will interpret others' claims and premises. Willard presents several examples of how arguers' definitions of the situation lead to meanings that cannot otherwise be understood in the externalized expression of arguments (1983: 35-39). Since the process of defining the situation is an internal (psychological) one, "psychologizing" cannot be avoided. "Leaps" from data to claims," writes Willard, "are movements made by thinkers - which means that they obey the matters of the thinkers' cognitive systems" (1983: 182). He continues: "So viewed, arguments are psychological processes; and to study them, we must inevitably grapple with subjective meanings. Hence, at the level of loose labels, our program differs from Toulmin's by virtue of rejecting his aim of 'depsychologizing' argument" (1983: 202).

Thus, interpretive theorists take the symbolic nature of arguments very seriously. They believe that the process of translating arguments from one mode of discourse to another involves *inherent* distortion and they believe that the process of interpreting argument in natural language involves the nondiscursive as well as the discursive.

3. Argument as a Human Symbolic Activity

Argumentation As Process

Regardless of whom we thought "won the debate," the well known exchange between Wayne Brockriede (1975, 1978) and Daniel J. O'Keefe (1978) convinced most of us that argumentation could be viewed as a process as well as a product. Whatever their differences, both believed that construing argument in either way was legitimate. Although O'Keefe's distinction between argument₁ and argument₂ was not merely a distinction between product and process, it led others to focus more clearly on the process of arguing. Although Brockriede may be faulted for not clearly focusing on both senses of argument, any reasonable interpretations of his writings as a whole cannot help but conclude that he was as interested in the process of arguing as he was in the products that it produced.

Some may question the legitimacy of viewing argumentation as a symbolic process, but I suspect their numbers are few and generally limited to a group of individuals who believe that argumentation is synonymous with formal deductive logic. A more common debate seems to concern which sense of the term should be considered the primary sense of argument. While some persons, notably Willard (1979, 169), argue that one sense or the other is more "fundamental," both Brockriede and O'Keefe saw both perspectives on argument as legitimate. Brockriede quite clearly saw many perspectives, including process and product, as legitimate ones. Borrowing from the work of Joseph W. Wenzel (1977), he wrote that "arguing invites varying perspectives that differ in emphasis on such dimensions as *dialectical methods, rhetorical processes, and logical products*" (1982, 139). O'Keefe saw little sense in any debate about which sense of argument was more fundamental since "whether one studies arguments₁ or arguments₂... will depend entirely on one's interests and purposes" (1982, 4).

But is the claim that argument is both process and product relevant to whether or not one takes an interpretive perspective? Certainly other perspectives on argument, ones that might not be labeled as interpretive, also share this view. The legitimacy of argument as process is a necessary feature of interpretive perspectives while it may be only a coincidental feature of some of the other perspectives.

The view that argument is process as well as product is not controversial even among some perspectives that do not share all of the other assumptions of interpretive perspectives. The fact that speech act theorists Van Eemeren and Grootendorst view argument as a process is clear in their work on argumentative *discussions*. Also, informal logicians Blair and Johnson assert that "an argument understood as *product* - a set of propositions with certain characteristics - cannot be properly understood except against the background of the *processes* which produced it - the process of argumentation" (1987, 45). Blair and Johnson's position on argument products and processes may be highly questionable in some informal logic circles. Indeed, many informal logicians focus on argument as a set of propositions with very little regard for the argumentation processes that produced them. Their chief concern is whether or not those propositions lead to a claim that is void of "fallacy." Irving M. Copi in his text *Informal Logic* defines an argument as "a group of propositions of which one is claimed to follow from the others" (4). With few exceptions, (notably Fogelin,

1982), informal logic texts focus on argument products to the exclusion of argumentation processes.

While some examples of noninterpretive perspectives focus exclusively on argument products, interpretive perspectives must give some consideration to argument processes as a matter of necessity because *interpretation* is centered in the *process* of arguing. Only in the process of having arguments and making arguments do interpretive processes play a central role. Mere argument products, disembodied from the processes that produced them, are much less interesting from an interpretive point of view.

4. Conclusion

Thus, the term "interpretive perspectives" on argument is a broad one, encompassing a wide variety of approaches to the study of everyday argumentation. These perspectives share a view of argumentation as a human symbolic activity. They differ from one another by whether or not their primary focus is on humans, symbols, or activity. But since they share a common set of presuppositions, even though some are in the background, these approaches to argumentation can provide useful information to one another. Argumentation theorists should begin the task of integrating these points of view into a broad interpretive theory of argumentation.

Arguing is an important activity in people's everyday lives. The actual *doing* of argument is a first-order construct while a theorist's description of arguing is a second-order construct. Because they consider arguers' interpretations of arguments as interesting data, interpretive perspectives narrow the distance between first- and second-order constructs of everyday arguers and, as a result, produce theories that coincide with argumentation in everyday life. By attending to actual cases of arguing, scholars with interpretive perspectives attempt to produce second-order constructs of arguing (theories) that are as close as possible to the first-order construct, or the actual process of arguing. Unlike the formal deductive logic approach to argumentation, which produces theories of argument that have little or nothing to do with the everyday practice of arguing, interpretive perspectives are committed to the proposition that theories of argumentation, if not recognizable to everyday arguers, should at minimum be relevant to their everyday lives.

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III

FORM AND TEXT IN ARGUMENT

Introduction: Form in Argument

Does argument have an essential form? If so, what is it? Does an argument take its shape from propositions and logical connections? From symbols and metaphors? From thoughts, spoken or unspoken? From conversational rules? These are all good questions – that is to say, hard questions – and have all been addressed by rhetoricians and argumentation specialists over the centuries. Each question has been answered affirmatively by some scholars, and negatively by others.

In one way, however, the focus on form obscures what may be the really fundamental issue: exactly how can we identify an argument, or contrast it with similar sorts of things that aren't arguments? To say that an argument necessarily takes a certain form is a way of addressing these problems. The classical tradition, continued through the argumentation textbooks of most of this century, has looked to logic for clues to argument's form and hence its essential identity. Aristotle (1984) said that arguments are of two kinds: the enthymeme, which is the rhetorical deduction, and the example, which is the rhetorical induction. Logic itself is a science of forms, but the modifier "rhetorical" seems to have destroyed the precision and attractiveness of logic in this context. Still, the traditional ways of defining argument normally began with logic, and elaborated it in some way to meet rhetoric's needs.

Though the many centuries since Aristotle have seen objections to the use of logic and its associated topics to define argument, our own century is the one in which logic has been most profoundly (and perhaps mortally) challenged. Toulmin's *Uses of Argument* (1958) attacked logic on its own grounds, and substituted the now-familiar "Layout of Argument," or Toulmin model. Toulmin's data-warrant-backing-reservation-qualifier-claim system attracted the attention and support of two very important argumentation scholars: Ehninger and Brockriede. They regarded Toulmin's model as a genuine alternative to logic, adapted it to current argumentation pedagogy in an introductory article (Brockriede & Ehninger, 1960), and then gave a full account of their approach in the historically pivotal *Decision by Debate* (Ehninger & Brockriede, 1963). Soon thereafter, the English translation

of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *The New Rhetoric* (1969) appeared, and, while it did not endorse the Toulmin model, it did support Toulmin's contention that formal logic was an inappropriate model for argumentation.

So in an astonishing twenty years, the rarely questioned dominion of logic over argumentation became a minority position, regarded by many as more an historical curiosity than a serious effort to describe human arguing.

Among the few holdouts is Hample, whose paper on the Toulmin model argues that Toulmin, in fact, failed to offer an alternative to logic. Hample says that the Toulmin model only appears to be distinct from logic because the model itself is not fully candid. When the detailed workings of the layout are examined, Hample says that it resolves itself into a series of hypothetical syllogisms. But even Hample is unwilling to suggest that ordinary arguments take the propositional form of syllogisms; instead, he concentrates on the functions that must be fulfilled in a coherent argument. These functions are providing data, warranting the relevance of the data to the claim, and claiming; they are not at all dependent on any particular linguistic formulations. In this way, the traditional hold of logic over argumentation is reasserted, with qualifications.

Willard's essay has a broader scope than Hample's, and attacks all formalisms - particularly the Toulmin model, but also the syllogism - as being inadequate for capturing the reality of real, interactional arguments. Willard says that diagrams cannot accurately represent arguments, for they unjustifiably wrestle everything - perceptions, motives, nonverbal symbols - into propositional form. Diagrams are linguistic abstractions that do not respect the nonlinguistic features of argument at all, and may not even be satisfactory in regard to that part of the argument which is textual. Critics have to "fill in" diagrams to complete arguments, and they have difficult (if not impossible) choices to make in this regard: is the complete argument the one the speaker had in mind? the one the audience had in mind? the one a distanced reader has in mind? all of these? Such problems all flow from a single source: the view that arguments are not speech texts, but instead are a kind of interpersonal interaction. An argument is a moment in some persons' lives, and to express that moment as a series of diagrammed propositions is too great a distortion for Willard to accept.

Burleson, however, claims that Willard is unfair to Toulmin. The Toulmin model, in Burleson's view, is chiefly applicable to arguments₁, while Willard focuses on argument₂ (this distinction was introduced

by O'Keefe paper (Ch. 5). Burleson thinks that the layout of arguments was never intended to do what Willard says it cannot – that is, accurately represent an interpersonal interaction – and so Willard has attacked a straw man. Burleson's position is dependent on his view that argument₁ is the more basic kind of argument. This is the assumption that permits him to argue that since argument₁ can be properly identified and diagrammed with the Toulmin model, we are therefore accurately representing argument with such diagrams. Willard, however, claims that interactional argument is the basic kind. Thus, if interaction cannot be diagrammed, neither can (the truest, most basic kind of) argument. If you agree with Willard, then Burleson's case reduces to the still-valuable claim that argument₁ can be modeled. If you agree with Burleson, then Willard's thesis needs to be re-evaluated as applying only to one kind of argument.

These three papers are concerned with traditional formalisms: the classical formalism of the syllogism, and the more recently embedded formalism of Toulmin's model. However, there are other ways of thinking about form. Of these, the idea of narrative has recently achieved prominence, largely due to Fisher's (1987) work in our discipline. The idea here is that stories have structure, and that arguments can be understood in terms of the structure of stories. Kneupper's paper suggests one related way of understanding argument's form without resort to logic or Toulmin.

Kneupper's essay is founded in an appreciation of Burke's dramatism. Burke says that human acts can be understood as having several essential features: an agent, an agency, a scene, a purpose, and the act itself. Any of these offers a vantage point for a critic. More pertinently, however, a perspective on an act can also be constructed by especially featuring two of these terms at once, in what Burke calls a ratio. An act comes into a different focus when seen in terms of its setting, as opposed to the vantage of its agent; an agent is understood differently when viewed in terms of his/her act than in terms of his/her cultural scene. By emphasizing certain ratios, an arguer can lead an audience to a particular conclusion without ever having to make an explicit linguistic case for that claim. Although most of Kneupper's essay is theoretical, his illustration of all this, Edward Kennedy's Chappaquiddick speech, shows powerfully how descriptions can be systematically used to make arguments.

These essays leave the central questions still unsettled, but they have the merit of offering well-considered cases for and against several reasonable efforts to define the form of argument. Other papers in this collection also bear on this issue. In particular, those essays which

make cases for argument taking its basic form from conversation, or speech acts, or dialectics, have been placed in the section entitled "Pragmatics of Argument," and other pertinent papers are to be found throughout the book (e.g., Ch. 9-11 and Ch. 16-19). The idea of form, or identity, is a central one, and thus appears naturally in many theoretical contexts.

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Chapter 12

The Toulmin Model and the Syllogism

Dale Hample

Nearly twenty years ago, Stephen Toulmin published an analysis of argument which was intended to supplant traditional logic by trading the logician's customary concern with argumentative form for a more pragmatic concentration on argumentative function.¹ His general strategy is to look freshly at the uses of argument in order to discover generally usable standards for judging the strength of arguments. In fact, the main point of the book is to find out "how we are to set out and analyse arguments in order that our assessments shall be logically candid - in order, that is, to make clear the functions of the different propositions invoked in the course of an argument and the relevance of the different sorts of criticism which can be directed against it" (pp. 8-9).

Toulmin creates an antithesis between working logic and idealized logic, and comes down firmly on the side of the working logic used in ordinary discourse (chapter 4). In doing so, of course, he de-emphasizes the notion of validity, which is the traditionalists' critical standard for assessing deductive logic. To balance this loss, he substitutes substantial argument as his logical prototype. Whereas validity depends on an argument's form and typifies little of what actually passes for argument, substantial arguments have the same form as any others and are ordinarily used in all nonformal fields of argument. But Toulmin's preference for substantial argument is not based on the claim that traditionally valid arguments do not work; he merely promotes a model of argument broad enough to include syllogisms without being based on traditional standards.²

His practical bent leads Toulmin to find a new starting place in his search for logical standards. That his view does not actually contradict traditional logic is shown by the freedom with which he says that substantial argument can be made to look formally valid (p. 135).

In fact, when he first introduces the idea of warrants as inference-licenses, he says a warrant may be written as "If data, then claim" (p.98). If only the first three parts of his model (data, warrant and claim) are taken into account, we find ourselves looking at a perfectly valid hypothetical syllogism: "D if D, then C; so C." Of course, Toulmin does not require his arguments to be in proper logical form (see p. 117), and this freedom in criticism has enormous importance. But it should not obscure the functional compatibility of formal logic with (at least) the first three parts of the Toulmin model.

The purpose of this essay is to analyze the Toulmin model (see chapter 3) with a particular view toward weighing the justice of its announced departure from formal logic. In general, I will claim that the model becomes more and more candid³ as it more closely approximates a syllogism (or a series of them). Throughout, however, I will follow Toulmin in concentrating on function, not form: my case will be complete if I can show merely that an argument must *do* what a syllogism does - not that an argument must *look* like a syllogism. The two main parts of the essay try to show (a) failures in clearly distinguishing the main parts of the model, and (b) the model's structural inadequacy. The reader should be aware that these arguments are directed only against the model, and so leave most of the book untouched. Consequently, the conclusion re-assesses the value of the model and Toulmin's contributions to the study of argument.

1. Distinctions

The Toulmin model is a pattern of functions. As Conwan says, "Argument is organization."⁴ In claiming that his model is a more candid exposition of argument than formal logic, Toulmin means that he describes the different functions of argument - and the functions' organization - more clearly than traditional views. Central to the support for that claim are the distinctions Toulmin makes between functions that he says are undifferentiated in syllogisms. In this part of the essay, we will consider three distinctions that I think do not hold up. The pairs of terms involved are backing and warrant, warrant and data, and data and rebuttal. In each case, I try to show either that the functions are (at least sometimes) indistinguishable or that the functions are seriously overlapped.

Toulmin's favorite claim may well be that he has noticed a distinction between backing and warrant that is obscured in the syllogism (see pp. 107-113). Aware that confusion between backing and warrant will lead to difficulties (p. 103), Toulmin himself addresses the nature of their differences: "statements of warrants, we saw, are hypothetical, bridge-like statements, but the backing for warrants can be expressed in the form of categorical statements of fact quite as well as can the data appealed to in direct support of our conclusions." He adds that confusion may appear "only when these differences are disguised by our forms of expression" (p. 105). So he lays out a way of expressing warrant and backing to make their differences clear. Since a warrant is a permissive proposition which allows movement from data to claim, its clearest expression is "*An A may be taken to be a B*" (pp. 105, 111). Bazzing, having the goal of providing data-like material to answer challenges to the warrant (pp. 103-105), should somehow communicate the idea that "*Every A has been found to be a B*" (pp. 104, 111).⁵ And, in truth, these two sentences seem obviously different.

But is it fair for Toulmin to rely on a *grammatical* distinction between these two functions? One of the most consistent themes in *Uses of Argument* is that the most useful criticism of argument relies on ordinary language, rather than insisting that every analyzable statement have a particular form (see p. 117). Since we have already quoted Toulmin expressing the concern that grammatical patterns may sometimes disguise warrant and backing (p. 105), it seems clear that we should regard as merely a happy accident the fact that Toulmin the stylist has managed to find two sentence patterns that, if used in the argument, clearly distinguish warrant and backing. Insofar as a reliably-discernible difference exists, it must be a functional, not a grammatical one.⁶

And Castaneda presents a criticism which, when taken to a different conclusion, shows that there is no reliable functional difference.⁷ He emphasizes that, for Toulmin, "we cannot get from any set of data to a conclusion without some warrant" (p. 128). But if every argument needs a warrant, then "D, B; so C" "is a lame argument which lacks W."⁸ However, Toulmin does not treat "D, B; so C" as incomplete. At one point (p. 123), he says "D, B; so C" is an "alternative" to "D, W; so C," implying that "D, B; so C" does not require a warrant. In cases where confirming the backing involves checking the claim, "D, B; so C" is analytic by Toulmin's standard, and so the argument - as it stands - is tautological (p. 125). In what sense could anyone

plausibly argue that an analytic, tautological argument needs to be completed? A close reading of Toulmin, then, yields two ideas which together obscure the backing-warrant distinction: (1) No argument can be complete unless the warrant function is fulfilled, permitting the passage from data to claim. (2) Arguments which have the form "D, B; so C" are sometimes complete without a warrant. The most reasonable conclusion to be drawn from those two propositions is that backing can serve the function of the warrant. Since the functions of backing and warrant thus overlap, and since grammatical structure will offer no consistently reliable hints to distinguish them (unless the discourse is forced into Toulmin's pattern), it seems pointless to insist that these are really two different things.

The optional identity of backing and warrant is reinforced by considering the relation between warrant and data because backing is supposed to be data-like. But I claim that there is no consistent way to tell data from warrant, either.

As before, Toulmin himself inspects the distinction between data and warrant. Although the rest of *Uses of Argument* makes a consistent differentiation between the functions, Toulmin is oddly reticent when he confronts the question directly. He begins by wondering whether or not we can depend for our distinction on the two queries, "what have you got to go on?" and "how do you get there?" He immediately concedes that these questions will not do the job:

By grammatical tests alone, the distinction may appear far from absolute, and the same English sentence may serve a double function: it may be uttered, that is, in one situation to convey a piece of information, in another to authorise a step in an argument, and even perhaps in some contexts to do both these things at once. (p. 99)

After noticing the inadequacy of merely grammatical criteria, however, Toulmin does not go on to defend functional standards of differentiation. Instead, he claims that "we shall find it possible in *some* situations to distinguish clearly two different logical functions" and then suggest a *grammatical* standard for the distinction: "the nature of this distinction is hinted at if one contrasts the two sentences, 'Whenever A, one *has found* that B' and 'Whenever A, one *may take it* that B'" (p. 99). It seems odd that a distinction that is only sometimes

apparent should be an essential part of a model designed to criticize all ordinary discourse.

But there remains some question about whether the data-warrant distinction is even sometimes clear, for Toulmin's functional descriptions of data and warrant are not especially helpful. Data, we are told, are the "foundation upon which our claim is based" (p. 97), but surely warrants are fundamental too. It is true that the "data we cite if a claim is challenged depend on the warrants we are prepared to operate with in that field" (p. 100), but the issue of logical primacy does not help because Toulmin explains elsewhere that we can create a warrant to authorize "precisely the sort of inference in question" (p. 135). Whether the warrant dictates the data chosen or whether the warrant is later written to link data to claim seems not to matter to the operation of the argument. The next chance to distinguish data from warrant is one that even Toulmin might wish to avoid: data are facts (p. 97) and warrants, being inference-licenses, presumably are not (p. 98). But if we have (rightly) abandoned grammatical standards, how can we hope to tell fact from not-fact? The most obvious answer - verifiability - can be quickly ruled out because Toulmin explains that warrant-establishing arguments operate by comparing empirically-observable phenomena to one another (pp. 121-122, 135-136).⁹ So warrants, like data, are identified through observation rather than deduced (in the traditional sense) from theories.

The only remaining alternative for Toulmin that I can see is that once in the argument, data and warrant are clearly different. But both Cowan and Manicas have considered Toulmin's sample argument regarding Harry's citizenship and found problems. Cowan points out that Toulmin's warrant - that Bermudan-born people are generally British citizens - "is surely information to someone who does not already know it."¹⁰ In this case, is it more fact-like that Bermudans are born British or that Harry was born Bermudan? Manicas argues that the data - "Harry was born in Bermuda" - can be taken two ways: to mean that "(It has been found that) Harry was born in Bermuda."¹¹ or to mean that "(It may be taken that) Harry was born in Bermuda." Since the first alternative is data-like, and the second is warrant-like (see p. 99) - and since Manicas performs a similar operation on the warrant - the result can be a perfectly reasonable argument about Harry's citizenship in which Toulmin has the data and warrant reversed. The conclusion I draw from all this is that, except for the case of someone who actually says "I have found that..." and "We may

take it that ...," distinguishing between warrant and data is a hopeless task. The effort would be peculiarly frustrating if the critic were dealing with enthymemes.

For the two distinctions we have been considering so far - backing-warrant and warrant-data - I have been claiming that the functions are often genuinely indistinguishable. In the next pair of functions, however, I offer a more limited argument to the effect that the terms merely overlap, but in a way inimical to the model.

The terms are data and rebuttal. In order to explain the overlap, I have to preview some of my comments on the structural adequacy of the model. Briefly, it seems to be that rebuttals cannot be incorporated into arguments if no more is meant by rebuttal than what Toulmin seems to mean. He says that conditions of rebuttal indicate "circumstances in which the general authority of the warrant would have to be set aside" (p. 101). In other words, a rebuttal is a hypothesis which, whatever its actual form, will serve the function of saying, "If R is true, then W is not." Toulmin does not use this form - he prefers the simpler (but I think less candid) "Unless R." But the important thing to notice is that he does not obviously provide any means of finding out whether R is accurate or not. I claim that the rebuttal hypotheses must be tested before it can aid in choice of the modal term. Consider an argument, designed to show that Lincoln was a good President, which is strapped with the reservation, "unless he was actually a Temporal Agent serving the interests of a hostile alien government from our future." Most of us would be inclined to ignore the rebuttal and choose the same qualifier we would pick if the reservation had never been mentioned. But we would (most likely) be ignoring the reservation because we think it false that Lincoln was a Temporal Agent, not because we think his motives are irrelevant to our assessment of his Presidency. So we naturally tend to *test* the hypotheses when they occur to us.

But what can we use to test them with? The only answer seems to be: data of some kind.¹² And, although I think he does not intend to, Toulmin actually allows for rebuttal testing. At one point, he presents an argument for analysis, only to notice that a few assumptions are not yet accounted for. His solution is to add some data which do not appear in the model. The argument is the one about Petersen's religion (pp. 139-140). Toulmin wonders whether he needs to consider either that "we know nothing else relevant about Petersen" or that

"Petersen is a random Swede." Toulmin nitpicks a bit, finally deciding that these notions are not data at all, being rather "second order" comments about the data (p. 140) and so not deserving inclusion in the model. However, he concedes that "quasi-syllogisms can properly be advanced only if the initial data from which we argue state all that we know of relevance to the question at issue (p. 140). This position seems identical to an earlier one:

Certainly the most reasonable estimate a man can make of the probability of some hypothesis depends in every case on the evidence at his disposal - not just any batch he chooses to consider but all the relevant evidence he has access to - but equally, it depends on the same body of evidence whether he can reasonably conclude that a given statement is *true*. (p. 81: cf. p. 60)

Notice that the additional data - very obviously in Petersen's case - answers possible reservations.

So in spite of the Spartan simplicity of Toulmin's examples, arguments turn out to need more than one bit of data. In fact, since "all the relevant evidence" ought to be involved in the evaluation of the claim, and since rebuttal hypotheses are all presumably relevant, the data for an argument must include not only enough facts for the warrant to move the argument through to the claim, but also enough information to test every rebuttal. The overlap between data and rebuttal, then, is this: the data must provide the evidence necessary to *complete* the assessment of the reservations.

Before closing this section of the paper, it may be useful to spell out the consequences of the three criticisms for the model. The effect of the data-rebuttal overlap, of course, is fairly obvious: it spoils the simplicity of the model, probably reducing its pedagogic value,¹³ and certainly making it less manageable for critics. If I am right about the pointlessness of trying to distinguish data from warrant, both of these simply become premises of a syllogism, taking the forms "D" and "If D, then C" without restriction. This might actually strengthen the model: I suspect that one reason Toulmin confines himself to singular data¹⁴ is that generalized data look too much like warrants. If we no longer had to worry about keeping data and warrants separate, expansion of the model would be straightforward, if traditional. A similar consequence might follow from rejecting the

warrant-backing distinction. The model would be substantially liberalized if we allowed anything to support a warrant, and anything to link data to claim. How "anything" might be used to support a warrant or link data to claim is one of the first topics taken up in the next section of the essay.

2. Structural Adequacy

In this part of the paper, I try to show that the Toulmin model is, if not actually incomplete, at least not as candid as a straightforward use of formal logic. In arguing for treating arguments as syllogisms, however, I do not mean to suggest that the language of formal logic ought to be used. I only claim that all arguments must satisfy - whatever their form - the *functions* of premises and conclusions. Although I restrict my discussion to hypothetical syllogisms ("D; if D, then C; so C"), I only do so because their application to the Toulmin model is particularly clear. Categorical and alternative syllogisms, though they seem to have more limited scope, can also accommodate some uses of argument.

I offer four criticisms to suggest structural inadequacy. These deal with the rebuttal-warrant relation, the backing-warrant relation, the absence of support or reservations for data, and the restriction of qualifiers to claims.

I have already explained the rebuttal-warrant inadequacy. Viewing rebuttals as having the function of saying "If R, then not W" shows the need for testing the hypothesis. If the rebuttal turns out to be largely false, the argument can proceed; but if it is accurate, the "D; if D, then C; so C" movement is flatly halted. That the model would be more candid if it proved for testing the rebuttal seems certain.

The main question on this issue that needs to be dealt with is how modal terms are generated on my view. Toulmin says the qualifier is "to add some explicit reference to the degree of force which our data confer on our claim in virtue of our warrant" (p.101). By seeing the rebuttal as "If R, then not W," the force of the reservation centers directly on the warrant, creating a qualifier in *that* term, which in turn requires a qualifier for the claim.¹⁵ Actually, "If R, then not W" is not the only formulation for the rebuttal: it is merely the prototype for a whole family of conditionals. Examples of these are:

"If R is probably true, W probably isn't," "If R is certainly true, W certainly isn't," and so forth. In other words, using evidence to test the rebuttal hypothesis is not a simple black or white decision: it is not a matter of whether or not R is true, but of *how far* it is true. At any rate, once the warrant has been qualified (say by "probably") the data-warrant-claim relationship becomes: "D; if D, then probably C; so probably C."

The brunt of the criticism is this: the omission (on Toulmin's part) of a procedure for testing rebuttals leaves vague how the rebuttals work, and how they generate qualifiers. Adding the necessary data clarifies the (syllogistic) way in which rebuttals operate, without greatly altering the basic D-W-C syllogism.

Consideration of the backing-warrant relation reveals a similar structural inadequacy. As we have already noticed, the function of backing is to provide evidence in support of the warrant. If we view the warrant as the claim to a subordinate argument, and the backing as its data, it becomes obvious that Toulmin nowhere explains *how* backing works. This point has been noticed by others.¹⁶ Although there is an alternative answer,¹⁷ the solution most consistent with the rest of the model is to require that the movement from backing to warrant be licensed by an additional warrant-like statement. This new warrant will fulfill the function of saying that "If B, then W," so that the whole sequence becomes "B; if B, then W; so W."

Once again, making the model more candid makes it more syllogistic. Toulmin omitted data for his rebuttals; in contrast, he left out the warrant needed by his backing. So at this point, the reconstituted model consists of three syllogisms: data-warrant-claim, data-rebuttal-warrant, and backing-warrant-warrant.

Perhaps one or two more ought to be added as well: consider the data. Critics of the model commonly wonder why the data are not backed in the same way as the warrant.¹⁸ Certainly there is a reason for the addition of a data-establishing function. Data are fundamental to argument, as are warrants. If it is important to emphasize that one deserves grounds within the argument, why should the other be postulated? And if I am right in saying that data and warrant are indistinguishable, surely no grounds appear for proving one and not the other. An exactly analogous argument can be made for considering reservations to the data. If both backing and rebuttals were attached to

the data function, each would have to satisfy the evidence and warrant functions. By extension of our earlier analysis, the rebuttal would be aimed at the data, taking the general form "If R is true, then D is not."

Obviously, this regress can continue indefinitely, and it is only a question of judgment as to where we can halt and still claim to have described argument candidly. What I suggest here is simply that data ought to have the same status as warrants: either both or neither ought to have backing and rebuttals. I will return to this issue in the conclusion.

Before ending the criticisms, however, one more oddity deserves attention: that of all the statements in the model, only the claim is explicitly awarded a modal qualifier.¹⁹ Surely the data should be qualified – especially if one argument's (qualified) claim becomes the next argument's data.²⁰ And since the warrant is itself the claim of an argument (founded on the backing), it, too, ought to be qualified. The whole point of a modal qualifier is to fit the force of an assertion to its grounds. This tailoring ought not be confined to a single function – especially since other parts of an argument themselves fill (or can fill) that same function from time to time. Regardless of what function a proposition happens to be undertaking, its force is *at all times* based on the arguments used to justify it.

The general aim of this section has been to show that the Toulmin model is structurally inadequate. By explicitly considering some additional functions – data for the rebuttal, a warrant for the backing-warrant relation, backing and rebuttal arguments for the data, and qualifiers for everything – the structure becomes both more complex and more candid. How these modifications ought to be taken account of, and what value we should now ascribe to *Uses of Argument*, are the final topics of this essay.

3. Conclusion

Probably the most consistent theme of this paper has been that arguments function syllogistically. Toulmin's attempts to distinguish between data-like premises and warrant-like premises do not seem to hold up, so we are simply left with two premises and a conclusion to describe the basic operation of argument. Upon inspection, both

the backing and rebuttal functions turn out to be incompletely analyzed in Toulmin's treatment, and a syllogistic pattern reappears when the gaps are filled in.

Unfortunately, once all the gaps are filled, a diagram of the new model looks more like the work of a drunken spider than an effort to isolate the essential operations of argument. Consequently, I think we should not attempt to include all the syllogisms in the model. Instead, we ought to consider backing and rebuttal as stock issues or *stases* which are applicable to the premises of any argument. On this view, the basic model - applicable to both the primary argument and the subsidiary *stases* - would consist of two premises, a claim and qualifiers. The presence of the qualifiers would signal the dependence of the argument on those which back and rebut it.

This reformulation has the virtue of being schematically simpler than the present Toulmin model, and the further advantage of not being insistent on some questionable distinctions between its elements. The re-affirmation of our traditional notions of *stases* and syllogisms should cause no distress, presuming we are wise enough to follow Toulmin in adapting to ordinary language.

And finally, I think that the reformulation would not cause us to sacrifice anything of value in *Uses of Argument*. Perhaps the three most powerful ideas in the book have not even been mentioned in this essay, because they have little to do with the Toulmin's model's departures from the syllogism. These are: the distinction between force and criteria (chapters 1 and 2), the distinction between field dependence and field invariance (chapter 1) and the relation between argument and epistemology (chapter 5). Only the analytic-substantial distinction (chapters 3 and 4) seems challenged; but I think it can be redeemed if we hold to ordinary language as our medium of analysis.

In short, though I think we need to return to the syllogism to describe the function and uses of argument, we have no right to ignore either Toulmin's critique of formal language or his insight into the meanings of argumentatively important terms.

Notes

1. Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958). Further references to this book will be by means of page numbers inserted in the text of the essay.
2. There is some question about Toulmin's analysis of traditional standards. The consensus of philosophers is that his treatment of logic is far too narrow: he consistently restricts himself to syllogisms with particular data and claim, and a universal warrant. See J.C. Cooley, "On Mr. Toulmin's Revolution in Logic," *Journal of Philosophy*, 56 (March 1959), 309-311; Hector Neri Castaneda, "On a Proposed Revolution in Logic," *Philosophy of Science*, 27 (1960), 281; Peter T. Manicas, "On Toulmin's Contribution to Logic and Argumentation." *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 3 (September, 1966, 87; Clyde Laurence Hardin, [Review of *Uses of Argument*], *Philosophy of Science*, 26 (April, 1959), 161; and Jimmie D. Trent, "Toulmin's Model of an Argument: An Examination and Extension." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 54 (October, 1968), 255. Only S. Körner, [Review of *Uses of Argument*], *Mind*, 68 (July, 1959), 425, is forgiving: he says that Toulmin's treatment of logic is "common to traditional and to mathematical logicians, who have merely widened its scope."
3. Logical candidness is Toulmin's own general standard for judging the adequacy of his formulation as compared to formal logic. See Toulmin, pp. 9, 112.
4. Joseph L. Cowan, "The Uses of Argument - An Apology for Logic," *Mind*, 73 (1964), 32.
5. To delay complications I have simplified the statements of warrant and backing on Toulmin, p. 111, to omit qualifying phrases. Whether or not qualifiers ought to be there is an issue we will consider in the second part of the paper.
6. Manicas, p. 85, makes the same point.
7. Castaneda, pp. 283-284.
8. Castaneda, p. 283.

9. See Robert L. Scott, "Backing Warrants and Establishing Warrants." Paper presented to Speech Communication Association meeting, Chicago, December, 1974.
10. Cowan, p. 30.
11. Manicas, p. 86.
12. The reader will notice that my description of reservations makes them into warrants of a sort, and that I am about to suggest the use of data to complete the argument. In using these notions, I am simply arguing on Toulmin's own grounds. I can just as easily put the argument (as I soon will) into the form of a hypothetical syllogism. My current criticism does not depend on my ability to distinguish data from warrants.
13. See James C. McCroskey, "Toulmin and the Basic Course," *Speech Teacher*, 14 (March, 1965), 91-100; and Wayne Brockriede and Douglas Ehninger, "Toulmin on Argument: An Interpretation and Application." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 46 (February, 1960), 44-53.
14. See footnote 2.
15. The use of qualifiers for propositions other than the claim is the fourth criticism of this section; I will consider the problem explicitly there.
16. Scott, pp. 3-4; Frederick L. Will, [Review of *Uses of Argument*], *Philosophical Review*, 69 (1960), 402. Cowan, p.31, wonders, "How are we to know whether a proposed backing really backs?" Brockriede and Ehninger, p. 45, say that backing "may consist of an entire argument," but Toulmin seems only to have intended that backing provide evidence. See Toulmin pp. 105-106, 119-120.
17. Both Scott, p. 5 and Will, p. 402, decide that the backing-warrant relation is unmediated - accomplished through intuition, tacit knowledge or the like. But if this position is accepted, I see no reason why the exactly analogous data-claim relation should not also be unmediated. Since I think it is both useful and possible to verbalize mediators (warrants), we should insist on them.

18. Manicas, p. 86; Trent, pp. 254, 256. Support for data is actually added to the model in Richard D. Rieke and Malcolm O. Sillars, *Argumentation and the Decision Making Process* (New York: John Wiley, 1975).
19. Actually, there is some confusion on this point. At least one warrant is - without comment - given a qualifier: "A man born in Bermuda will generally be a British subject" (Toulmin, p. 102). However, a sentence or two later, the warrant is stated as "A man born in Bermuda will be British" - without the qualifying "generally." Cooley, p. 310 n. 13, questions whether Toulmin would allow a qualifier in data, but quotes the qualified warrant a page earlier. Manicas, p. 84, says that rebuttals are only possible if warrants are qualified, which suggests they ought to be. Trent, p. 254, thinks that both data and warrant should be unqualified, but on p. 257 uses, as typical of Toulmin, a qualified warrant. As far as I can tell, Toulmin does not himself address this issue.
20. Brockriede and Ehninger, p. 45. They are clearly supported by the passage regarding lemmas on Toulmin, p. 97.

Chapter 13

On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments

Charles Arthur Willard

1. Introduction

Argumentation theorists have adhered tenaciously in recent years to a positivistic faith in operationism. Most texts, for example, operationalize "argument" diagrammatically, using either the Toulmin layout or some variant.¹ Although the speech communication discipline has been gradually embracing a process and interactionist perspective on communication,² most argumentation scholars have retained the conceptualization of "argument" as a "thing" which can be descriptively analyzed through the use of linear descriptive diagrams.³ Some theorists have attempted to integrate the notion of argument into more contemporary frameworks,⁴ but many others apparently continue to believe that diagramming arguments is useful.⁵ Despite the paradigm shifts in general communication theory, the argumentation discipline seems to have retained the enthusiasm expressed more than a decade ago by Ehninger and Brockriede for the Toulmin diagram's capacity to provide an appropriate structural model by means of which rhetorical arguments may be laid out for analysis and criticism.⁶

This enthusiasm is easily explained. To a discipline long committed to formalism and rationalism, Toulmin's approach seemed a welcome alternative to syllogistic systems. Many scholars believed that Toulmin's diagrammatic approach to argument was a means by which persuasive arguments could be subjected to formal scrutiny without engaging in psychologism. Theorists believed that the Toulmin formulation might be sufficient to accomplish what argumentation scholars had been trying to do for years: join formal logic and theoretical advances in social psychology.

The assumption that arguments can be operationalized diagrammatically grows out of a philosophical paradigm which is rapidly passing from

favor.⁷ Indeed, this essay contends that persuasive arguments cannot be adequately diagrammed. Although diagrams may have normative value,⁸ they have no descriptive value; and, more importantly, the distortions and misrepresentations inherent to argument diagrams outweigh any critical or descriptive advantages they may provide. Hence, the bulk of this essay is devoted to discussion of two reasons why argumentation theorists and rhetorical critics should eschew the use of diagrams. First, argument diagrams are mired in considerable (and unavoidable) conceptual confusion as to just what it is that they are supposed to represent. Second, persuasive arguments are too complex and dynamic to be adequately depicted diagrammatically. That is, argument diagrams necessarily abstract arguments from the phenomenal world of the social actor. The development of these charges, of course, entails an implicit attack upon a central tenet of positivist dogma: that existing phenomena must be linguistically explicable.

2. What Do Argument Diagrams Represent?

An argument "diagram" is a specific kind of scientific "model." The focus of the present essay is on some faults of the species which may not be applicable to all other species of the genus "model." Now, models are supposed to be structurally isomorphic with the things they represent.⁹ A model of argument, then, is supposed to be a representation or reconstruction of the form of an argument. In this sense, Aristotle used the syllogism as a "model" both of cognition and of public argument. In the same vein, Toulmin's diagram is used to depict formal relationships among the parts of arguments (viz., data, warrant, backing, reservation, qualifier, and claim).¹⁰ Both syllogisms and the Toulmin layout display arguments linguistically. Both are based on the assumption that arguments are things *possessing*, independent of the people who use them, certain formal characteristics.

Such an assumption is tenable only if it is possible to specify exactly what it is that argument diagrams depict. Some theorists seem content with the vague assertion that "argument diagrams represent arguments," thus implying in an ambiguous way that an argument has a unified and definable existence of its own, independent of the people who use it, and that this form can be clearly depicted. Cronkhite, for example, applies his version of Toulmin's diagram at one point to the source, at another to the receiver, and at other points, in an unclear

way, to the message itself.¹¹ Although it is surely not intentional, Cronkhite conveys, by his use of the diagram a vague intermingling (at some points, he seems to assume an identity) of the message conceived, message sent, and message received.¹² The weakness of this approach is obvious: if the word "argument defines any process in which a source sends a message to a receiver in which he asserts one proposition to be true by virtue of others (in Aristotelian parlance, one thing having been said, another follows in consequence), then at least three diagrams would be needed to accurately describe any "argument." The first would depict the processes occurring in the mind of the source which result in the verbalized claim. The second would depict the "message-in-channel" - the symbolic cues actually sent out by the source. And, the third would depict the cognitive processes of the receiver as s/he hears the argument.

It is untenable to claim that a single diagram can depict all three. Critics may often find instances in which an auditor uses data, warrant, and backing which differ from those of the source. Most important, the data and warrant appearing in a speech text may differ in important respects from those employed by both source and auditor. A politician, for example, may assert a claim about school busing based upon some data or warrant which s/he would rather not articulate openly. So s/he invents plausible substitutes for the transmitted message. Thus, the message-conceived and the message text differ fundamentally. A receiver may adopt the anti-busing claim not because of the stated warrant and data (if they are stated) and not because of the data and warrant in the mind of the source, but by virtue of some quite idiosyncratic data and warrant. An even more common occurrence might be when the source and receiver actually agree upon data and warrant but understand that these premises will not be stated openly because other data and warrants are more broadly acceptable. Hence, the politician and the listener may agree that busing should be opposed to keep non-white children out of the "good" schools, but the listener understands that the politician will use arguments such as "local autonomy" and "neighborhood self-determination." Consequently, if these examples are typical of day-to-day argument, and there is no reason to suppose them to be unique, the argumentation theorists and the rhetorical critic must assume that the message sent, message received, and the message-in-channel (or speech text) are not identical.

This poses a dilemma for rhetorical critics. If criticism purports to describe and subject to formal scrutiny the arguments in a rhetorical

transaction, critics must be very clear about what it is that they are describing. They must clearly indicate the perspective from which they criticize and, most important, whose perspective is being criticized. That is, because persuasive arguments are characteristically enthymematic, critics must typically make some educated guesses about missing data and warrants or backing and reservations. Critics must clearly distinguish between the perspectives of the source and receiver as they "fill in the blanks." To vacillate between the perspective of the source and that of the receiver, or worse, to artificially merge the two perspectives, is to both miss the point of what happened and to distort its nature. At the descriptive level, there is nothing wrong with regarding rhetorical criticism as a process of perspective-taking. Indeed, critics must be people who can bring high reflexivity, to use G.H. Mead's word, to bear on an abstracted dyad embracing themselves and the source (or themselves and the receiver). Yet, they must be prepared to clearly identify whose perspective they are taking when they supply missing elements of argument.

If critics feel confused about the choices, unsure as to which message is the proper object of an argument diagram, this confusion springs out of thinking of argument in terms of a diagram. We think of arguments in diagrammatic terms because they have always been explained to us that way (e.g., Aristotle's syllogism or Toulmin's diagram). Such a conceptualization of argument is intrinsically circular: theorists wish to define a thing, so they describe it diagrammatically, and then assign to the nature of the thing the properties of the diagram.¹³

The question arises: why choose? Why must a critic think of the three messages as mutually exclusive choices? Why not simply use three diagrams for three "stages" of argument? The ultimate conclusion of this essay, already hinted at, is the Toulmin diagrams and other similar diagrams are inadequate isomorphs of all three, rendering the question superfluous. Yet, the focus here is on the essential ambiguity of argument diagrams in terms of the difficulties in choosing what they are to represent. So, the question deserves an answer. Two reasonable answers immediately come to mind. First, a linking of three or more Toulmin diagrams to depict a process of interaction seems a terribly cumbersome and not very helpful arrangement. A diagram, after all, is supposed to permit a "laying out" of premises in a clear pattern for purposes of analysis. The juxtaposition of three formally similar but substantially different diagrams seems more

confusing than helpful since the relationships between the three diagrams could not be diagrammed. The second answer, however, is more decisive. The Toulmin diagrams cannot serve as a structural representation of human cognitive processes given the complexity of those processes and the state of human knowledge about them. In our haste to operationalize the concept of "inference" in terms of the "mental leap," we blur over most of the vital and highly complex cognitive processes which coalesce to produce the symbolic phenomenon we call "argument." For example, variables suggested by George Kelly's "psychology of personal constructs" including the combinatory and hierarchical nature of constructs, the relationships between constructs and linguistic forms and combinations, and cognitive complexity with its important implications for the meanings and psychological force of a proposition are not admissible evidence in the Toulmin diagram.¹⁴ Meaning is, of necessity, hypostatized and abstracted from its roots in the highly idiosyncratic personal construct system of the individual. From a completely different psychological perspective, say that of the mediational behaviorist (S-O-R), the most important variables which would shape and guide an individual's inferential processes (viz., attitudes, beliefs, values, emotional sets, open and closed minds, or assimilation and contrast effects) simply cannot be made to fit a diagram of persuasive argument.¹⁵ Hence, rhetorical critics will be on tenuous theoretical grounds indeed if they try to use a diagram as a structural representation of the cognitive processes which have produced an argument.

The problem of choice seems to reduce to this: critics can only use the Toulmin diagram to "lay out" what appears on a sheet of paper (viz., a speech text). There must be no pretense that the diagram is a depiction of anything else. It seems obvious that Toulmin's diagram lacks the complexity necessary to any adequate cognitive paradigm and that critics would lose through distortion anything they stand to gain in simplicity. Although the last part of this essay challenges the capacity of descriptive argument models to deal adequately with the relatively simple problems posed by arguments on paper, a preliminary digression is in order. The relationships between "arguments" and speech texts (and, by implication, even tape recordings of speeches) must be examined.

3. Speech Texts Contrasted to Arguments

Theorists have traditionally thought of argument" in one of the two senses: (1) a combination of premises employed by someone to lead to a further premise, or (2) something that people engage in- a specific kind of interaction. Historically, the second sense of the word "argument" has been given short shrift because it is so difficult to grapple with. Due to the paucity of theorizing about this interactional conception of argument, we must be content, for now, with asserting that it is legitimate to think of argument as a specific genre of interaction (occurring within certain kinds of rhetorical situations) in which the participants perceive mutual incompatibilities in their respective positions and attempt either to "hash out" the differences or to persuade the other individuals to adopt more consistent beliefs or positions on issues.

Clearly, it is with the first sense of "argument" that theorists have been traditionally most concerned. It seems equally obvious that it is combinations of premises which argument diagrams are purported to represent structurally. On one level, at least, this is the easiest sort of analysis for critics since they are dealing with a concrete "object" or "thing" on a piece of paper which they can easily break down or "lay out" for analysis. But when we ask just what it is that the critics are analyzing, we are confronted with an old problem that was illustrated succinctly many years ago by Richard Murphy in his "Speech as a Literary Genre."¹⁶ The problem is that a group of propositions on a sheet of paper might rightly be called "argument" in one sense, that of literature, but they have nothing to do with actual interactions among people. Speech texts are not even dependable echoes. A diagram of a set of propositions on a sheet of paper is most decidedly not a representation of the highly dynamic and complex interaction which occurred when person A formulated a set of propositions and transmitted certain symbolic cues to person B who proceeded to construe them in some way. There is nothing particularly objectionable to thinking of speeches as literary works or even to analyzing the arguments contained in them. Yet, an argument, as the communication theorist looks at it, and as the argumentation theorist ought also to regard it, is a psychological phenomenon having no existence apart from the individuals who use it. It is not a "thing" endowed by nature with substance and properties.¹⁷ It cannot rightly be said to "possess" form in a metaphysical sense because the individual who creates it is the locus of its form and the individual who receives it stands equally

as a locus of form. The argument has already been made that the "form" of an argument in a speech text may have little or no clear relationship to the propositional relationships envisioned by both the source and the receiver.

In sum, the argumentation theorist or rhetorical critic who diagrams the contents of speech texts is doing nothing more significant than drawing pictures of lines on sheets of paper. When person A sends a message to person B, a myriad of complex variables must be brought into play to adequately describe "what happened." The source's perceptions of the situation, of symbol meanings, of other persons (and their motives), and of his available options for action all contribute to his choices of certain propositions over others. Paralinguistic, kinesic, and proxemic/managerial cues will have important effects upon the receiver's ultimate understanding of the propositions.

Thus, a speech text can be said to bear only the most distant sort of relationship to an actual encounter between people. The distance is much too great to permit descriptive analyses of events. A text is nothing more than a highly imperfect abstraction from an event and, while it might usefully be regarded as a genre of literature, it is a most unreliable clue as to the nature of an argumentative transaction. Diagrams of such texts, then, are worse than useless- they are misleading.

4. Three Fundamental Defects of Diagramming

The above analysis has focused on the weaknesses of argument diagrams vis-a-vis the inherent ambiguity of the critical perspective created by their use. It remains now for us to inquire into certain substantive objections to the use of diagrams per se.

Scholars and theorists who use models have long recognized that they face a dilemma: models are most valuable when they are clearly and easily understood; yet, the model which is too simple reveals nothing useful and blurs over complexities, while the model which is too complex becomes too cumbersome to use. Most diagrammers have sought a middle ground between extreme complexity and simplicity. It is the contention of this essay, however, that the simplicity-complexity issue is superfluous when weighed against three basic sources of distortion endemic to argument diagrams. These sources

of distortion are (1) the process of translation- translating the message into analytic premises; (2) the linguistic bias of argument models; and (3) the model's intrinsic isolation of context- both linguistic and sociopolitical.

To fit the premises of a persuasive argument onto a Toulmin diagram is an act of translation- a reformulation of symbolic cues into analytically explicable premises. We must take as a "given" that the data-warrant-claim paradigm is roughly isomorphic with a person's reasoning process; and, since discourse is characteristically enthymematic (as noted above), we make educated guesses about which data and warrants the source has not verbalized. Stated another way: the claim, much like a poem, is a compression of meaning; and we "explode" its meaning by formulating probable answers to Toulmin's questions "what do you have to go on?" and "how did you get there?"

The problem of perspective (from whose perspective ought the critic fill in the blanks?) has already been discussed. It has been suggested that the worst possible thing for the critic to do would be to vacillate between message-sent, message-in-channel, and message-received. Yet, once the critic has chosen a perspective, s/he is immediately confronted with a problem posed by the inherent subjectivity of human perceptions of any message. This assumption that the critical gaze is inherently subjective springs directly from constructivist psychology- a theoretical perspective which, as George Kelly has argued, assumes subjectivity:

No two people can play precisely the same role in the same event, no matter how closely they are associated. For one thing, in such an event, each experiences the other as an external figure. For another, each experiences a different person as the central figure (namely, himself). Finally, the chances are that, in the course of events, each will get caught up in a different stream and hence be confronted with different navigational problems.¹⁸

Kelly most decisively does not mean that there can be no sharing of experience. Indeed, he argues that "to the extent that one person construes the construction processes of another, he may play a role in a social process involving the other person."¹⁹

The basic problem for humans, in Kelly's view, is that for a person to play an effective role with another in a social process, "he must

effectively construe the other person's outlook.²⁰ Man (and, indeed, rhetorical critics and argumentation theorists) is able to do this more or less imperfectly.

If the critics' central descriptive task entails estimations of the perspectives of various actors in given situations, their concern must be with not imposing some normative form on another person's thoughts or in attempting to make that other's thoughts fit some diagram. Rather, critics must become, in a sense, ethnomethodologists: they must ask how *that* person believes that her/his claims must be supported, how *that* person construes her/his responsibilities as an advocate, and what *that* person regards as sufficient evidence, warrant, backing, and the like. The central descriptive problem for the student of argument must be how the people who use arguments in social situations account for the relationship among propositions.

Hence, the first weakness of argument diagrams reduces to this: the critic is encouraged (and, in a sense, forced) to impose the form of the diagram on that which s/he seeks to describe. The diagram greatly limits the critic's ability to construe the various perspectives of the people who are "arguing" in a social context. The most important descriptive question should be: "what sort of diagram is that person using?"

The second source of distortion lies in the linguistic bias of argument diagrams. The search for data, warrant, backing, or reservations entails casting these things into propositional forms- expressing them in language. For example, an "authoritative warrant" might state that "since what X says is worthy of belief" and a "motivational warrant," as Ehninger and Brockriede say, "states a motive that authorizes the evaluative claim."²¹ Indeed, many scholars regard as a major advantage of the Toulmin diagram that it allows the critic or debater to visually depict an argument on paper; and to express the speaker's unverbalized assumptions in clear propositional form.

The difficulty with this approach is that many of the forces that impel speakers to certain modes of persuasive behavior (and auditors to certain kinds of behavior) are not expressible in language. Indeed, many fundamental propositions about which people "argue" are not linguistically expressible. For many years, writers such as Susanne Langer have been arguing that many aspects of our sensuous, mental, and emotional life- our "felt life" as Henry James defines it- cannot

be expressed in words. Langer writes that "the symbolic presentation of subjective reality for contemplation is not only tentatively beyond the reach of language- that is, not merely beyond the words we have; it is impossible in the essential frame of language."²² Such art forms as music, dance, sculpture, painting, and the like are symbolic in that they are expressive of certain modes of human feelings which cannot be expressed linguistically. We cannot reduce to words (or even explain in any clear way in words) our aesthetic experiences with a progression of diminished sevenths or a chord in C Major superimposed on a A Minor trill. Even the "language-bound" arts such as poetry and fiction express some feelings only indirectly. They hint and suggest in an attempt to so juxtapose form and ideational content as to call up in the reader feelings that cannot be expressed directly.

If this is true, two conclusions come to mind. The first is that Toulmin's diagram or any argument diagram cannot depict one of the most common (therefore, important) genres of argument, viz., argument produced through the conjunction of several artistic media. A television commercial, for example, may combine music, dance, cartoons, special effects, and words to produce an "argument." It may be so designed that the words take their special meanings and emphases from the context of aesthetic responses to music, pictures, and special effects. Indeed, some commercials produce their persuasive messages without recourse to any words at all. For example, (1) many beer commercials seek to associate product consumption with the pleasurable aesthetic response to well-written, imaginative jingles- the actual words spoken in the commercial are of minor importance; (2) Richard Nixon's 1968 campaign commercials consisted of taped passages from his nomination acceptance address played in conjunction with war scenes, ghetto scenes, and the like augmented with carefully selected music- the net effect being that "doves" perceived the message as "dovish" while "hawks" construed Nixon's words as "hawkish;" and (3) many car commercials rely on clever camera work, music, staging effects, and musical lyrics that sometimes never mention the product name. Now each of these examples is an "argument" from, say, Toulmin's perspective: they are claims upon our attention and belief made by persuaders. They fail to conform neatly with our traditional conceptions of argument because they eschew the simple propositional mode.

An objection might be raised here: these are not examples of "argument." They are merely instances of persuasion. The response

to such an objection must be: of course they are genres of "argument" insofar as they attempt to establish formal relationships among symbolic structures in the minds of their hearers. A color picture of an attractive young woman in the right hand seat of a sportscar combined with music and clever action sequences involving the car on the road constitutes an identifiable unit of meaning- of symbolic form. The pleasant feelings we experience when confronted with some of the best commercial jingles are specifically intended by the advertisers to sustain a connection between the pleasure and the image of the product and its use. Critics should not arbitrarily rule out of consideration a genre of argument that does not conform to their present conceptual schemes (viz., our diagrams). Further, they must cast aside the positivistic notion that things which cannot be expressed via language are either "irrational" or do not exist.

If, indeed, multi-media presentations constitute "argument," it seems clear that to attempt to cast them into propositional form (which one must do when using present argument diagrams) would distort their essential nature. To "make them fit" onto a diagram that fails to accurately depict aesthetic experiences and the relationships between these experiences and the words uttered would be to miss the point entirely.

A second conclusion which can be drawn from this notion of nonlinguistic symbolizing concerns more traditional genres of argument. Insofar as the claims a person makes are based upon feelings which cannot be expressed propositionally, argument diagrams encourage us to speculate on the bases of insufficient evidence. It seems reasonable to assume that the constituents of an aesthetic experience are many of the same variables that influence behavior in other contexts, viz., attitudes, beliefs,

values, emotions, and the like. These variables, from a behaviorist (S-O-R) perspective at least, constitute the data, warrants, backings, and reservations of arguments. Yet, we ought to seriously question whether a critic or debater can possibly reduce these variables to analytic propositions. The intuitive idea of Ehninger and Brockriede's "motivational warrant" seems to be that we can and must isolate and express the motives (apparently, the attitudes, beliefs and values) underlying the inferential leap from data to claim. Yet, the authors fail to advise the student as to how to go about determining the nature of an attitude and how it might be expressed propositionally. Now, if we look at attitude along the lines suggested by Fishbein, and others,

the problem becomes apparent. Allport views attitude as a "*mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related.*"²³ Similarly, Fishbein defines an attitude as "a learned predisposition to respond to any object in a consistently favorable or unfavorable way."²⁴ It seems obvious that any learned predisposition- a mental and neural state- cannot be cast propositionally. Typically, attitudes are expressed symptomatically- by the statement of some belief, some hypothesis about either the nature of the object or about the types of action to be taken with respect to the object. Thus, the critic is tempted to conclude that when a source expresses, say a negative stereotype of black people, the source must possess a negative attitude, predisposition to respond to black people. And, Ehninger and Brockriede prompt us to say that the motivational warrant for a specific claim is the source's negative attitude toward blacks. But, as Fishbein has stressed, the relationship between beliefs and attitudes is far more clear: "Although each belief suggests an attitude, the attitude per se can only be reliably abstracted by considering the many beliefs the individual holds."²⁵ Hence, "while an individual's attitude will be highly correlated with an estimate based on a consideration of many of his beliefs, it may be uncorrelated or even negatively correlated with any single belief considered in isolation."²⁶

It is hardly difficult to envision persuasive utterance in which evidence concerning the relationship between an expressed belief and the attitude or value structure of the source is scanty or ambiguous. With the short messages so characteristic of the mass media, we typically encounter beliefs in near-isolation. Yet, if the belief is used as data for some claim, the Toulmin diagram urges us to speculate, indeed forces us to formulate in propositional form the attitude which serves as a "motivational" warrant for the inference from data to claim. This becomes mere guesswork with little chance of accuracy. From the S.O.R. behaviorist perspective, it seems reasonable to say that behavior springs out of attitudes, beliefs, values, norms, habits, and expectancies. Thus, data, warrants, backings, and reservations might be expected to consist of any of these variables. Yet, only one of these variables, beliefs, can be routinely cast in propositional form. Indeed, we might never be able to pinpoint with any confidence the reasons why a source infers (in a certain way) from given data to certain claims. The danger of the argument diagrams is that they encourage us to try.

The willingness of argumentation theorists and critics to embrace a concept such as the motivational warrant probably stems from traditional roots in Aristotelian rationalism and the faculty psychology of the Enlightenment. A traditional assumption in the discipline is that logic is something divorced from, naturally opposed to, the emotions. Argument has consequently been thought of as a product of the rational capacity- something which is distorted by the emotions. Those theorists who have been willing to admit emotionality into the argumentation lexicon have tended to "make it fit" the prevailing models of rational thought (traditionally, the syllogism). The more holistic view of human nature toward which the communication discipline seems to be moving invites us to regard "argument" as simply any act of conjoining symbolic structures (propositions or otherwise) to produce new structures. Obviously, argument diagrams which force critics to reduce human symbolizing to words- propositional forms- distort the nature of argument.

The final source of distortion inherent in any argument diagram is its isolation from context- both linguistic and sociopolitical. The assumption here is that a context is an ephemeral coalescence of people, acts, objects, institutions, and perceptions that can be only approximately reconstructed. Contexts, both linguistic and social, are construed by the people in them: and consequently, the most important feature of a context is how it was construed. Although this problem obtains with any attempt to reconstruct past events, it is exacerbated by diagrams which lead us to believe that we can "lay out" for examination the arguments that were used. Such diagrams force the critic to assume an omniscient stance- a stance which is difficult to justify or defend.

For linguistic context, the argument diagrams must assume an unrealistic degree of stability. Toulmin's diagram, for example, because it purports to "lay out" the lexical/structural connections between the data, warrant, and claim, must assume that these connections are fairly stable contextually. The context must be clear and unambiguous. Yet, it is easy to think of examples of persuasive arguments in highly volatile and ambiguous contexts. I.A. Richards has called linguistic context "a name for a whole cluster of events that occur together...In these contexts one item- typically a word- takes over the duties of parts which can then be omitted from the recurrence. There is thus an abridgement of the context.... When this abridgement happens, what the sign or word- the item with these delegated powers- means is

the missing part of the context.²⁷ Toulmin's diagram forces us to rip propositions out of context- we could not practicably use the diagram without this abstraction from context.

The diagram puts us in a frustrating conceptual bind: on the one hand, insofar as we arbitrarily assign meaning to propositional elements- which is exactly what we are forced to do in most contexts- we distort the nature of the argument. On the other hand, insofar as we give the unstable context full play- insofar as we recognize the variability of the possible meanings of a propositional element- we will find it impossible to employ the diagram at all. The dilemma is compounded by the fact that we have no way to compare the gain in understanding through the use of the diagram with the losses through distortion. It is impossible to guess how serious the distortion may be.

Sociopolitical contexts are frequently those from which propositions are given meaning; and we should consider context stability to be the exception rather than the rule. The important situational variables which cannot be depicted in an argument diagram are literally too numerous to list here. A partial list of such variables must include: (1) opportunities for interaction; (2) the source's perceptions of her/his hearers and her/his attributions of motives to them; (3) the hearers' perceptions of the source and their attributions of motives to her/him; (4) the influence of various group norms upon all participants; (5) the past experiences of the participants with one another, the topic of discussion, the problem, and similar situations; (6) the perceptions of the participants of constraints on their actions; and certainly not finally, (7) the commonality uniting the source and her/his hearers. Each of these variables, of course, suggests additional factors that might be listed. The list of such variables may well be limited only by our abilities to perceive relationships among phenomena. It must suffice for our purposes here to assert that none of these variables can be considered within the confines of argument diagrams now in use. All of the variables might affect (a) the choice of one proposition over others, (b) the selection of specific terms, (c) the omission of certain terms, and (d) the selection of certain modes of delivery or styles of interaction. It was noted above that paralinguistic, kinesic, and proxemic cues can and do modify the meanings of propositions; and it seems reasonable to argue that many such cues draw their character from and are evoked by a person's perceptions of a context. Obviously, the meanings which people attach to these nonverbal cues will be characteristically idiosyncratic. In sum, all of these variables

greatly affect the meanings of propositions and the ways that propositions are used in arguments. None of them can be depicted in a diagram.

5. Conclusions

The traditional devotion to positivistic assumptions about operationism has not served the argumentation discipline well. Employment of the Toulmin diagram and similar types of diagrams has led theorists to mistake paradigmatic simplicity for descriptive accuracy and to confuse normative principles of argument with descriptive statements about argument. As analytic instruments, argument diagrams are basically counterproductive. They suffer from difficulties springing out of the choices of perspective forced on the critic. They constitute an unjustified act of translation. They impose a linguistic bias on many genres of human discourse which do not admit of linguistic analysis. And, they divorce propositional elements from their proper linguistic and sociopolitical contexts. The Toulmin diagram may well be an adequate normative diagram for the evaluation of arguments, but it was never intended to be a descriptive instrument for the analysis of day-to-day argument. It is not enough to simply recognize, as so many writers do, the limitations of diagrams- and then proceed to use them. We will be much better off if we eschew the use of descriptive diagrams entirely.

Notes

1. Argumentation texts seem to favor Toulmin. See Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, *Decision by Debate* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1963), pp. 98-167; Glen E. Mills, *Reason in Controversy* 2nd Ed., (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1968), pp. 16, 42, 110, and 182; and Austin J. Freeley, *Argumentation and Debate*, 2nd ed., (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1966). Freeley urges the use of Toulmin's diagram in strong terms (p. 143): "By laying out his arguments in the form of a structural model, the advocate gains an additional opportunity to analyze the whole complex of the argument...." Many persuasion and communication theory texts employ the diagram in the same way. Andersen, for example, calls the Toulmin diagram "a schematic layout

for the examination of arguments." See Kenneth E. Andersen, *Persuasion Theory and Practice* (Boston, Allyn and Bacon, 1971), p. 137. Some fundamental texts use the diagram as a descriptive instrument for the analysis and understanding of inferences. See Thomas M. Scheidel, *Speech Communication and Human Interaction* 2nd ed. (Glenview: Scott, Foresman, 1976), pp. 104-06.

2. See, e.g., Ernest G. Bormann, "The Paradox and Promise of Small Group Research," *SM*, 37 (1970), 11-217; Leonard D. Hawes, "Elements of a Model for Communication Processes," *QJS*, 59 (1973), 11-21; Lawrence Grossberg and Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Presuppositions, Conceptual Foundations, and Communication Theory: On Hawes' Approach to Communication," *QJS*, 61 (1975), 195-208; and Hawes' reply, "A Response to Grossberg and O'Keefe: Building a Human Science of Communication," *QJS*, 61 (1975), 209-19.
3. An example is found in Erwin Bettinghaus, "Structure and Argument," in *Perspectives on Argumentation*, ed. Gerald R. Miller and Thomas R. Nilsen (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, 1969), pp. 130-55.
4. See, e.g., many of the essays in Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., eds. *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation*, (University Park, Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1965); and, for an attempt to integrate "argument" into a systems theory perspective, see Bernard L. Brock, et al., *Public Policy Decision Making: Systems Analysis and Comparative Advantages Debate* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973).
5. A good illustration is Bert E. Bradley, *Fundamentals of Speech Communication: The Credibility of Ideas* (Dubuque: William C. Brown, 1974).
6. Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, "Toulmin on Argument: An Interpretation and Application," *QJS*, 46 (1960), 44.
7. Viz., positivism. The criticisms of positivism have been very severe. See Frederick Suppe, "The Search for Philosophic Understanding of Scientific Ideas," in *The Structure of Scientific Theories*, ed. Frederick Suppe (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1974), pp. 3-241.
8. The normative value of argument diagrams is not at issue. Argumentation scholars have traditionally confused normative and destructive

statements about argument. It may be that every argument ought to have data, warrant, backing, reservation, and qualifier for each claim. Yet, this is unrelated to descriptive statements about the psychological character of persuasive arguments. Few texts use Toulmin's diagram primarily as a normative paradigm. Obviously, such a use would be more in line with Toulmin's vision of a diagram of "justificatory" arguments.

9. A cogent explanation of "models" and their employment appears in Abraham Kaplan, *The Conduct of Inquiry* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1964), pp. 258-93.

10. Thus, the arguments of this essay ought not be construed as attacks upon the Toulmin system per se. Toulmin did not intend his model to be a general paradigm of cognition. The criticisms of this essay are directed to the uses of the Toulmin diagram proposed in argumentation and communication theory texts. It is in these works that much stronger claims are made for the diagram (viz., that it can serve as a cognitive model). Toulmin himself thinks of justificatory argument along jurisprudential lines: "Light is thrown on these questions by the analogy with jurisprudence. This would naturally lead us to adopt a layout of greater complexity than has been customary, for the questions we are asking here are...more general versions of questions already familiar in jurisprudence." Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1958), p. 96.

11. Gary L. Cronkhite, *Persuasion: Speech and Behavioral Change* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1969), pp. 84-87.

12. On page 85, Cronkhite describes his model in terms of the listener. On page 86, such concepts as "motivational warrants" and "authoritative" and "motivational" proofs are discussed in terms of the source. Cronkhite's subsequent discussion seems to blend the two perspectives into a general "message."

13. An example is found in Craig R. Smith and David M. Hunsaker, *The Bases of Argument* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1972), p. 97. The only uniquely normative use of the Toulmin model in recent works is cast as a debater's tactic in Robert C. Dick, *Argumentation and Rational Debating* (Dubuque: William C. Brown, 1972), pp. 35-36.

14. The perspective is explained in George A. Kelly, *A Theory of Personality* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963). See also D. Bannister, ed., *Perspectives in Personal Construct Theory* (London: Academic Press, 1970); D. Bannister and J.M.M. Mair, *The Evaluation of Personal Constructs* (New York: Academic Press, 1966); and J.C.J. Bonarius, "Research in the Personal Construct Theory of George A. Kelly," in *Progress in Experimental Personality Research II*, ed. B. Maher (New York: Academic Press, 1965), pp. 1-46.
15. An analogous difficulty was confronted by William McGuire in dealing with the syllogism as a model of cognition. See "A Syllogistic Analysis of Cognitive Relationships," in *Attitude Organization and Change*, ed. Carl I. Hovland and Milton J. Rosenberg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), pp. 65-111. McGuire, of course was not concerned with a pictographic diagram necessary for "laying out" arguments. Yet, he is still forced away from Aristotle's model by introducing an "outside term" into the logic model (viz. "wishful thinking").
16. "Speech as a Literary Genre," *QJS*, 44 (1958), 117-27. See also Barnet Baskerville, "The Place of Oratory in American Literature," *QJS*, 39 (December, 1953), 459-64.
17. One might cite, as a last resort, that the message consists of air movements and light variations. This, of course, fails to meet the challenge: an argument is given its form by human minds- it is phenomenological in character, and to ponder its nature, apart from its status as speech text, is absurd.
18. Kelly, p. 55.
19. *Ibid.*, p. 95.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Ehninger and Brockriede, *Decision by Debate*, p. 164.
22. Susanne K. Langer, *Problems of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957), p. 24. Langer's position is also developed in *Feeling and Form* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), pp. 26-41. This perspective is also expressed by Ernest Cassirer, *Language and Myth* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1946).

23. Gordon W. Allport, "Attitudes," in *Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement* ed. Martin Fishbein (New York: Wiley, 1967), p.8.
24. Martin Fishbein, "Attitude and the Prediction of Behavior," Fishbein, *Readings*, p. 483.
25. Martin Fishbein, "Beliefs and their role in Attitude Measurement," in Fishbein, *Readings*, p. 264.
26. Fishbein "Attitude and Prediction," p. 480. See also p. 482.
27. *Philosophy of Rhetoric* (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1965), p.34

Chapter 14

On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations

Brant R. Burleson

In recent years several writers have attempted to clarify, define, and reformulate the subject matter traditionally studied under the rubric of argumentation.¹ As O'Keefe notes, much of this conceptual work has reflected "an emerging concern with the description and explication of argument, as opposed to a focus on prescriptive matters."² Many of these more descriptive formulations have embraced the widely accepted view of human communication as process. Hence, it has become increasingly common for students of argumentation to investigate and theorize about the complex interacting variables in contexts where arguments appear. While many of these efforts promise to enrich our understanding, certain articulations of the "process view" distort the concept of argument as traditionally employed. The present effort examines certain distinctions and assumptions underlying the methodology of argument analysis and criticism through a critique of the "process view" of argument recently presented by Charles A. Willard.³

Willard's notion of argument is embedded in a critique of the use of descriptive diagrams in the analysis and criticism of arguments. He believes descriptive diagrams such as the Toulmin model should be abandoned as descriptive and critical tools because of "conceptual confusion" in the use of these devices. He further asserts that the use of descriptive models or diagrams should be discontinued because such models necessarily abstract and simplify the phenomena which they seek to describe. Urging critics and theorists to "eschew the use of descriptive diagrams entirely,"⁴ Willard argues for a "process and interactionist prescriptive on communication"⁵ wherein "it is legitimate to think of argument as a specific genre of interaction."⁶ While the present critique supports a "process and interactionist prescriptive

on communication," it rejects the *specific* process view of argument proposed by Willard, in the belief that it is a conceptualization whose adoption by argumentation theorists and critics would preclude the fruitful analysis and evaluation of arguments. This general claim will be defended by: (1) indicating the conception of argument and nature of analytic and critical activity inhering in Willard's notion; (2) revealing certain deficiencies in Willard's conception of argument which spring from a failure to recognize the several senses in which the term "argument" is used; (3) offering a conception of argument which, it is believed, provides a constructive base for the analysis and criticism of arguments; and (4) demonstrating how, within the presented alternative view, models and diagrams provide both important sensitizing concepts and functional tools for analysis and interpretation of discourse.

I

What is "an argument"? What should be the focal concern for argumentation theorists and critics? What ends are served by the analysis and criticism of arguments? Obviously, answers to such questions establish one's theoretical and methodological orientation.

Willard urges us "to regard 'argument' as simply any act of conjoining symbolic structures (propositions or otherwise) to produce new structures."⁷ Perhaps recognizing that this conception fails to distinguish argument from perception, learning, or experience, Willard also offers a more limited definition:

...it is legitimate to think of argument as a special genre of interaction (occurring within certain kinds of rhetorical situations) in which the participants perceive mutual incompatibilities in their respective positions and attempt either to "hash out" the differences or to persuade the other individuals to adopt more consistent beliefs or positions on issues.⁸

Defined in this manner, arguments are transformed into fleeting, ephemeral experiences which are necessarily beyond the purview of anyone other than participants in the immediate context. Reinforcing this view, Willard contends that "an argument, as the communication theorist looks at it, and as the argumentation theorist ought also to

regard it, is a psychological phenomenon having no existence apart from the individuals who use it."⁹

Beyond implying that the interests and questions of the argumentation theorist ought to be identical with those of the communication researcher, Willard intimates that arguments should be described and analyzed only with psychological terms and from a psychological point of view.

What is the nature and function of critical activity that follows from such a conceptualization of argument? Unfortunately, Willard does not present an analytic methodology explicitly; nor does he provide any examples of criticism compatible with the position he advocates. Thus it is necessary to infer certain methodological implications from a few assorted comments.

Willard assumes "the critic's central descriptive task entails estimations of the perspectives of various actors in given situations."¹⁰ Providing such descriptions, according to Willard, requires critics to "become, in a sense, ethnomethodologists: they must ask how *that* person believes that her/his claims must be supported, how *that* person construes her/his responsibilities as an advocate, and what *that* person regards as sufficient evidence, warrant, backing, and the like."¹¹ This individualistic orientation would appear to result in the critic producing a system of psycho-logics: i.e., descriptions regarding the nature of, and functional and structural relations among the elements of, an individual's cognitive system.¹² On this view, the argumentation critic's ultimate aim is to provide an account of how "messages" are interpreted within a person's cognitive system, how these interpreted messages alter or affect the structures of the system, and how these altered or affected structures influence other structures and/or the behavior of the person. Beyond the impact of messages themselves, Willard would have the critic consider how a rather lengthy list of social-psychological variables affect the manner in which messages are interpreted and exert influence. Willard further argues that "the central descriptive problem for the student of argument must be how the people who use arguments in social situations account for the relationships among propositions."¹³ The argumentation theorist apparently becomes responsible for explaining why people construe their experiences as they do. Thus criticism becomes responsible for charting the cognitive operations of the individual parties engaged in making and presenting arguments. The methods through which the critic supposedly fulfills this end remain unspecified.

Several of Willard's formulations are problematic. The apparent exclusion from criticism of the traditional, and perhaps essential, act of evaluation results in a conception many will regard as inadequate. Identifying the interests of the argumentation theorist with those of the communication researcher will be disturbing to others. And the apparent characterization of logic as purely ideographic certainly constitutes yet a third significant problem.

In his most recent writings Willard has sought to elaborate and clarify his conception of argument.¹⁴ In these works Willard explicitly acknowledges the distinction between two senses of argument; argument₁, a type of speech act which a single individual makes or produces, and argument₂, a form of social interaction in which two or more individuals engage. Willard claims that his analysis is focused upon a conceptual analysis of argument₂. However, Willard still sometimes blurs the distinction between argument₁ and argument₂ (as evidenced by his continued attacks on argument diagrams as tools of analytic description), and does not adequately address the question of the relation of argument₁ and argument₂ (although he does assert that argument₂ or argument as a form of interaction is the *primary* sense of the term).

The present paper seeks to demonstrate the validity of diagramming argument₁ for purposes of analytic description and criticism. In addition, the present analysis therefore constitutes an implicit rejection of Willard's view that argument₂ is the more fundamental sense of argument. As Brockriede has recently stated: "Although persons can make arguments without engaging in the process of arguing, I do not see how they can argue without making arguments. Characteristically, the act of advancing arguments precedes or initiates the process of arguing."¹⁵ Argument₁, then, seems the prior sense of the term (both logically and chronologically), and argument₂ is to be identified, at least in part, by the presence and exchange of arguments₁ among individuals engaged in social interaction.¹⁶

Thus the central problem in Willard's analysis rests in his peculiar conception(s) of argument. Argument is variously defined as a "genre of interaction," an "act of conjoining symbolic structures," and as something "used in social situations." Faced with this array of potentially incompatible definitions, can we help but wonder how we should understand the nature of argument?

To the end of unraveling this confusion, a detailed explication of the nature of argument is presented below.

II

Recently, several theorists have attempted to indicate the various distinctive senses in which the term argument is used.¹⁷ O'Keefe provides perhaps the clearest characterization of these senses in the previously mentioned distinction between argument₁ and argument₂:

In everyday talk the word "argument" is systematically used to refer to two different phenomena. On the one hand it refers to a kind of utterance or a sort of communicative act. This sense of the term I will call "argument₁." It is the sense contained in sentences such as "he made an argument." On the other hand, "argument" sometimes refers to a particular kind of interaction. This sense, "argument₂," appears in sentences such as "they had an argument." Crudely put, an argument₁ is something one person makes (or gives or presents or utters), while an argument₂ is something two or more persons have (or engage in).¹⁸

Thus argument₁ is a kind of product or thing persons construct and proffer to one another and argument₂ is a type of human interactional activity.

Certain implications of O'Keefe's distinctions are critically important for argumentation theorists. First, the theorist must be clear about what it is he attempts to analyze. Obviously, the concepts and methods suitable for the analysis and criticism of argument₁, a product or something people make, are not appropriate for describing the nature of the processes underlying communicative interaction. Unless the theorist has a well-defined notion of the object of his analysis, ambiguity and conceptual confusion almost certainly will result.

Second, the two senses of argument are distinct; they cannot be collapsed into one another. Neither sense of argument is derivative; that is, neither sense is completely reducible to the other. Naturally, the senses are interdependent and interpenetrate one another, but neither sense can be adequately expressed solely in terms of the other.

However, simply recognizing the distinction between argument₁ and argument₂ is only the starting point for analysis. As O'Keefe notes, "very thorny issues immediately arise concerning how one is to delimit arguments₁ and arguments₂ and how one is to characterize the relation between arguments₁ and arguments₂."¹⁹ The following characteristics of argument₁ are presented in an attempt to resolve some of these issues and further disambiguate the concept.

Characteristics of Argument₁

1. Discourse is said to contain an argument only if an assertion is put forward which can be plausibly construed as a claim on the belief and attention of the participants. Toulmin indicates that for something to be called an argument, it is necessary for the claim being advanced to be offered as one meriting serious attention. Further, the claims of an argument will typically address either the beliefs one holds about states of affairs or the appropriateness of social norms, rules, or evaluations.²⁰ Regardless of their content, however, assertions must warrant the consideration of others to be treated as argumentative claims.

Of course, some assertions are offered nonseriously; for example, those assertions made within what symbolic interactionist theorists term an explicit pretense awareness context.²¹ Such assertions make no claim on belief and are ordinarily better described as belonging to some other genre of communicative acts; narrative, satire, jokes, etc. This is not to deny that certain examples of these forms may be profitably treated and analyzed as argument; indeed, many such works virtually demand such analysis.

It should be clear from this perspective that discourse is not included or excluded from the set of phenomena described as argument merely by virtue of its inclusion in some other genre of communicative acts (e.g., novels, scientific theories, poems, political treatises, etc.). Rather, it is the nature of the assertion put forward that is of concern in deciding whether or not the discourse is usefully described as argument. Further, it may be perfectly justifiable to treat certain symbolic phenomena, say, the lyrics of a song, as both argument and poetic expression.

Where the claim may be plausibly ignored or dismissed without consideration, it is certainly problematic as to how the message should

be described. Willard indexes this problem by enclosing "argument" in quotation marks whenever he uses it in an expanded, unusual, or metaphorical sense. Communicative acts in which assertions are not seriously put forward, however, may be construed as offering or supporting a type of claim, but these are not usefully regarded as arguments.

2. *Arguments are organized around the defense of the claim.* For an argument to be made, it is not enough for a claim or assertion to be put forward; there also must be reasons given for believing it. An argument is composed of a claim and a statement or set of statements, adduced *in its support*. This proposition defines argument as reason-giving discourse.²²

Now the reasons given in support of a claim may not always be made explicit in discourse. A mugger who shouts, "Hands up or I'll shoot!" certainly puts forth a serious claim on our belief. The reasons offered in support of his claim are not typically made linguistically explicit, however; rather, reasons are expressed by the assailant's desperate look, his intimidating manner, and the presence of a gun pointed at one's midsection.

Of course, reasons may be given implicitly in a less dramatic fashion. The traditional understanding of discourse as enthymematic supports this view. To counter Willard, however, one must add that simply because much discourse is typically enthymematic does not mean that the implied reasons are beyond the guess of a critic; it means, rather, that the critic simply must be sensitive to the context or field in which arguments occur.

3. *The movement from support to assertion involves an inferential leap.* The point being made here is both obvious and familiar. In order for a bit of discourse to be called an argument, it is necessary not only for the data to be relevant to the assertion, but that the assertion in some sense goes beyond the data. Sets of propositions in which one statement is contained in another are not ordinarily referred to as arguments. Toulmin apparently concurs on this point:

If the purpose of an argument is to establish conclusions about which we are entirely confident by relating them back to other information about which we have greater assurance, it begins to be a little doubtful whether any genuine, practical argument

could ever be properly analytic. Mathematical arguments alone seem entirely safe ... but they could hardly be less representative.²³

Thus neither "Jim is 6 feet tall and John is 5 feet tall, so Jim is taller than John" nor "Jim is taller than John, so John is shorter than Jim" is an argument in anything but the most trivial sense. The relevant distinction here, following Toulmin, is not whether an argument is inductive or deductive, but rather whether the claim is merely a restatement of data or backing. To qualify as an argument against this criterion it is necessary only that the claim not be reducible to the data or backing separately.

The occurrence of this "inferential leap" defines, in a certain sense, the central problem of the critic and argumentation theorist: the examination of how statements offered in connection with each other are made coherent, how the relevance of one statement to another is displayed. Jürgen Habermas recently has argued that warrants serve this vital function of producing coherence in an argument. He asserts that "warrants have nothing to do with the relation between single isolated sentences and reality, but above all only with the coherence between sentences within a language system."²⁴

These three criteria seem to establish the necessary and sufficient conditions for characterizing a piece of discourse as an argument₁. They are intended as a description of a class of communicative acts which are non-problematically referred to as argument. Understanding argument₁ in this way, as a particular kind of communicative act meeting the three criteria, is not in any way inconsistent with either a process view of communication or an interpretive perspective.

III

Willard's critique of argument diagrams does not directly address the issue of whether or not Toulmin diagramming is appropriate for the study of argument₁. In fact, he seems to focus his attack on those who would employ Toulmin's system to describe argument₂; only this interpretation is consistent with Willard's repeated criticism of individuals who use Toulmin's diagram as a model of cognitive processes. Because of this, and since he further presupposes a characterization

of argument which is ambiguously focused on the interactional sense of argument (argument_2), much of his critique simply misses the point. If the Toulmin diagram and similar systems are appropriate only for the analysis of argument₁, then criticisms regarding their shortcomings in describing argument₂ are irrelevant. The rejection of Willard's critique, however, does not establish the acceptability for the continued use of argument diagrams. Let us examine the actual utility of such models in light of other criticisms Willard presents.

First, Willard indicts argument diagrams because they encourage the critic "to impose the form of the diagram on that which s/he seeks to describe."²⁵ Certainly, manifestations of this unacceptable practice do appear in the field's literature; not all discourse is productively analyzed as argument. Such misuses are not an indictment of the Toulmin diagram *per se*, but rather are symptomatic of the failure of a particular theorist fully to appreciate the distinctions between Toulmin's theory and more traditional treatments of logic.²⁶ Simply because a few theorists make the error of assuming that Toulmin's conceptual system is isomorphic with the syllogism is no reason to abandon Toulmin; rather, it is reason to more carefully explicate Toulmin.

Second, Willard correctly points to the importance of context in analyses of arguments. However, his rather peculiar conception of context seems to preclude any type of formal analysis. It is certainly acceptable for theorists and critics to be concerned with both purely formal matters and form as embedded in a context. The following examples demonstrate the legitimacy of such concerns.

First, arguments in the abstract may be justifiably construed as objects whose formal properties are independent of any actual discourse. Theorists may develop a set of conceptual categories representing what they take to be the features common to all particular arguments, and then examine the formal relationships among them without reference to any specific example. Appropriate questions of this sort include such issues as whether or not qualifiers may be separated from claims, and whether reservations are more properly appended to claims or backing. To examine theoretic concepts in this fashion does no more violence to a process view of communication than does considering the formal adequacy of a set of grammatical rules.

Second, a proper application of formal schemes of analysis such as the Toulmin diagram requires consideration of social context. *The formal analysis of arguments depends upon understanding the meaning of the discourse, not the reverse.* This holds true, even though form in the abstract is context-independent, as demonstrated above. Even a superficial reading of *The Uses of Argument* is sufficient to establish that data and warrant cannot be identified apart from an understanding of context. Toulmin's notion of field-dependence further emphasizes the need to take account of context. That the Toulmin model does not necessarily subordinate contextual matters to matters of form is evidenced in the following example.

In a graduate seminar, Martin Fishbein made the argument, "A person can have beliefs about something he doesn't believe in [S-1]. Most people do not believe in unicorns [S-2], but nearly everyone can fill out a set of rating scales on the concept 'unicorns' [S-3]. And even an atheist can fill out a semantic differential on God [S-4]."²⁷

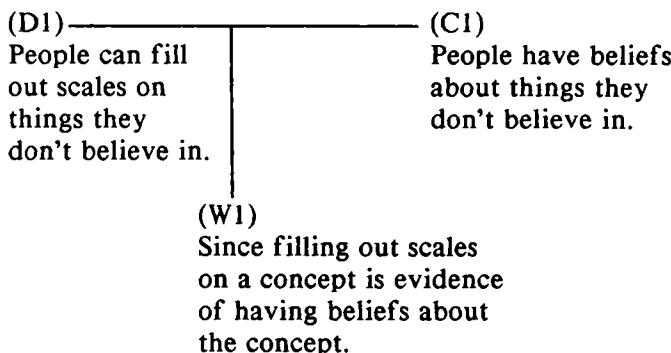
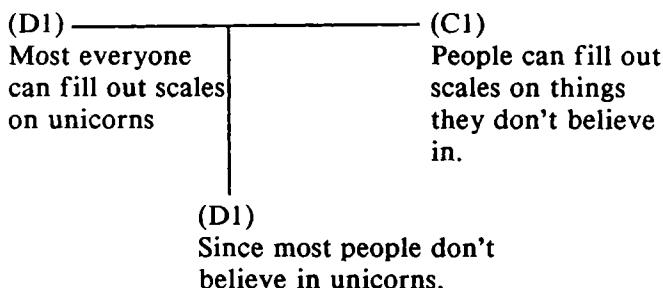
We need not construe this as an argument. Attending only to surface form and logical constraints, we may regard these sentences as a series of statements which are related only topically. Thus we might rephrase S-2 and S-3 to read "most people can fill out a set of rating scales on things (specifically unicorns) that they do not believe in," and regard S-1 and S-2 and 3 as simple parallel constructions which can be conjoined as follows: "Most people have beliefs about things they don't believe in *and also* most people can fill out rating scales on things they don't believe in." Under such an interpretation, the only link between "having a belief about" and "filling out a scale on" is that they are actions which, in some circumstances, are capable of being performed by the same subject.

Only by taking into account the context in which the remarks were made is it possible to display the sense in which they may be understood as an argument in support of the claim, "People can have beliefs about things they don't believe in." The Toulmin diagram provides a good collapsed description of the relevant contextual factors.

Now, what kind of contextual factors are represented implicitly in the diagram? To begin with, where is the recognition that this series of sentences is, in fact, an argument, and not only a series of topically related sentences. Its characterization as an argument results not from its surface form, but from the observation that all people present in the seminar appeared to believe that it was an argument. There

is additionally the fact that the interpretation embodied by the diagram can encompass other facts such as the occurrence of the statement, "And even an atheist can fill out a semantic differential on God." Finally, the diagram displays a connection between the sentences which is not present in text but was tacitly understood by all participants to the interaction. The particular warrant (W2) supplied in the diagram is corroborated by the knowledge that Fishbein is known to believe in its truth and to believe, moreover, that others believe its truth as well.

Facts such as these *must* be taken into account *before* a series of statements may be analyzed as an argument. And the usefulness of diagramming resides in the fact that it requires the critic to justify his interpretation in terms of such contextual considerations.



IV

The analysis presented in the previous section presumably has demonstrated the utility of models such as the Toulmin diagram in the analysis of arguments. It should be apparent, however, that legitimate use of such models requires that certain conditions be fulfilled. The following paragraphs seek, first, to detail more explicitly the conditions which model-users must meet, and, second to elaborate further certain features of the Toulmin system which make it an attractive tool for the critical interpretation of arguments.

If argumentation theorists are to provide anything uniquely insightful about the nature of discourse, then it must be because of their distinctive perspective as argumentation theorists. According to Toulmin, this perspective focuses on making "clear the functions of different propositions [in an argument] and the relevance of the different sorts of criticism which can be directed against it."²⁸ If we accept Toulmin's characterization, then the methods employed by theorists and critics ought to reflect a central concern with argument₁. With Toulmin's diagram this is certainly the case.

The first condition, then, which must be satisfied in using the Toulmin model is that it be applied to an analysis of arguments₁, not just any symbolic phenomena. Of course, the critic may have to defend the utility of studying certain symbolic phenomena from the perspective of argumentation theory by substantiating the assertion that something is, in practice, an argument₁ or that it may be construed so for some purpose. The conditions supplied earlier in this essay will, one hopes, prove helpful in this effort. Regardless, it is the responsibility of the theorist or critic to interpret propositions in such a fashion that their functions as claims, supports, and inference licenses are made apparent.

In this activity, the critic or theorist will usually confront such issues as the following: Did the source of a message intend to make an argument? Did audience members understand that an argument was being presented? What factors legitimate the treatment of some piece of discourse as an argument by the critic? Such questions inevitably lead to the consideration of contextual factors. Thus a second condition presupposed by Toulmin's model is the careful consideration of the

context from which units of analysis are drawn, for it is the context which gives meaning to statements as features of an argument.

In one sense, Willard is correct in asserting that argument has "no existence apart from the individuals who use it."²⁹ Those who attempt to analyze "arguments" without paying heed to the contexts from which they are drawn are certainly "doing nothing more significant than drawing pictures of lines on sheets of paper."³⁰ But although some critics and theorists may be legitimately reproached for their failure to respect contextual factors, there is nothing intrinsic about Toulmin's diagram which "forces us to rip propositions out of context."³¹ Toulmin himself is quite clear on this point. He explains that diagrammed or "micro" arguments "need to be looked at from time to time with one eye on the macro arguments in which they figure, since the precise manner in which we phrase them and set them out, to mention only the least important thing, may be affected by the role they have to play in the larger context."³² The example presented in the previous section should be sufficient evidence to demonstrate how the diagram can be used in a context-sensitive manner.

Further, Toulmin's notion of field-dependence is a particularly useful and insightful way of conceptualizing context. Properly understood, the Toulmin diagram leads critics and theorists to consider what may be termed the *substantive context* of an argument. Traditionally, conceptions of context have referred to those fluid, surface features of an immediate situation. Hence, discussions of context have analyzed such factors as opportunities for interaction among participants, physical characteristics of the speaking situation, source and audience perceptions of one another, events immediately preceding and following the interaction episode, and so on. While important, such factors respect only the more superficial features of situations in which argument occurs.

The equally important notion of substantive context refers to the meaning structure, universe of discourse, or language game in which arguments arise. This context is a locus of ideas and relationships among ideas shared among members of a community. A consideration of this context dictates concern with issues such as: What constitute believable and relevant data and backings? What kinds of claims legitimately can be put forth? What factors determine the extent to which claims must be qualified? What types of warrants are permis-

sible? Obviously, this list could be extended to encompass a variety of similar issues.

The substantive context, either implicitly or explicitly, provides the criteria against which the merits of an argument should be evaluated. Each language game is a locus of communally shared and tested standards of intelligibility, truth, sincerity, and correctness - the components of rationality which all good arguments must meet.³³ The substantive context thus provides critics and theorists with important clues as to how ideas, concepts, propositions, and arguments are interpreted and utilized within a given community. Unlike transient and ephemeral interactional contexts, substantive contexts are relatively stable and enduring.³⁴ Insofar as the critic or theorist is sensitive to this latter context, he avoids being forced to "arbitrarily" assign meaning to propositional elements. If the assignment of meaning were truly arbitrary, then the possibility of rational human communication certainly would be eliminated.

Conclusion

Descriptive diagrams are a powerful method of analysis. Like any good method, diagrams make certain assumptions about the nature of phenomena to which they are applied. If these assumptions are not understood or respected, then argument diagrams can and will most certainly be misused. However, simply because argument diagrams have the potential to be abused by the unreflective is no reason to give them up as tools of analysis and criticism. Rather, that is cause for theorists and critics to become more aware and respectful of the assumptions made by the method. In part, this essay has attempted to explicate some of the more important assumptions made in using the Toulmin model. To be employed effectively, this tool must be applied only to those phenomena O'Keefe calls argument₁, and the nature of the context in which the argument is made must be respected at all times. It is important to recognize that contexts include substantive factors as well as interactional elements.

Further, it is unfair to criticize a method for being inapplicable to phenomena it makes no pretension of accommodating. Thus, most of Willard's criticism regarding the use of descriptive diagrams in the analysis and criticism of arguments are both inappropriate and irrelevant. It has been demonstrated that most of these criticisms stem

from Willard's confusion of argument₁ and argument₂. He thus criticizes argument diagrams for not being useful ways to study human interaction processes, a use for which they were never intended. Argumentation theorists and critics must realize the significant differences between argument₁ and argument₂, and show respect for these differences in both their conceptual and methodological tools.

Notes

1. These attempts have ranged from exploratory probes to extensive, systematic treatises. See, for example, Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969); Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958); Douglas Ehninger, "Argument as Method: Its Nature, Its Limitations, and Its Uses," *Speech Monographs*, 37 (June 1970), 101-110; Wayne E. Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 9 (Spring 1975), 179-182; and the essays contained in Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (eds.), *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation* (University Park, Pa.: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1965); and Gerald R. Miller and Thomas Nilsen (eds.) *Perspectives on Argumentation* (Chicago: Scott, Foresman, and Co., 1966).
2. Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Winter 1977), 127.
3. Charles Arthur Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1976), 308-319.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 319.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 308.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 312.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 317.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 312.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 314.
11. *Ibid.*
12. For an explication of the concept of "psycho-logic," see Robert P. Abelson and Milton J. Rosenberg, "Symbolic Psycho-Logic: A Model of Attributional Cognition," *Behavioral Science*, 3 (1958), 1-8. Also see Jesse G. Delia; "The Logic Fallacy, Cognitive Theory, and the Enthymeme: A Search For the Foundations of Reasoned Discourse," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 140-148.
13. Willard, "On the Utility," p. 314.
14. See Charles Arthur Willard, "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument: The Constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (1978), 121-140; and Willard, "Argument as Non-Discursive Symbolism," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (1978), 187-193. Willard is employing the distinction offered by O'Keefe. See fn. 2 above.
15. Wayne Brockriede, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 129-130.
16. The constitutive conditions of, normative matters pertaining to, and the relation between argument₁ and argument₂ are treated systematically in a forthcoming essay: Brant R. Burleson, "Argument, Arguing, and the Discipline of Argumentation: Some Descriptive and Normative Considerations," in preparation.
17. For elaborations of such distinctions, see Maurice Natanson, "The Claims of Immediacy," in Natanson and Johnstone, pp. 10-19; Joseph W. Wenzel, "The Three Senses of Argument," unpublished manuscript, Department of Speech Communication, University of Illinois; and O'Keefe.
18. O'Keefe, p. 121.

19. Ibid., p. 127.
20. This notion is developed by the German philosopher and social theorist, Jürgen Habermas. See Jürgen Habermas, "Toward a Theory of Communicative Competence," in *Recent Sociology*, No. 2 ed. Hans Peter Dreitzel (New York: Macmillan, 1970); Habermas, "Some Distinctions in Universal Pragmatics," *Theory and Society*, 3 (1976), 155-167; and Habermas, *Theories of Truth*, trans. Richard Grabau (unpublished manuscript, Department of Philosophy, Purdue University). Habermas's theory is explicated in T.A. McCarthy, "A Theory of Communicative Competence." *Philosophy of Social Science*, 3 (1973), 135-156; and Anthony Giddens, "Habermas's Social and Political Theory" *American Journal of Sociology*, 83 (1977), 198-212.
21. "Pretence awareness contexts" are characterized by interactants implicitly agreeing not to challenge each other's moods and declarations, and instead acting as if they fully understand one another, when, in fact, they are only pretending. See Alfred R. Lindesmith, Anselm L. Strauss, and Norman K. Denzin, *Social Psychology*, 4th ed. (Hinsdale, IL.: The Dryden Press, 1975). pp. 412-416, 458.
22. Obviously, this definition of argument is not novel. For example, Rieke and Sillars define an argument as "a statement with the support for it." See Richard D. Rieke and Malcolm O. Sillars, *Argumentation and the Decision Making Process* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1975), p. 48. Also, see Brockriede, "Characteristics of Argument," p. 130.
23. Toulmin, p. 127.
24. Habermas, *Theories of Truth*, p. 26. Habermas's notion is similar to Toulmin's treatment of warrants as "inference-licenses"; Toulmin describes warrants as "general, hypothetical statements, which can act as bridges, and authorize the sort of step to which our particular argument commits us," p. 98. Warrants, then, serve to make the relevance of statements to one another (such as data and claim) clear.
25. Willard, "On the Utility," p. 314-315.
26. The distinction between Toulmin's historical-descriptive logic and traditional formal logics has apparently not been recognized by several critics. For example, Cowan criticizes Toulmin because "he

has not shown how conformity to the forms and procedures he outlines does provide any support or justification at all" [Joseph L. Cowan, "The Uses of Argument - An Apology for Logic," *Mind*, 73 (1964), 31]; while Manicas maintains that Toulmin's attacks on deduction and validity are incorrect since "with respect ... to formal validity one can decide if an argument is valid or invalid solely on the basis of its logical form" (Peter T. Manicas, "On Toulmin's Contribution to Logic and Argumentation," in *Contemporary Theories of Rhetoric: Selected Readings*, ed. Richard L. Johannesen (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 266]. Both criticisms seem to miss Toulmin's central thesis that the notions of logical form and formal validity are inappropriate and irrelevant criteria to assess the merits of the vast majority of arguments people make; the question of validity, for Toulmin, is always a field-bound matter.

27. I am indebted to Sally Jackson of the University of Illinois for suggesting this example and much of the attending analysis.

28. Toulmin p.9.

29. Willard "On the Utility," p. 313.

30. Ibid., p. 313. Brockriede makes a similar point in contending that "human activity does not usefully constitute an argument until some person perceives what is happening as an argument" ("Where is Argument," p. 179]. This position seems consistent with the perspective developed above; no utterance may be regarded intrinsically as an argument, for arguments are always construed in discourse by persons.

31. Willard, "On the Utility," p. 318.

32. Toulmin, p. 94. Somewhat later in his work Toulmin makes a similar comment also relevant to this issue:

Certainly language as we know it consists, not of timeless propositions, but of utterances dependent in all sorts of ways on the context or occasion on which they are uttered. Statements are made in particular situations, and the interpretation to be put upon them is bound up with their relation to these situations.... The ways in which statements and utterances require to be criticized and assessed reflect this fact [p.180].

33. Habermas argues that all communicative action rests on a "background consensus" which presupposes the sincerity and correctness of speakers, and the intelligibility and truth of statements. For a defense of this view, see the references cited in fn. 17.
34. For an analysis of the stability of such contexts see the discussion of "disciplines" in Stephen Toulmin, *Human Understanding*, vol. 1 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), *passim*.

Chapter 15

Dramatism and Argument

Charles W. Kneupper

Among twentieth century rhetorical theorists it is a commonplace to characterize Kenneth Burke as among the truly eminent. It is also safe to characterize Dramatism as the most fully developed and widely influential modern rhetorical theory. To risk a single bold speculation, it seems probable that Dramatism is the only contemporary rhetorical theory which has attracted sufficient adherents and exerted significant interdisciplinary influence to be expected to exert continuing influences on rhetorical scholarship into the twenty-first century.

Dramatism, which Burke describes as "a method of analysis and a corresponding critique of terminology designed to show that the most direct route to the study of human relations and human motives is via a methodical inquiry into cycles or clusters of terms and their functions"¹ is a loosely constructed theory. It seems fair to characterize the Burkean corpus as a series of enduring concerns, illuminating insights, occasional segments of thoroughly articulated theory, unified by some broad metaphorical commitments, with a general sense of overall coherence. The *looseness* is that much of the coherence is implicit and intuitive, rather than explicitly derived from the theory. Thus, Dramatism is not comprehensive, not fully articulated, and should not be regarded as in final form. Burke is the pioneer of Dramatism, but the perspective will endure beyond him. Burke's formulations remain a rich ground for further elaboration as a grand theory of rhetoric and for use in application to more particular communication problems and concerns.

Despite the considerable impact which Dramatism has had on the practice of rhetorical criticism, it is somewhat curious that the theory and method have had considerably less application directly to argumentation theory and criticism. One obvious reason for this relative lack of application is that "argument" is not among the central terms or

focal concerns of Dramatism. In the corpus of Dramatism, Burke does not display an explicit focus on argument forms and processes. And despite the widely disseminated view that Burke's analysis shows that various philosophic schools tend to center their arguments in one or another of the pentadic terms,² argument has little prominence in Burke's writings and does not even appear in the index of many of his works.

I view the absence of a concern with argument as a deficiency in the level of explicit development of Dramatism. It is not a sign of deficiency of the basic principles of Dramatism. Rather, it plausibly reflects Burke's coming to rhetoric through literature. His attention to understanding literary and poetic form to an extent deflected his attention from argumentative forms. Many of the insights are convergent, but the explicit application remains to be done.

On the other hand, the absence of application of Dramatism to argument is not solely due to Burke's failure to deal explicitly with the concept argument: it is also due to the failure of argumentation scholars to creatively apply the perspective to their own focal concerns. The tenets of Dramatism are compatible with both notions of argument-as-structure and argument-as-interaction. Moreover, Burke's notions of form, strategy, social cooperation and competition seem directly relevant to understanding argument in human situations. Further, Burke is implicitly concerned with argument and the concept of *ratios* does much of the work required of the construct argument in traditional theories of rhetoric.

In beginning to examine some of the relationships of Dramatism to argument, I shall proceed in the following manner. First, it will be necessary to explain the concept of *language-as-motive* as a crucial background understanding of Dramatism. Second, the dramatistic pentad and the ratio concept will be examined and related to argument. Finally, heuristic implications for using the pentad and ratio concept to generate argument will be discussed.

I

Motive is among the key elements of Dramatism. Its centrality is suggested by its presence in the titles of such major works as *A Grammar of Motives*, *A Rhetoric of Motives*, and the still in process *A Sym-*

bolic of Motives. Further, an examination of the Burkean corpus will show that problems of motive recur throughout all of his scholarly works. The problems of motive and of the role of language, symbols, and communication in human motivation are enduring concerns in the evolution of Dramatism. However, Dramatism has a special view of language. Burke explains that:

"We might begin by stressing the distinction between a 'scientific' and a 'dramatic' approach to the nature of language. A 'scientific' approach begins with the question of *naming*, or *definition*. Or the power of language to define and describe may be viewed as derivatative; and its essential function may be treated as attitudinal or hortatory: attitudinal as with expression of complaint, fear, gratitude, and such; hortatory as with commands or requests, or in general, an instrument developed through its use in the social processes of cooperation and competition ... Such considerations are involved in what I mean by 'dramatistic,' stressing language as an aspect of 'action,' that is, as 'symbolic action.'"³

It is Dramatism's stress on the action and motivational dimensions of language which make its view distinctive.

The implications of this view are derived from Burke's famous definition of man as the symbol-using animal "rotten with perfection."⁴ The motivating significance of language is derived from the clause "rotten with perfection." Burke explains that "there is a principle of perfection implicit in the nature of symbol systems; and in keeping with his nature as symbol-using animal, man is moved by this principle." The principle is "central to the nature of language as motive."⁵ Burke described an aspect of this principle as "a kind of 'terministic compulsion' to carry out the implications of one's terminology."⁶ Notice that Burke views *language as motive*, and not language as evoking or reflecting motive. In Dramatism, language constitutes motive.

Implicitly contrasting the dramatistic view of motive with those which would be scientific and positivist, Burke explains that "A motive is not some fixed thing, like a table which one can go and look at. It is a term of interpretation, and being such it will naturally take its place within the framework of our *Weltanschauung* as a whole."⁷ Our *Weltanschauung* acts as our orientation to reality, both material

and social. It is a "bundle of judgments as to how things were, how they are, and how they may be. The act of response, as implicated in the character an event has for us, shows clearly the integral relationship between our metaphysics and our conduct. For in a statement as to how the world is, we have implicit judgment not only as to how the world may become but also as to what means we should employ to make it so."⁸ Our orientation determines how we characterize events and therefore our motives toward events. As Burke explains it:

"Any given situation derives its character from the entire framework of interpretation by which we judge it. And differences in our ways of sizing up an objective situation are expressed subjectively as differences in our assignment of motive. But the question of motive brings us to the subject of communication, *since motives are distinctly linguistic products*. We discern situational patterns by means of the particular vocabulary of the cultural group into which we are born."⁹

Thus, "since we characterize a situation with reference to our general scheme of meanings, it is clear how motives, as shorthand terms for situations, are assigned with reference to our orientation in general."¹⁰

For example, if two persons were to observe the actual objective event in which a crew of construction workers tear down an old house, and one describes the event as "progress" while the other describes it as "the wasteful destruction of a historic and cultural resource," then quite significant differences of orientation and motives are implied. Both descriptions are strategic interpretations of reality. As Burke notes "strategies size up the situations, name their structure and outstanding ingredients, and name them in a way that contains an attitude toward them."¹¹ The "progress" observer has a favorable/supportive attitude toward the act witnessed. The "wasteful destruction of a historic and cultural resource" observer has an unfavorable, perhaps objecting attitude toward the same objective event. Moreover, as public statements of motive, they invite either cooperative or competitive participation from others. When stated together, the two motives are in competition. They seem incompatible and to require choice of which view to cooperate with and correspondingly with which view to compete with. But, each speaker is inviting cooperation.

In such situations the speakers might seek to influence each other. Burke notes that "when we wish to influence a man's response... we emphasize factors which he had understressed or neglected, and minimize factors which he had laid great weight upon. This amounts to nothing other than an attempt to redefine the situation itself."¹² Note that the situation is always strategically defined in language, but that through communication alternative constructions may be presented. To redefine the situation is to alter orientation and concomitantly reshape motive. All this occurs linguistically. One's motive, strategy, attitude, definition of the situation are all determined in the context of the orientation provided by the *Weltanschauung*, which should be viewed as a complex system of verbal equations. The "progress" observer may wish to stress the benefits which will eventually result. The "wasteful destruction" observer may wish to stress the sense of historic continuity and culture the house provided. The chances are that in the ensuing communication, both observers will be changed. If they listen to each other, both will discover factors they had not attended to. They may not convert to the other's motive, but they will better understand it.

The Dramatistic view of language as motive is subtle and distinct from psychological theories of motive which view language merely as evoking or activating some physiological drive (hunger, thirst, sex, etc.) which is the "true" motive. Although Dramatistic theory does not deny physiological drives, it views such theories as reductionist. Burke explained that:

"Once words are added ... the purely biological nature of pleasure, pain, love, hate, fear is quite transcended, since all are perceived through the coloration that the inveterate human involvement with words impart to them. And the same is true of all sheer bodily sensations, which are likewise affected by the new order of motivation made possible (and inevitable!) once this extra odd dimension is added to man's natural animality. From this point on, no matter what man's motives might be in their nature as sheerly animal, they take on a wholly new aspect, as defined by the resources and embarrassment of symbolism."¹³

The view of language as motive links language to action and attitude (incipient action). This link is vital to any rhetorical theory which attempts to explain human behavior which occurs as a consequence

of linguistic communication. For argumentation theorists, this link is vital to any claim that adherence to argument forms is part of the social ordering process for constituting human motivation.

II

The Dramatistic Pentad is probably the most important of Burke's methodological contributions. The pentad is intended as a tool for the methodical analysis of motive as present in human discourse. The pentad consists of the five terms: Scene, Act, Agent, Agency, and Purpose. These terms act as categories "which human thought necessarily exemplifies."¹⁴ In a loose sense, the terms of the pentad may be said to refer to Where, What, Who, How and Why respectively. That these terms have been the heuristic hub of journalism is a commonplace. However, the pentad as a powerful analytic tool loses much when reduced to these references. It is of little consequence to point out that "talk about experience" will necessarily use terms referring to the where, who, how, what, or why of the *experience*. Such an observation is true, but trivial.

The analytic power of the pentad is inextricably linked to the concept of "ratio." Writing etymologically concerning the term, Burke states:

"The first meaning for *ratio* given in Harper's dictionary refers to the reckoning, calculating, and computing of things. Derivatively it came to signify business matters, transactions, affairs. Then respect, regard, consideration for things. Then course, conduct, procedure, manner, method. The conditions or nature of something could be called its *ratio*. Finally we move into such meanings as the faculty of mental action, judgement, understanding, reason. Thence to reasonableness, law, rule, order. And finally, theory, doctrine, system, based on reason, science, knowledge."¹⁵

Although the term argument is not explicit in this range of meanings, the stress on method and reason suggest it is promising ground. Ultimately, in Dramatism a *ratio* is the nature of a motive. Outside of the presence of ratios there is no assessment of motive. In suasive discourse, *ratios* are the sources of formal appeal. They are implicitly argument forms. At times, they can be explicit.

Burke describes a ratio as a principle of determination, as a principle of selectivity rather than causality, as a form necessarily exemplified in imputing motive, and as essentially analogical.¹⁶ For example, Edward Kennedy in his address to explain events surrounding the death of Mary Jo Kopechne stated: "Little over a mile away the car that I was driving on an *unlit road* went off a *narrow bridge* which had *no guard rails* and was built on a *left angle* to the road. The car overturned into a *deep pond* and immediately filled with water."¹⁷ This short quotation is filled with scenic references, which *imply* a dominating influence of the scene in producing the accident. This dominance of one pentadic term over others is always present in a ratio. This particular ratio implicitly makes the scene the determining/responsible factor producing the accident. Yet, the characterization of the event in terms of the scene is a matter of selectivity. Clearly, unlit roads, etc. do not necessarily cause accidents. If Kennedy were to argue explicitly in causal terms, then any time late at night when he drives on unlit roads with narrow bridges with no guard rails built on left angles to the road, he should have an accident. If argued explicitly this ratio loses plausibility. Yet, the scenic analogy holds "the nature of the act is implicit, or analogously present in the nature of the scene."¹⁸ Such conditions as Kennedy mentions provide the potentiality for such accidents and are plausible contributing factors. Finally, in imputing motive, this description by selectively stressing scenic elements tends to place responsibility on the scene and thereby deflects responsibility from Kennedy as agent. In this respect, it constitutes a rhetorical strategy designed to absolve Kennedy of responsibility, despite his verbal acceptance of responsibility earlier in his address. Pentadic analysis reveals where Kennedy places the motivating stresses. Evaluation of this implicit argument would raise the question of the accuracy of the selectivity and the potential contributions attention to other pentadic terms and ratios might have allowed.

The ratio concept is critical to the power of pentadic analysis of motive, because motive is not assigned except in the presence of a ratio. In a statement such as "I was driving down an unlit road" there is no ratio. There is no sense of controlling motive even though there are agent, act, and scene references. Only when there is a sense of one term controlling or dominating others is a ratio present. There are many possible ratios. Basically, any pairing of the terms of the pentad can result in a ratio. There are at least twenty possible ratio combinations. As this number is too large to illustrate exhaustively, I have selected to illustrate only the five act ratios. In doing so, I will

be providing simple examples of the form each such ratio could take. Although in these examples the ratios are expressed in single sentences, it is possible for ratios to be distributed throughout a larger segment of discourse. The key identifying factor is discovering a sense of dominance of one term over others.

Ratio Illustrations

RATIO	EXAMPLE
SCENE-ACT	Given the circumstances, what else could we do? or Given the circumstances, no other action was possible.
AGENT-ACT	From such a person, you would expect such acts. or From Richard Nixon, you would expect lies and deception. or From a miser, you will get excessive frugality to save money.
AGENCY-ACT	Given a hammer, everything will be treated like a nail. or In a bureaucracy it takes a long time to get decisions made.
PURPOSE-ACT	In order to get x, we must do y. or In order to achieve peace with honor, we must negotiate a settlement with x conditions. or In order to achieve economic prosperity, we must fully adopt the Reagan economic package.
ACT-ACT	I hit him because he hit me. or The fall of the first domino resulted in a chain reaction.

In each of these examples, you should have a sense of some antecedent factor which results in motivating the consequential act. The act is thus prompted by and explained in terms of the antecedent factor. Any of these statements could be regarded as an argument claim in which the ratio provides justification. It is not a logical sense of justification, but a motivational sense which the ratio's provide. Ratios are thus argument forms. They are persuasive. They require both attention and critical evaluation.

III

The development of Dramatism has been almost without exception in application to rhetorical analysis and criticism. Burke and his followers have devoted comparatively little attention to the application of Dramatism to the composing process or to the question of whether the theory can function as a technical art for guiding the production of discourse.¹⁹ If Dramatism can function productively, then it would have to function as a heuristic. As Richard Young explains: "A heuristic procedure provides a series of questions or operations whose results are provisional; it helps us more effectively ... Although systematic heuristic search is neither purely conscious nor mechanical; intuition, relevant experience and skill are necessary for effective use."²⁰ The dramatistic pentad and pentadic ratios can serve such a heuristic function for suasive discourse in the creation of either explicit or implicit argument forms. Basically, the pentad provides a system of perspectives from which reality may be viewed. Moreover, the ratios offer a variety of strategies for motivational justification.

For instance, if one is planning to attempt to induce social cooperation through motivational justification in support of some policy, then the pentad may be heuristically employed to insure the consideration of a multiplicity of perspectives. How appropriate is the policy to the scene? What in the scene calls for the policy? How will the policy change the scene? Who will implement the policy? Are they capable of effectively implementing the policy? What must be done to implement the policy? After implementation, what will the policy require by way of continuing action? Are resources to implement and act on the policy available, operational? Why is the policy desirable? What does the policy seek to achieve? A consideration of questions of this nature will assure the policy advocate of a broad range of arguments to support the policy as well as with the potential to an-

ticipate counter-arguments. Moreover, it enables the generation of ratios from which the most persuasive may be selected. Certainly questions of this sort are not new to the policy advocate. Yet, because these questions are generated from the pentad, it demonstrates the power and elegance of the system. It should not surprise us that competing theories have many commonalities. The behavior of people doesn't change from theory to theory; only the elegance with which that behavior is explained. In regard to motivation to act, Burke provides at least the five act ratios examined in the previous section as focal points for developing a rhetorical strategy. The act may be motivated by antecedent scene, act, agent, agency or purpose. In a sense, a pentadic ratio is an implicit argument and the list of ratios can function similarly to the Aristotelian *topoi* as places to look for justification.

Further, the pentad may also serve a heuristic function in adapting discourse to particular audiences. Burke notes that conservatives tend to argue from agent, liberals tend to argue from scene, realists from act, pragmatists from agency, and mystics and idealists from purpose. Insofar as terms from these categories are central to the arguments of these various groups, it follows that they are also pivotal terms from which each group interprets reality and also that each group is most susceptible to argument centered in that term. In a sense, to argue from the central interpretative terms of a group is to argue *in terms which they can identify with*. It is in this way that a linguistic consubstantiality is formed between speaker and audience. Thus, a speaker or writer who can characterize an audience as conservative, liberal, pragmatic, realist, or idealist can adapt his motive appeals to the terminology most "justificatory" to that audience.

In my own experience within the academe, I have found the pentad a useful tool for discourse adaptation. I tend to find my colleagues on the faculty liberal and idealistic on educational issues. They seem most receptive to scene and purpose ratios. In contrast, administrators seem dominantly realist and pragmatist and are correspondingly more attuned to act and agency ratios. Finally, students seem conservative and idealistic and are moved by agent and purpose ratios. Put in more concrete terms, in proposing a new course the faculty is motivated by "justifications" concerning educational purpose and responsiveness to the social scene. Administrators are somewhat interested in these ratios but are not moved to action by them. Administrators are motivated by justifications which demonstrate the feasibility of the

act within the constraints of the agency. In other words, I need to show the course is staffable with minimal cost and will probably generate substantial FTE. Finally, students are attracted to courses partially by their nature, but also by whom they are taught. They choose courses by what they are and the attraction of who is teaching the course.

Interestingly, I also find that when ratios are not appropriately related to the respective audiences that non-responsiveness and sometimes impatience is a result. Faculty tend to be uninterested in the details of administration. Administration has some interest in purpose, but wants to get to the nitty-gritty questions of agency. Motivation to action is expedited by audience adaptation. In a well thought out proposal, a rounded statement of motive will include appeals to each respective decision making group.

Summary

This paper has examined some implications of Dramatism for argument. In particular, the view of language-as-motive was explained: the dramatistic pentad and ratios were explained as implicit arguments for motivational justification; and implications for the use of the pentadic ratios as a heuristic procedure for generating arguments or adapting them to particular audiences was discussed. Further explorations of Dramatism should be undertaken in a continuing effort to exploit this perspective for the implications it has for enriching our understanding of certain dimensions of argument. Burke's notions of form and strategy are particularly rich concepts that might be examined.

Notes

1. Kenneth Burke, "Dramatism," *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*. David L. Sills (ed.), (New York: Macmillan and the Free Press, 1968), 445.

2. see Kenneth Burke. *A Grammar of Motives*. Part II.

3. Kenneth Burke. *Language as Symbolic Action*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1966), 44.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 19.
7. Kenneth Burke. *Permanence and Change*. (Los Altos: Hermes, 1954), 25.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 35.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
11. Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of Literary Form*. (New York: Vintage Books, 1957), p.3.
12. Burke, *Permanence and Change*, 220.
13. Kenneth Burke, *Attitudes Toward History*. (Los Altos: Hermes, 1959), 373.
14. Kenneth Burke, *A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives*. (Cleveland: World Publishing Co., 1962), 317.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 151.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 15, 18, 402, 444.
17. Edward Kennedy quoted in David A. Ling. "A Pentadic Analysis of Senator Edward Kennedy's Address to the People of Massachusetts, July 25, 1969," *Central States Speech Journal*, XXI (1970), 84. I am indebted to Prof. Ling for the general line of analysis of Kennedy's statement.
18. Burke. *A Grammar of Motives*, 444.

19. Some recent attempts to apply Burke to composition include: Howard Byker and Loren J. Anderson. *Communication as Identification*. (New York: Harper and Row, 1975); William F. Irmscher. *The Holt Guide to English*. (New York: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1976); and W. Ross Winterowd. *The Contemporary Writer*. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Jovanovich, 1975).
20. Richard Young, "Invention: A Topographical Survey," in *Teaching Composition: 10 Bibliographical Essays*. Gary Tate (Ed.) (Fort Worth: Texas Christian University Press, 1976), 2.

Introduction: Evaluating Argument

One way to view scholars who study argumentation is to suggest that they are driven by one of two fundamental motives: to understand the nature of argument as it is practiced by advocates in the real world (a descriptive approach), and to improve the practice or quality of argument (a prescriptive approach). Of course, these two goals are not mutually exclusive; in fact, it is impossible to know how to improve people's skill at an activity without describing their current practices and problems (although it is certainly possible to describe argument without attempting to evaluate or improve it). This section is devoted to scholars who are avowedly interested in evaluating argument.

It becomes obvious after spending a little time studying this area that it isn't enough to ask the general question, "Was the argument good?" The problem that emerges is illustrated when critics attempt to evaluate an effective but reviled advocate, like Hitler. If you look at the effects or success of his speeches and arguments, you have to conclude that he was a "good" advocate. However, if you look at what he argued for (superiority of the Aryan race, world conquest), you have to say he was a "bad" advocate. So, simply using words like "good" or "bad" without further elaboration is too general to be of much use in evaluating persuasive arguments.

Arguments can be evaluated in different ways, and a positive evaluation of an advocate or a set of arguments on one dimension is no guarantee of a positive judgment on another. In the example just mentioned, the first evaluation is one of effectiveness or persuasiveness, and the second is a judgment of ethics or morality. However, those who study arguments are often interested in something different than either of these. Argument critics, while they may address one or both of these two concerns as secondary (but still undeniably important questions), are interested in the quality of the arguments themselves.

As discussed in the essay on the history of argument, Aristotle's syllogism can evaluate the formal validity of deductive arguments that use universal propositions ("All X are Y," "No A is a B"). However, as many writers have recognized, most arguments in the real world do not use language phrased as logic requires. Many scholars believe

that the rules of the syllogism are just not relevant to most of the arguments that actually occur in the world around us.

McKerrow's article defines a valid argument as one that pragmatically justifies the belief expressed by the conclusion. He expressly does not equate validity with form (and thereby with formal validity). Even so, readers may recall Wenzel's criticism of McKerrow's use of "validity" in the essay reprinted in this Section (Ch. 16) McKerrow reviews and proposes a synthesis of three earlier approaches to assessing the validity of arguments: Toulmin (1958, 1972), Ehninger (1968), and Perelman (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).

Dale Hample's essay begins by positing three criteria for deciding whether an approach to evaluating arguments is acceptable: are the evaluations objective (not idiosyncratic), do they identify good arguments generally and specifically can they evaluate individual arguments as well, and can the quality of arguments be assessed before (or after) an argument is made to an audience? Hample then uses these criteria to examine (and reject) three approaches to evaluating arguments: using the public (e.g., Perelman's notion of the universal audience), formal logic, and Toulmin's field dependent standards for evaluating arguments.

The next two papers in this section are drawn from the area of argument inquiry generally known as informal logic. Instead of (or in addition to) developing standards for evaluating arguments, we can attempt to draw up lists of bad argument types. Then, when we encounter arguments, we can compare them with our list, and weed out the bad ones. But, this procedure doesn't guarantee that all arguments surviving the weeding-out process will be good ones. First, the list of bad arguments may not be complete; if it isn't, bad arguments can slip through. Second, it is possible that argument quality exists on a continuum (some arguments are very good, others are fairly good, etc.), rather than on a simple dichotomous judgment of valid/invalid or sound/unsound. If so, even if we could be sure an argument wasn't a bad one, it might not be very high on the scale of good ones. This project is undertaken by those who study fallacies.

One of the earliest, if not the earliest, theoretical discussions of bad arguments can be found in Aristotle's work, *On Sophistical Refutations*. The main problem with this approach, as suggested earlier, is that we cannot agree on a thorough list of fallacies. The essay by Ulrich also argues that some arguments that appear to be fallacies are not necessarily bad. Accordingly, he offers a new perspective on fallacies. He suggests that fallacies be viewed as arguments that

establish a claim with some probability, and that they possess generic weaknesses that can be used as *topoi* by argument critics.

Blair's essay can be seen as an introduction or survey of the informal logic approach to argumentation. He first discusses models of argument. Then he offers suggestions for identifying and isolating arguments in actual discourse, which of course is preliminary to evaluating them. Then, he discusses the business of assessing everyday arguments. He uses the term cogency (rather than validity or soundness), explaining that an argument is cogent for a person if that person accepts it as an "adequate basis" for the claim the argument is intended to support.

Because evaluating argument depends in part on an argument's form, this material is closely related to the section on argument diagrams in the previous section. Other essays on evaluating arguments can be found in essays by Benoit (1987) or Massey (1975). Van Eemeren and Grootendorst propose a method for making explicit unexpressed premises in everyday argument (1982; 1983). Van Eemeren also discusses two views of reasonableness in his essay *Argument Studies' Five Estates* (Ch. 32) While there are numerous essays on particular fallacies, more broadly-based treatments of fallacies include Damer (1980), Engell (1980, 1982), Hamblin (1970), and Woods and Walton (1972).

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Chapter 16

Rhetorical Validity: an Analysis of three Perspectives on the Justification of Rhetorical Argument

Ray E. McKerrow

Argumentative discourse is reason-giving activity. Except in rare instances, the reasons advanced do not provide absolute proof of the truth or rightness implied by the claim. In order that an advocate can accurately assess the efficacy of his discourse, a logic compatible with the requisites of such non-analytic activity is required. In more general terms, contemporary rhetorical theory requires a working logic compatible with the exigencies, constraints, and uncertainties governing situations defined as rhetorical.

Several theorists have proposed, in general outline, logics which stress an evaluation of non-analytic arguments: i.e., good reasons offered in support of a claim.¹ The criteria for assessing the validation of good reasons have been variously located in a field dependent concept of relevance,² in the values of society,³ in a persons recognition of his own moral obligation,⁴ and in an appeal to a universal audience.⁵ In each case, the particular criterion of rhetorical validity being utilized is embedded in a set of assumptions which provide the ground from which its application can spring. Each theorist's assumptive framework offers the advocate a perspective from which to make choices about the type of appeal he may advance, the kind of information he should present, and the possible reactions, based on the proper application of the criterion of rhetorical validity chosen, that he might expect from his respondent. Although limited by the level of "rhetorical sensitivity"⁶ possessed, the advocate has the opportunity to maximize his chances of success by a judicious selection of appeals and, with the cooperation of his respondent, the testing of those appeals by recourse to an appropriate standard of rhetorical validity.

In this essay, I shall argue, that, although the standards vary, they each operate on the assumption that arguments *justify* rather than *verify* their claims. In supporting this argument, I shall review attributes

common to rhetorical argument, propose a definition of rhetorical validity as *pragmatic justification*, and illustrate the operation of this generic definition within three contemporary approaches to the validation of rhetorical discourse. In addition, I shall argue that the determination of justification is premised on a common set of assumptions. Each perspective (1) assures a ratiocinative critique of argument, (2) operates independently from any "consubstantial" state between the participants, and (3) promotes a sense of self-risk which in objectifying the relationship between participants, denies rather than confers personhood on them.

1. Rhetorical Validity Defined

Four attributes common to the techniques of rhetorical argument can be identified. The first is obvious: the particular devices of argument function to provide form within a working logic for rhetorical discourse. Second, as techniques, they do not go beyond attempts at adherence to an endorsement of the user's state of being, his "selfhood" as it is exhibited or revealed through language. Any observation about the user's selfhood which is based solely on an analysis of his argumentative method is necessarily an inferential judgment.⁷

Third, the techniques of argument do not function as criteria for the validation of the substance which they carry; nor do they possess the conditions for their own use. Thus, the fact that an argument is causal rather than sign-based is not, in and of itself, sufficient ground for claiming greater probative force. Moreover, the conditions for the proper application of a particular criterion of validity, such as relevance or moral obligation, are distinct from the methods of argument.

Argument techniques share a final feature in common: they provide neither arbitrary nor compulsory reasons for the truth of rightness of a given perspective or position. Put another way, the forms or methods of argument do not guarantee with absolute certainty the truth of the substance which they carry. In a strict narrow sense, they do not function as forms of proof. Instead, they serve as pragmatic justifications for the adoption of a claim or the execution of an act. In this sense, arguments seek to justify my adoption of a belief in X, not to demonstrate the verifiability of X.⁸ The definition suggested by this nonverifiability condition can be phrased as follows: from a rhetorical perspective, *an argument is valid, if, and only if, it serves as a pragmatic justification for the adoption of a belief.*⁹ Conceived

in this fashion the definition focuses attention on the rhetorical in the object of evaluation: i.e. on content productive of belief rather than on form productive of validity. The determination of what constitutes *justification* in any given case depends on the particular criterion employed and on the prevailing conditions which must be justified in its application. The *pragmatic* nature of justification suggests that a listener has been given good reason to accept a claim and to act on its behalf. Thus, justification is not simply a product of given reasons, but of offering those reasons which will satisfy the hearer that adherence is an acceptable choice. Later events may indicate that the choice, and the concomitant adoption of a belief, was an error, but this in itself does not invalidate the initial adherence.

The above definition presupposes that a rhetorical sense of validity can be articulated and sustained as an alternative to the formal analysis of argumentative discourse.¹⁰ One potential objection to this presupposition is that the phrase "rhetorical validity" identifies our concerns with those of the logician, thereby focusing attention on the formal characteristics of the argument. If this occurs, rhetorical validity becomes a mere handmaiden of logic and the usefulness of distinguishing between the two is undermined. The creation of "soft logics," which are by definition inferior modes of analysis, misconstrues the impetus for conceiving of a rhetorical sense of validity apart from any other sense which could be established. A metaperspective on this problem demands that rhetorical validity and logical validity not be compared in terms of their respective efficacy, but that their biases in the evaluation of discourse be properly recognized; one exists for the determination of the bases of justifiable belief; the other exists for the determination of the constancy of one's reasoning.

A second potential objection to the presupposition is that the phrase "rhetorical validity" juxtaposes two contradictory terms - that one cannot speak of rhetoric and validity in the same breath. This view, however, construes validity too narrowly, preferring to perceive it as the sole province of logical demonstration. On the contrary, to say that an argument is "valid" is to indicate that it is capable of meeting certain tests. In Stephen D. Ross's words, "validation depends on the existence of a means for testing an object or action as to whether it meets particular standards."¹¹ There is nothing in this definition of the validation process which suggests that the standards *must* be drawn from logic or science. If questions concerning the acceptability of an argument can be initiated and answers can be appraised, a mechanism for validating the argument exists. In this context,

"rhetorical validity" has meaning as a validation mechanism only so long as the questions it generates can be differentiated from those contained in or generated by other mechanisms, most notably that of "logical validity."

The viability of "rhetorical validity" as a generic construct is evident in Stephen Toulmin's, Douglas Ehninger's, and Chaim Perelman's respective emphases on pragmatic rather than formal procedures in the analysis of arguments. The following review highlights their respective senses of "rhetorical validity" and prepares the way for an analysis of the common set of assumptions on which their perspectives are grounded.

2. Three Perspectives on Rhetorical Validity

Toulmin's "layout of argument"¹² is conceived in the spirit of ordinary language philosophy and is designed to bring philosophical disputes, and an evaluation of them, out of the realm of world-independent formal logic to a world-dependent realm of practical logic. With respect to Toulmin's view of argument, the important practical consideration is that the "analytic ideal" is often-times an inappropriate standard against which to measure the efficacy or validity of reasons offered in support of claims. He argues that we should demand of arguments "not that they shall measure up against analytic standards but, more realistically, that they shall achieve whatever sort of cogency or well-foundedness can *relevantly* be asked for in that field."¹³ Thus, the validity of substantive arguments must be measured in terms of the field in which they exist. The application of the criterion of relevance depends on at least two conditions: An individual must be familiar with the field in question, at least to the extent that he is aware of the linguistic conventions which might be involved in the assessment of argumentative assertions in that field; and he must also possess a working knowledge of the standards or criteria unique to that field.¹⁴

Seen in the context of these and other conditions which could be enumerated, the criterion of relevance does not relate to the kind or type of argument used, but instead to the question: Are the standards for assessment those which are appropriate in this particular situation?" If the argument satisfies these standards, it can be judged acceptable within its field, regardless of its efficacy in terms of standards drawn from other fields. By satisfying the criterion of relevance in this manner, arguments achieve that measure of rhetorical validity required

by the general construct: they provide good reasons, in the form of pragmatic justifications, for the adoption of the belief.

Ehninger, in an essay entitled "Validity as Moral Obligation,"¹⁵ presents a different perspective on the criteria for assessing rhetorical validity. Six standards, including internal consistency, persuasiveness, the factual nature of the claim, and the advocate's prestige, are analyzed and found unacceptable as criteria for validity. From this examination, Ehninger concludes that "because validity can be guaranteed by neither logical nor empirical means, in the end it always is dependent on the cooperativeness and good will of those persons whom a controversy concerns and in this sense consists of neither more nor less than a moral obligation on their part."¹⁶ In elaboration on this conception of rhetorical validity, he claims that an argument or case is valid if, and only if, it "forces a fundamental readjustment in the thinking of the persons to whom it is addressed."¹⁷ Ehninger goes on to enjoin the advocate to argue in such a way that "the person addressed abandons his position only for 'the right reasons' and with full awareness of why such action is required."¹⁸ At the very least, the individuals involved must subscribe to similar notions of what constitutes the 'right reasons' and must agree on the contexts in which one's sense of moral obligation should be exercised. Given these assumptions, an individual is presented with a pragmatic justification for the adoption of a belief when he has no basis on which to deny adoption short of admitting stupidity, stubbornness, or irrationality.

Perelman, on the other hand, postulates the existence of a universal audience - one which can guide, direct, and validate rhetorical transactions. For our purposes, three general characteristics of such an audience can be abstracted from *The New Rhetoric*:¹⁹ (1) it is a hypothetical construct consisting of the speaker's conception of "reasonable men"; (2) in seeking adherence by the universal audience, "maximally efficacious rhetoric," is valid "for the reason of every man"; and (3) the universal audience acts as a "rhetorical conscience."²⁰ There is a reciprocal validation between universal and particular audiences: "It can be said that audiences pass judgment on one another." As a rhetorical conscience for the advocate, Perelman's universal audience acts as the arbiter in determining what constitutes a pragmatic justification for adherence to a claim. As a hypothetical construct, it depends, as do other perspectives discussed, on an individual's recognition of "reasonableness" among men as well as the willingness to test arguments by that standard. In this sense, it requires a "leap of faith" on the part of the advocate to accept the constraints imposed. An implication of the leap is that the respondent will play the game

by the same rules. If so, then the appeal to the universal audience can operate to provide an assessment of validity.

3. Common Ground for the Judgment of Rhetorical Validity

As I indicated earlier, the criteria by which pragmatic justification is determined do not operate in a vacuum. Instead, their application is premised on a set of features held in common by the perspectives reviewed above. In what follows, I shall briefly discuss each of these features as part of the ground on which the justification of rhetorical argument proceeds.

The first characteristic to be reviewed is this: each perspective assures a rational perusal of arguments. Toulmin, Ehninger, and Perelman find fault with the methods of demonstration in formal logic and note their inapplicability as a standard for rhetorical validity yet none is willing to rule out, for that reason alone, the application of some ratiocinative system for judging the acceptability of arguments. In fact, their individual perspectives insure a rational base for the application of a validity criterion. Toulmin, for example, insists upon a familiarity with the rational procedures to be used in satisfying the relevance criterion.²¹ Ehninger forsakes internal consistency as a sufficiently acceptable measure of validity, yet requires that a person be *forced* to change his mind by reacting to compelling arguments. What better way to compel change, or at least lay a foundation for it, than by constructing an internally consistent case? Perelman notes the deficiencies of sole reliance on an analytical, formal paradigm, yet claims that the strongest case is that which employs "nothing but logical proof." Thus, these perspectives promote evaluation of argument in a deliberate, rational manner; one that is calculated to provide, in the absence of certainty, the best assurance that adherence is justifiable.

Second, the process by which arguments are validated does not depend on an appeal to any bond between the participants in the interchange. For example, Perelman's universal audience, once hypothesized, may be regarded with dispassionate interest, and treated as an object which, in an equally dispassionate manner, will dispense answers to my queries about the efficacy of my argument. The universal audience provides a broad confirmatory base for my arguments, but does not require any bond between us other than the recognition of its existence. The same is true when arguments are presented, once sanctioned, to the particular audience. It too can be treated as an object

which receives and, by recourse to the same collection of reasonable men, validates my argument. In similar fashion, standards of relevance may be evaluated in terms of the argument's substance rather than the participant's relation to one another.

But if this is true, if arguments can be addressed in this manner, then what is the nature of the "self-risk" one is said to accept in the argumentative encounter? Ehninger, for example, contends that when two people have met the conditions for "restrained partisanship" the arguer "both bestows 'personhood' on his opponent and gains 'personhood' for himself.²² This analysis suggests that argument is a humane and humanizing enterprise: the act of arguing enjoins a special relation between people that does exist outside of or prior to the act. Thus, any analysis of the validity of the argument within this scheme must recognize the existence of the special bond (the reciprocal granting of personhood) between the participants. To do less would constitute an incomplete analysis of the conditions whereby one justifies his reasoned appeal in gaining another person's adherence. Having accepted the preconditions for argument, one risks "self" if he or she fails to live up to the demands imposed by the act of acceptance. The problem with this conceptualization is that it equates adherence to social conventions with the granting of "personhood." I wish to argue that "personhood" is a term which implies far more than the mere *recognition* of another person; it suggests the existence of a special relation between people, typified by terms such as "communion," "consubstantiality," or "intersubjectivity." Moreover, as the second commonality asserted above suggests, the creation of this sense of personhood is not perceived as an integral part of the validation process. In fact, the process runs counter to the bestowal of personhood: the risk enjoined in the argumentative encounter is the product of an objectification of the elements within the dialectical interchange. Objectification, in turn, denies the full potentiality of personhood - the fullness present in a state of communion with the Other - between participants.

In elaborating on this argument, I shall begin by examining the pervasiveness of risk and the status of the preconditions for argument that are affected by risk.²³ As I move from place to place, as I live within the realm of "mundane reality,"²⁴ I construct a world of my own making. What I accept in my world is a function of what I perceive as real. Moreover, the validity criterion which I impose on my world and the arguments contained in it is personal, inherently subject to no single code of conduct or style of life. I can, if I wish, adopt the empiricist's position or that of an existential phenomenologist. I may

even adopt both and apply them where they appear to be most appropriate. At the very least, I am not bound to a conception of the world which entails acceptance of any single validation mechanism. Not being bound does not imply that I do not choose a validation scheme in actual discourse situations. I may agree with my respondent at the outset that a particular criterion of validity be adopted or we may allow a validation mechanism to evolve during the course of our conversation. The criterion arrived at may, but need not, be one which is already sanctioned within a particular field of discourse.

This "natural standpoint" entails risk-of-self. Mikel Dufrenne clarifies the general nature of such risk in writing that through language us one becomes conscious of his "self;" as one speaks, he commits himself. "I am what I say, and every genuine word is a word of honor."²⁵ In the act of constructing my world, I momentarily anchor myself to a particular conception. Within the realm of spoken or written discourse, I accept an obligation to "*stand with* my symbolic acts."²⁶ Insofar as I fail to do so, I degrade my own being, to say nothing of the impact of my negligence on others around me. Acceptance of this obligation entails the possibility that I will be forced to admit that my conception of the world is mistaken. In shifting my stance, I risk my "self-hood." If we accept this brief analysis, it becomes apparent that risk is a pervasive condition of human existence and that within the validity perspectives advanced, encountering risk is an ever-present possibility.

The immediacy of risk depends on adherence to three preconditions for the conduct of argumentative discourse. (1) The arguers agree to "hear each other out." Each person is willing to suspend his tendency to reject the argument until the entire case has been presented. Moreover, acts of intimidation, coercion, or other forms of threatening another are ruled out as they infringe on the freedom to judge that case on its merits. (2) The arguers come to an agreement on a criterion of validity - it may be that of relevance, moral obligation, or one which simply evolves during their discourse - which can be invoked to evaluate the efficacy of arguments. This does not rule out the possibility that the interlocutors will disagree on what constitutes relevance or formal consistency, if either is chosen as the standard of validity. It does suggest, however, that judgment will be based on a common standard, instead of on the application of two different and potentially incompatible criteria to the same situation. (3) The arguers agree that, in the event one presents a stronger case, the other will acquiesce or at least recognize the weakness of his own position. Upon agreement to these preconditions, the possibility for risk in an argumentative

encounter becomes an immediate one: arguers are bound to alter in some form their conception of the world when, on the basis of an adhered to standard of judgment, they find that one of the positions is superior to the other.

The change which I am forced to accept, assuming we find my position to be deficient, ranges from partial to complete, depending on the centrality of my beliefs about the subject under discussion.²⁷ If I am arguing the proposition, "Coors is a better beer than Olympia," I lose the argument without undergoing radical change. I might, for instance, alter my conception of "self" as a competent reasoner because I have failed to advance and defend what I perceive as a simple claim. If, on the other hand, the topic is abortion, and my beliefs on the subject are inextricably linked to my conception of the world, to lose an argument and accept change may force a radical alteration. In this instance, I am broken loose from my anchor and set apart from my former view of the world. In the continuum from partial to complete change, some arguments are more risk-provoking than others; their resolution may demand more than I am willing to give.

More important than the risk-provoking nature of arguments, however, is the suggestion that adherence to these preconditions does not, in and of itself, constitute a consubstantial or intersubjective union with the Other. In brief, the set of preconditions are social conventions: they can be adhered to almost automatically and unconsciously by the participants. Arguments can still be presented to people, treated as objects, rather than as persons sharing a special relationship. In this event, a preponderance of It-It interchanges, transactions as sterile as those between a signal post and its receiving station, identify the discourse as "unreal communication," as "communication without communion."²⁸

The preceding analysis leads us to the third feature forming the operative ground on which the three perspectives are based. In the process of adhering to the preconditions for argument, I objectify the Other (my opponent), myself, and the standard of validity we choose. From this objectification, a cohesive relationship emerges which makes possible a rational deliberation of a dispute. By thus objectifying the Other, I degrade his Being, as well as my own. Instead of conferring personhood, I classify and label the other as my opponent in a dialogue, thus denying the full potential of communion between us.²⁹ Put another way, union with an Other is fundamentally distinct from the process of objectification which follows from adherence to the preconditions for argumentative discourse. With reference to

this point, Gabriel Marcel writes that "the communion in which presences become manifest to each other, and the transmission of purely objective messages, do not belong to the same realm of being."³⁰ Within the realm of objective transmission, argument is akin to other social relationships which I might experience. I may treat my opponent, once the rules or preconditions have been agreed to, much as I treat my banker or the mechanic who works on my car. I even may place my trust in these persons only to find that it has been misplaced: the banker is a crook, the mechanic is incompetent, the arguer refuses to abide by the rule of acquiescence. In short, I do not necessarily treat any of these as a friend. There need not be any communal bond created by our exchange, or even necessarily present prior to the exchange.

4. Arguers are not Lovers

In summary, this essay has attempted to illustrate the set of assumptions held in common by the validation mechanisms proposed by Toulmin, Ehninger, and Perelman. Emphasizing a pragmatic means of justifying arguments, all three ground the operation of their respective criteria on an assurance of a rational objective appraisal of arguments. Moreover, the application of the criteria takes place without reference to an intersubjective state or union between the interlocutors. Finally, the means by which self-risk is immediatized places argumentative discourse within the realm of other social encounters, thereby precluding it from necessarily promoting or achieving a communal state between arguer and respondent. It is in these terms that each perspective incorporates the generic sense of rhetorical validity as pragmatic justification. In the process, the perspectives also preclude the assimilation of those mechanisms which do not contain an explicit reference to the "rationality" of the argument and are not conceived independently of a consubstantial or communal state between the interlocutors. Furthermore, adherence to these perspectives would rule out the consideration of validity criteria dependent on a sense of self-risk which transcends the process of objectification and does establish a state of communion with the Other. The image of pragmatic justification presented, therefore, suggests that the rhetor and his opponent are not asked to yield to the whims of individual judgment, nor to the exigencies of any particular situation. Instead, in the absence of certainty, which logical demonstration might yield, the interlocutors are exhorted to justify argumentative claims in accordance with accepted standards of behavior, as exemplified by the preconditions

for argumentative discourse. Thus, arguers are not lovers³¹ - they are only dialecticians seeking to justify their positions only so long as it is rational to do so.

Notes

1. The most notable example is Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1958). Toulmin's most recent work, *Human Understanding* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1972) is premised on the central theme of *Uses of Argument*: that analytic logics are inapplicable to much of what passes for philosophical dispute and that "men demonstrate their rationality, not by ordering concepts and beliefs in tidy formal structures, but by their preparedness to respond to novel situations with open minds - acknowledging the shortcomings of their formal procedures and moving beyond them." *Human Understanding*, pp. vii-viii. For a perceptive discussion of the nature of working logic, see Ray Lynn Anderson and C. David Mortensen, "Logic and Marketplace Argumentation," *QJS*, 53 (1967), 143-51.
2. Toulmin, *Uses of Argument*, p. 148.
3. Karl R. Wallace, "The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons, *QJS*, 49 (1963), 248.
4. Douglas Ehninger, "Validity as Moral Obligation." *Southern Speech Journal*, 23 (1968), 215-22.
5. Chaim Perelman and I. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (South Bend: Univ. of Notre Dame Press, 1969). For a discussion of other criteria, see Henry Johnstone, Jr., *Philosophy and Argument* (Univ. Park, Penn State Univ. Press, 1959); Gidon Gottlieb, *The Logic of Choice* (New York: Macmillan, 1968); and Carl Wellman, *Challenge and Response: Justification in Ethics* (Carbondale; Southern Illinois Univ. Press, 1971). Because the focus of this essay is on criteria utilized in assessing *public argument*, these latter positions are excluded from specific consideration. Johnstone's treatment of validity, for example, focuses on the role of rhetoric in philosophic controversy. Even his discussion of self is not aimed at exploring interpersonal relationships

in public argument, but instead is conceived as a response to a particular philosophical problem which arose in the treatment of *ad hominem* argument as the only valid philosophic form. His latest essays, which recognize the role of rhetoric in philosophy, carefully distinguish between that role and others which rhetoric might play. See Johnstone's "Rationality and Rhetoric in Philosophy." *QJS*, 59 (1973), 381-389; and "The Facts in the Case of Henry Johnstone," *QJS*, 61 (1975), 89-91. Gottlieb's discussion of rules is addressed to requirements imposed on argument within the legal community. Finally, Wellman's discussion of validity is restricted to an evaluation of ethical statements, hence it is not evaluated in the review of perspectives.

6. Roderick P. Hart and Don M. Burks, "Rhetorical Sensitivity and Social Interaction," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 75-91.

7. This does not, of course, preclude judgments about people based on their argumentative techniques, but it does suggest that the methods themselves are not endorsers of a person's self. Richard Weaver, on the other hand, claims that arguments do say something about a person's view of the world. Those who argue from genus, for instance, "are in their personal philosophy idealists." *The Ethics of Rhetoric* (1953; rpt. Chicago: Regnery, 1970), p. 56. Weaver's classification scheme is based on the source or content of the argument rather than its form. Regardless, there is nothing sacrosanct about his typology or his claims concerning the states of mind that arguments from genus, similitude, or circumstance represent.

8. John Hospers, *An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis*, 2nd ed. (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 258. See Carroll C. Arnold, "Oral Rhetoric, Rhetoric, and Literature," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1 (1968), 204.

9. Perelman provides additional support for this definition of rhetorical validity: "It is because of the possibility of argumentation which provides reasons, but not compelling reasons, that it is possible to escape the dilemma: adherence to an objectively and universally valid truth, or recourse to suggestion and violence to secure acceptance for our opinions and decision. The theory of argumentation will help to develop what a logic of value judgments has tried in vain to provide, namely the justification of the possibility of a human community in the sphere of action when this justification cannot be based on a reality or objective truth," p.514.

10. For an illuminating discussion of the characteristics of a "rhetorical sense of validity" see Thomas Farrell, "Validity and Rationality: The Rhetorical Constituents of Argumentative Form." elsewhere in this issue.
11. *The Nature of Moral Responsibility* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1973), p. 78.
12. Toulmin, *Uses of Argument*, pp. 94-145.
13. Toulmin, *Uses of Argument*, p. 248. Italics mine.
14. See Toulmin, *Uses of Argument*, p. 60.
15. *Southern Speech Journal*, 23 (1968), 215-22. Karl Wallace suggests a similar criterion in his essay, "The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons." "The measurement of validity in practical discourse quite commonly resides in the general principle [value] and its applicability" (248). If one asserts "John should not have lied to Mary," the statement can be assessed by recourse to the general value assumption, "It is wrong to lie." The determination of validity depends on the assertion, "John should not have lied to Mary." If applicable, then good reasons exist for the adoption of the assertion (248). For a critique of this approach to validity, see Wellman, pp. 13-18.
16. Ehninger, 222.
17. Ehninger, 219. Italics mine. The sense of "force" which Ehninger employs is adapted from Johnstone's argument concerning the necessity for consistency in philosophical reasoning. In a recent essay, Johnstone capsulizes this conception of validity, saying that "a philosophical argument is valid if it forces the thinker to whom it is addressed to revise or abandon his position. The term 'forces' here is not, of course, being used in a psychological sense; a valid philosophical argument is one exploiting the principles of a position under attack in such a way that whoever holds this position is exposed as logically inconsistent whether he admits it or not." "Rationality and Rhetoric in Philosophy," *QJS*, 59 (1973), 382.
18. Ehninger, 222.

19. Unless otherwise noted, quoted material is from Perelman, pp. 31-35.
20. Allen Scult, "Chaim Perelman's Universal Audience: A Perspective on the Problems of Epistemology and Invention in Contemporary Rhetoric," paper read at 1971 SCA Convention. For different perspectives on the role of the universal audience, see Ray Dearin, "Perelman's 'Universal Audience' as a Rhetorical Concept," paper read at 1970 SCA Convention, printed in *Theo-Rhet*, No. 2 (1970); and Eric Skopec, "Rhetoric, Knowledge, and the Universal Audience in Chaim Perelman's *New Rhetoric*," paper read at 1973 SCA Doctoral Honors Seminar, Temple University.
21. Toulmin, "Reasons and Causes," in *Explanation in the Behavioral Sciences*, ed. Robert Borger and Frank Cioffi (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 1970), pp. 12-13. See R.S. Peter's "Comment," pp. 24-41, and Toulmin's "Reply," pp. 42-48 in same volume.
22. Ehninger, "Argument as Method: Its Nature, Its Limitations, and Its Uses." *Speech Monographs*, 37 (1970), 109. See Ehninger, *Influence, Belief, and Argument* (Chicago: Scott-Foresman, 1974), pp. 5-7.
23. Several authors have broached the subject of risk-of-self. My purpose in this essay is to suggest the pervasive nature of risk in the natural setting, indicate the conditions for its immediacy in argument, and illustrate its objectification of self, other, and standard of validity. For other discussions of risk, see Arnold: Wayne Brockriede; "Arguers as Lovers," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 5 (1972), 1-11; Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., eds., *Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation* (Univ. Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1965); and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., *The Problem of the Self* (Univ. Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1970).
24. Natanson, *The Journeying Self* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1970), p. 2.
25. "Language and Metaphysics," in *Readings in Existential Phenomenology*, ed. N. Lawrence and D. O'Connor (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967), p. 208.
26. Arnold, 199.

27. See Daryl Bem, *Beliefs, Attitudes and Human Affairs* (Belmont: Brooks/Cole, 1970), pp. 4-21.
28. Gabriel Marcel, *Mystery of Being*, trans. G. Fraser (Chicago: Regnery, 1950). I. 205.
29. Marcel, *Mystery of Being*, trans. Rene Hague (Chicago: Regnery, 1950), II. 77ff.
30. Marcel, *Mystery of Being*, I, 207.
31. For a contrary perspective, see Brockriede, "Arguers as Lovers," 1-11.

Chapter 17

What is a Good Argument?

Dale Hample¹

Our first canon of rhetoric is that discourse be invented thoughtfully: that through inquiry, creativity and criticism the rhetor must select the best available arguments for use in a message. Obviously, this requires that good arguments be distinguishable from bad. To make such distinctions consistently and well is one mark of Aristotle's man of practical wisdom, or of Quintilian's good man speaking well. So the question, "what is a good argument?" has incontestable centrality in rhetorical theory. The purpose of this essay is to evaluate three types of answer to that question.

But it would be precipitous to consider those answers without first explaining what I mean by argument and what will count as an acceptable answer to the title question. These matters are more than preliminaries: the definition, and particularly the criteria for a tolerable answer, implicitly contain the commentaries to be offered on each of our three options.

I understand argument to be simply a movement from evidence to conclusion. This definition is intended to be both neutral and traditional. Certainly it is close to Aristotle: "...reasoning is an argument in which, certain things being laid down, something other than these necessarily comes about through them."² This description of argument is offered in the hope that it will not exclude many important candidates for our answer.³

To count as a sufficient answer, a solution must have certain qualities. Above all, the criterion must *itself* distinguish good from bad arguments, and do so unequivocally. I mean by this that a rhetor or critic must play an almost wholly neutral role in the decision. He or she may read, but should not determine, the judgment; only the criterion and the specimen argument should be involved in that. The

evaluation should be nearly automatic, untainted by idiosyncracy or unique outcome. This is not an unusual requirement. Willard says that Toulmin "depsychologizes argument precisely because couching argumentation principles in personal psychological terms would be a surrender to relativism. His search is for the stable features of rational discourse as manifested in public argument..."⁴ Personal judgments of an argument's validity will not serve us here.

Further, the criterion must speak both generally and specifically. To be generally articulable is necessary for the solution to be perceived as an answer. If it only operates tacitly and unknowably on a case-by-case basis, we will never be conscious of it as a criterion. A specific voice is also essential. To have a general solution is of little use if it cannot be clearly applied to every given argument. So a proper criterion of good arguments will be recognizable both as an ideal and in particular.

Lastly, because our quest is subordinate to the subject of invention generally, I require that the criterion be predictive. That is, it must enable us to *advise* the rhetor (or make informed selections ourselves) rather than just to calumniate or praise after the fact. If a solution is satisfactory, it should tell us whether an argument is good before we make it, while we make it or after we make it: the criterion ought to be indifferent to time.

Considering that these theoretical criteria are fundamental to the analysis that follows, the reader may wonder why I have merely explained them, rather than justifying them at length. I have two reasons. First, I am willing to let the criteria rest on their own intrinsic reasonableness in order to get on with the paper. Secondly, the analysis of possible answers to the title question can be seen as an indirect test of these standards. If an answer is unable to meet a criterion, but is desirable on other grounds (being the best answer we have, for example), the most interesting available conclusion may be that the standard does not apply to that rhetorical theory at all. In this connection, I wish to correct one misapprehension which arose from earlier drafts of this paper: I do not think that every adequate rhetorical theory must include a validity criterion which meets my standards. In fact, some of the more distinctive features of rhetoric may well be related to an unwillingness or inability to provide objective, unequivocal judgments. I will briefly return to this idea at the end of the essay.

Before moving to consideration of the three general issues, I should note that one common answer – effectiveness, or some kind of audience response – is not considered here because the criteria and the nature of the question clearly disallow this solution.⁵ Effectiveness is obviously something which can be known unequivocally only after the fact. Reliance on an estimate of an argument's likely impact would make our answer to the question "is this a good argument?" a mere estimate as well. Judgment might have to be continually revised, or even put off for several centuries. So besides being non-predictive, the effectiveness criterion is not certain to render clear specific judgments. And perhaps most persuasively, the fact that it makes sense to ask of *either* an effective or ineffective argument, "but was it a good one?" shows that we understand good to mean something other than merely effective. Perhaps for this reason, Perelman is careful to distinguish between "*an effective argument, which gains the adherence of the audience*" and "*a valid argument, which ought to gain it.*"⁶ Our earlier warning that we would not accept personal judgments of argument validity also points towards rejecting various effectiveness standards. "Truth and validity are onlookers' concepts and presuppose a God's-eye-view of the arena," says Hamblin. When a person asserts "S is true" during an argument, it only means "S," and when a participant says "S, so T is valid," it only means "S, so T." From the arguers' points of view, validity claims merely assert something about acceptability or effectiveness.⁷ Effectiveness is an inherently personal standard, and says at least as much about the person as the argument.

One last thing needs to be pointed out before we turn to the three main candidates. The object of this paper is to see if we have any completely rigorous and sufficient theories of good argument, not to determine whether or not everyday judgments of argument quality are accurate. The achievement of normal adulthood is *prima facie* evidence that an individual has somehow made consistently reliable assessments for many years. Whether these accurate discriminations take place through intuition, are learnable, define native intelligence or occur through approximation (or exact applications) of the criteria to be discussed momentarily, is not at issue in this essay. That we usually can tell good arguments from bad ones does not necessarily mean that we know precisely why we make a certain evaluation; nor does it prevent us from being uncertain, wrong or ambivalent from time to time. Uninformed practice cannot answer our question: only a fully articulate theory of argument can do so satisfactorily.

1. Publics and Their Incarnations

One family of criteria for good arguments says that a good argument is one that is validated by a public or some part of a public. The most familiar example of this standard, of course, is to be found in the *New Rhetoric*. There, the universal audience is the personally-constructed ideal to which every speaker ought to appeal. This hypothetical audience of rational informed adults confirms good argumentation through adherence. No speciously-bedizened declamation will seduce the universal audience; only the substance of the matter at hand can win favor.⁸

Public grounding of argument is important for other writers as well. Bitzer says that a public possesses a core of principles and knowledge which constrain, supply and validate the best rhetoric. Good public argumentation draws on those fundamentals to maintain and advance the community's store of ideas.⁹ Also concerned with a decay of the body politic, Lippmann hopes to re-establish the "public philosophy," which will show more clearly what choices America ought to make. A new assertion of our traditional principles is in our public interest, which "may be presumed to be what men would choose if they saw clearly, thought rationally, acted disinterestedly and benevolently." The public philosophy would thereby express "the interest of an invisible community over a long span of time."¹⁰ Dewey, too, sees in the community the source of both argument standards and the knowledge which public argumentation must possess, If the public is to re-embody itself properly.¹¹

These authorities are enough to illustrate the general idea: that a good argument is one which draws on public knowledge and moves in a publicly acceptable fashion toward conclusions which are therefore convincing to the community in question.¹² The intent of this position is to provide an ideal which will lift rhetoric from the realms of sophistic, eristic and irrelevancy to the status of something that "may be able to speak what is pleasing to the gods," as Plato would have it.¹³

This view provides a valuable ideal of good argument, but in specific cases, the public is mute. It is not really intended to materialize and judge every argument in its domain. Lippmann emphasizes the purely normative function of the public when he observes, "There is no point in toying with any notion of an imaginary plebiscite to discover the public interest. We cannot know what we ourselves will be thinking

five years hence, much less what infants now in the cradle will be thinking when they go into the polling booth."¹⁴ The authors of the *New Rhetoric* italicize this same idea to preclude misunderstanding: "*The agreement of a universal audience is thus a matter, not of fact, but of right.*"¹⁵ The point of holding up public adherence as a standard, then, is only to provide an inventional goal. The public *qua* public is not expected to validate or decry individual arguments. Being voiceless in specific, the public cannot satisfy our criteria.

We can see these same difficulties in two recent argumentation theories which are closely related to the notion of public. Wallace sites rhetoric squarely within ethics, saying that "...the basic materials of discourse are (1) ethical and moral values and (2) information relevant to these."¹⁶ He then goes on to say that

...the measurement of validity in practical discourse quite commonly resides in the general principle and its applicability.
...X should not have copied from Y's paper, for in doing so he cheated, and cheating is wrong. In this case, clearly there are facts that could or could not be established. Clearly, the general principle, "cheating is wrong," is relevant and functions as a warrant. The principle is applicable, or is applicable as qualified, if particular circumstances call for qualification. The principle itself is valid to the extent that it corresponds with the beliefs and conduct of the group which gives it sanction.¹⁷

Useful as Wallace's theory is, it obviously depends for its validity judgments upon being able to assess the correspondence of a value to social standards, and the applicability of the value to the argument.¹⁸ These two issues resolve themselves into arguments about normativeness and relevance, and the validity of *these* arguments must ultimately appeal to some more fundamental criteria. A similar problem would arise if one were to try to derive validity criteria from public conventions regarding conversations. Jacobs and Jackson have shown how "having an argument" (i.e., interpersonally) involves abiding by a number of conversational rules.¹⁹ If a valid argument were defined as one which is rule-governed, we would still be left with the problem of deciding how to tell if a conversation fits the social norms. In a specific case, we would argue about whether the conversants obeyed the rules, and we would need different validity criteria for *these* arguments (which might or might not be interpersonal). So apparently

the standards of a public do not lend themselves to the detailed analysis required in order to say that an argument is valid or not, and this seems to be true whether the public is an ideal, or whether it is society at large.

But particular audiences can be used to make the public incarnate: perhaps this variant will satisfy our needs. Elite audiences are especially important as representatives of universal audience. An elite - say of philosophers or experts on the economic consequences of some policy - renders the public more concrete, more accessible.²⁰ Another particular audience which is specially pertinent here is the single interlocutor who cooperates in dialectic with the rhetor. The point of dialectic may be seen as the identification of knowledge which can then fuel arguments.²¹ Dialectic constitutes a critical evaluation of hypotheses or arguments already suspected of unsoundness.²² Particular audiences, then, are physically present and fully capable of pronouncing judgment on specific arguments.

The problem is that presence has been bought at the price of the ideal. The fact that a particular audience is supposed to represent a universal one should not obscure the fact that an elite can only approximate a public. Nor can a single individual be relied on to make all the objections, withhold exactly the right assents, make precisely the correct concessions, as the ideal might require. In one passage, however, Socrates seems to say otherwise: "If at any point in our discussion you agree with me, that matter will already have been adequately tested both by you and by me, and there will no longer be any need to refer it to any other touchstone," he tells Callicles. "For you would never have agreed with me through lack of wisdom or excess of modesty, nor again would you agree with me with intent to deceive.... In fact, then, any agreement between you and me will have attained the consummation of the truth." But what must not be overlooked is the context of this statement. Socrates has just skewered both Gorgias and Polus, and Callicles may be a candidate for more "inquiry." To draw him in, Socrates resorts to unabashed flattery: meeting Callicles is a godsend; Callicles is blessed with knowledge, good will and frankness; he is wise, well-educated and a good friend.²³ If all this is serious, it strikes the modern reader as badly overstated and far too trusting.

The point, then, is that a real audience will have real foibles; unique values will be unexamined, criticisms may be missed, and a good

argument be rejected or a bad one confirmed. How often these things happen will of course depend on the quality of the people involved. But error is obviously possible for a particular audience; over the long run, in fact, error is certain. So long as an inaccurate judgment on a specific argument is possible, our criteria have not been rigorously met. Besides, there is nothing axiomatic about a dialectical encounter. If dialectic *did* produce only valid argumentation, we would still be within our rights to ask how it happens, what a valid argument looks like, and what standards of argument dialecticians use. The same goes for rhetoric addressed to any elite. So our title question would remain unanswered in specific.

Neither publics nor their incarnations properly answer our question. The notion of a public enunciates a fair ideal for argument, but allows no chance of specific assessment; incarnations are concrete enough, but cannot guarantee exact application of the ideal. We need to consider another possible solution.

2. Logic

Perhaps the most traditional description of a good argument is that it has valid form and true premises. This formulation has unquestionable value in the realm of logic, but for rhetoric we need to examine it carefully. To do so, we should begin by noticing explicitly that discourse which actually *has* (on its face) valid form and true premises is not rhetoric. "The duty of rhetoric," says Aristotle, "is to deal with such matters as we deliberate upon without arts or systems to guide us, in the hearing of persons who cannot take in at a glance a complicated argument, or follow a long chain of reasoning. The subjects of our deliberation are such as seem to present us with alternative possibilities: about things that could not have been, and cannot now or in the future be other than they are, nobody who takes them to be of this nature wastes his time in deliberation."²⁴ So demonstration will not be encountered during the study of rhetorical discourse. The main trouble this presents us in using the criterion of demonstration is that we will somehow have to massage arguments to stand them alongside the logical measure.²⁵

Assuming two uncertain things to be true will expedite the analysis. First, I wish to stipulate that epistemological grounds can be found such that true and false propositions can in principle be identified

as such without error.²⁶ To explore the likelihood that this premise is accurate, would take both this essay and its author far beyond their limits; nonetheless strong advocacy of logical criteria may eventually require such a study. Secondly, we ought to specify that an ordinary statement can be transformed into one or more logical propositions without any serious changes in meaning. This too is fundamentally disputable,²⁷ but if we are to study the relation between logic and rhetoric, we need to assume that one is at least possible.

In assessing the goodness of rhetorical arguments, the critic has three broad options if he/she is to march under the banner of logic.²⁸ The first of these is to view the argument as it stands in the message, without regard to the arguer or the audience. This approach is doomed because rhetoric is enthymematic. That is, the message will contain only part of the argument; in terms of the logical standard, premises will be missing, and no judgment at all will be possible.²⁹ The argument can be emended in two ways, and these are the critic's other two options.

One is to finish the argument by supplying the missing items from the speaker's point of view. Translating the enthymeme back to the arguer makes the speaker's invention the focal point of evaluation. But this approach is problematic because the arguer may not have invented a complete argument in the first place. If the argument is inherently incomplete, to fill it in and then judge it involves criticism of an argument radically different from the one invented. Beside, this suggests a more troubling flaw: how is it to be filled in? Assuming (as we must if we are to make a general argument here) that the arguer is unavailable for interrogation, the critic will need to finish the argument.

But filling in the argument presupposes a judgment of logicality. Suppose an arguer says, "automobiles (A) are dirty, offensive pollution-spewing things (B), and so we ought to keep them out of our cities (C)." The speaker has provided a premise - A is B - and drawn a conclusion - A is C. If the critic believes the argument to be a logical one, the added premise will be "B is C" - perhaps "anything that dirties our cities should be forbidden from them." But if the critic is for some reason hostile to the argument or speaker, or supposes a different premise to be a more accurate reflection of the real invention, this might be supplied: "rural life is dirty and degraded" (C is B). This emendation, of course, makes the full argument invalid. Nonetheless,

it might just as easily been the speaker's original idea. Perhaps a simpler example will help further. The enthymeme "Caesar deserved death because he was a tyrant" can be completed in two very plausible ways. A generous critic might lend "all tyrants deserve death," in which case the full argument is valid. But if the critic were less forthcoming, the supplied premise might be "some tyrants deserve death," leaving the argument invalid. The whole procedure puts the critic in the position of evaluating his/her own argument, not the speaker's. Judgments of purity are too easily dominated by the last materials to be mixed in.

The critic's other main logical option is to fill in the argument from the audience's vantage. Since this will also involve "completing" the enthymemes, the previous objections can be applied here too, and are sufficient to show that a logical standard cannot be modified to serve in this fashion either. But since it is traditional to fill enthymemes out with the audience in mind, I wish to point out several other problems with that procedure.

The basic difficulty, which shows itself in several ways, is that the argument in the message can be expected *not* to correspond with the argument the audience is dealing with. In the first place, some types of sentences are systematically misunderstood; the sentence's implication, and not its logical meaning, is received. On recall tests, people hearing "the hungry python caught the mouse" reported having heard "the hungry python ate the mouse." "Dennis the Menace sat in Santa's chair and asked for an elephant" was thought to be "Dennis the Menace sat in Santa's lap and asked for an elephant." And "the flimsy shelf weakened under the weight of the books" was reported as "the flimsy shelf collapsed under the weight of the books."³⁰

Besides sometimes being more sensitive to implications than to the sentences themselves, people also react more to their own thoughts about a message than to the message itself. In several experiments designed to test the relative importance of personally-generated beliefs as opposed to statements contained in a message, several Ohio State researchers asked respondents to list their thoughts during or after reading persuasive messages. Listed thoughts were classed as coming from the message, being modifications of the message statements, or being generated wholly by the respondents. Predictions of attitude change were about three times better when based on recipient-generated thoughts than when based on those drawn from the message (modified

message beliefs produced intermediate predictions). Worse (from the stance of someone trying to fill in an enthymeme), audience members listed twice as many self-generated thoughts as message ideas (the modified message beliefs were in between again). And when measures were taken a week after exposure to the message, recall of message ideas was barely related to attitude at all, while recall of one's own reactions to the message predicted opinion fairly well.³¹

These two problems may well be related to a third: that people sometimes make errors on logic tests.³² One plausible interpretation of these errors is that people supply extra premises or make illicit conversions (e.g. from "all B is C" to "all C is B"), changing the problem. Certain investigators, acting as critics completing enthymemes might act, have identified the premises which, if used by subjects, would make the wrong solution right.³³

In short, the critic has only a slim chance of identifying the argument which the audience actually uses. Accurately translating an enthymeme forward to the receivers seems even more hopeless than translating back to the speaker's invention. And of course, if the translation is problematic, evaluations based on it are equally unreliable.

Before leaving the topic of logic, though, we should consider another strategy for evaluating arguments. Granting that we cannot directly identify good (i.e., logical) arguments, perhaps we can find the bad ones, and so discover the good ones indirectly. Fallacies might serve us here. Formal fallacies – those concerned with valid form – need not detain us, because the previous arguments showing logical form to be undiscoverable also preclude any rigorously-applicable means of finding illogical ones. As to the fallacies of substance – appeals to authority, or *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, for example – I have several concerns. First, the various lists of such fallacies have never struck me as being necessarily inclusive. That is, the lists just seem to contain some classes of bad arguments, without any unifying principles, and so without any guarantee of covering the whole realm of argumentation. Without such a warrant, of course, we could not be certain of catching all the bad arguments, and so might mis-identify some bad ones as good.

The second concern is that there seems to be little agreement on what constitutes a fallacy. "Someone else thinks so too" is sometimes labeled the fallacy of authority, on the grounds that another's opinion about

an argument's conclusion is not germane to the argument. Yet persuaders are usually told to cite authoritative support of various kinds, as scholars use footnotes. This cannot *in general* be a fallacy. Argument *ad hominem* - wherein one refutes an opponent by showing an inconsistency between the opponent's present and past positions - could be a fallacy on the basis that a past claim has no necessary relevance to the present chain of reasoning. But Johnstone sees this type of argument as not only rational, but as the foundation of philosophical reasoning.³⁴ The *post hoc* fallacy - B is observed after A, so A causes B - is perfectly accurate in our phenomenal worlds most of the time: how can this be a fallacy if it takes us from true premises to true conclusions?

Fallacies, then, are not reliable ways to classify bad arguments.³⁵ True, many bad arguments have the form of one fallacy or another - but so do some good arguments. What seems to happen is that a critic sees a bad argument, and then hunts through a list of fallacies until a properly pejorative label is found. Badness is identified before fallaciousness, and so the latter will not satisfy us here as a primary criterion.

So, "what is a good argument?" is not answered by "a logical one." Though logic is another valuable ideal for argument, like the various publics we examined, it does not speak unequivocally in specific cases. The inherently enthymematic nature of argumentation and the irrelevance of form to fallacy are insuperable bars to the use of these criteria in a rigorous, objective fashion. Only one more answer to the title question remains to be examined.

3. Field Dependence

A body of discourse may center around a particular topic or topics, and involve a certain community of arguers and audiences: we may call this union of topic, discourse and community a field of argument.³⁶ The notion of field sometimes merges with the idea of a public,³⁷ and is often used in discussions of argument validity. Fields, whatever they are called by a particular writer, are sometimes awarded powerful - nearly deterministic - control over argumentation. For instance, Perelman says

The strength of arguments therefore depends considerably on a traditional context. Sometimes the speaker can take up any subject and use any kind of argument. But there are times when his argumentation is limited by custom, by law, or by the methods and techniques peculiar to the discipline within which his argument is developed. The discipline often determines also the level at which the argumentation must be presented, laying down what is beyond dispute, and what must be regarded as irrelevant to the debate.³⁸

This view sees both form and content as dictated by the field. We can study this position in its clearest light by looking at the example of science. The basic mode of scientific inference is "If Hypothesis is true, then Evidence will be true; E is true; so H is true." This inference pattern summarizes the way hypotheses are tested through prediction.³⁹ In logical terms, the general argument is quite clearly invalid (the fallacy is called affirming the consequent). This invalidity is itself suggestive evidence that the field (science) deterministically requires a peculiar argument form.⁴⁰ That fields also dictate substantial content is more commonly noticed, and relevant passages may be found in work as early as Aristotle's.⁴¹ "Substantial content" refers not only to the kinds of topics which a field's arguments may entertain, but also includes standards which say what is a good argument and what is not. A fully developed field theory therefore has the potential to solve the problem I have posed in this essay's title. I see four ways in which fields might generate appropriate judgments.

First, we could compare an argument's conclusion to its field's doctrine. On this standard, a good argument is one which comes out right. Religious disputes can be checked against church dogma; a potential Guardian's dialectical response can be compared to the interlocutor's knowledge of Plato's Forms; the right view of the universe is the one in which everything orbits around man (or the earth, or the sun). The field of argument is in part defined by the possession of a gospel, whether scientific, religious or social, which is the truth for all arguments in the domain. As McKerrow says about arguments within the social community, "Social argument involves and uses as its motivating force the accepted modes of thinking within a culture to promote socially defined ends."⁴²

This is obviously no solution to our problem: it checks only the product and not the process of argument. An argument, recall, as a *movement*

from evidence to conclusion; full evaluation must take that movement into account, and well as the premises and the claim. Because the doctrinal criterion does not directly examine the process of argument, it is largely irrelevant to our question.

The idea that a field controls the substantive content of its arguments suggests that we consider several content-based validity criteria here.⁴³ First of all, consider *topoi*. One way the idea of argument topics has been extended into our time is in the form of newventional standards. For example, we have the stock issues for policy analysis, or possibly Dewey's stages of reflective thinking. The theory here is that if each of the subordinate standards is substantively satisfied, the overall argument will be valid. An important recent exemplar of this kind of conventional strategy is Fisher's criteria for good value argument. He says that to test whether a good reason has been given, one must determine (1) what values are embedded in the message; (2) those values' relevance to the overall claim; (3) the consequences of accepting those values; (4) whose experience or wisdom validates the values; and (5) whether these are the best values on which to base the decision in question.⁴⁴ These ideas are, I think, essentially a system of stock issues for value dispute.

Is Fisher's analysis of value argument sufficient to show how the field of ethics can identify valid and invalid argumentation? Not completely. Even granting the usefulness of Fisher's five issues, he does not explain precisely how to evaluate the resulting answers. How does the field of ethics define "relevance," for instance? Exactly how can we tell which of two competing values is "best" for a particular dispute? Fisher does not address such problems in detail. These kinds of decisions can only be made with the aid of good argumentation. Since Fisher does not specify what these subordinate good arguments are like, his theory presupposes - but does not identify - valid argumentation. This work, like much of the rest we have reviewed here, is a valuable ideal, but it does not help us much with the microscopic judgment we seek to make.

Another validity standard which relies on a field's control of its substance is what we might call the proof-disproof ratio. Here, the critic studies the field as a whole to judge an argument he/she considers all the argumentation favoring a claim, all the opposition to the claim, and then the claim's asserted strength. If the claim is accurately qualified, it is valid. Invalid claims may be overstated, or too modest.⁴⁵

Perelman, for instance, uses the ratio of proof to disproof to help explain what he means by "strength of argument:" "...intensity of adherence as well as relevance are at the mercy of argumentation directed against them. Thus the strength of an argument shows itself as much by the difficulty there is in refuting it as by its inherent qualities."⁴⁶ The familiar phrase *prima facie* also acknowledges the importance of opposing argumentation in the initial evaluation of a case's validity.

The fundamental problem with this approach is that it will not yield clear, reliable, permanent judgments. Even if it is true in principle that a field controls its content, a *person* must finally weigh the proof against the refutation. The critic must be able to generate all the available arguments for and against a claim. This effort will owe much to individual characteristics, such as creativity, expertise, thoroughness and so forth. One of the original standards that we set out in the beginning is that the judgment of validity ought not be idiosyncratic, and this procedure obviously fails that test.

The last and perhaps most usually considered way a field might distinguish good arguments from bad is through the use of previously validated arguments. These are arguments in which the warrant of the data's bearing on the claim is already established, and in which directions for using the warrant are clear. For example, social scientists have settled on a five percent chance of error as the cutoff for believing in a phenomenon. Thus, if the difference between two groups' average scores has a four percent probability of appearing by chance, the difference is formally concluded to be real; if the chance is thirty percent, the difference is adjudged aleatory. In short, the community has validated an argument form having a substantive warrant. This argument can be used indefinitely by pushing new premises through the warrant and extracting suitable conclusions. Each such use would automatically be a good argument.

Certainly this procedure is quite useful on a day-to-day basis within a community. But as a general description of good arguments, it is defective. First, I see no reason to believe that all arguments occur within such topic-centered fields.⁴⁷ And even for those that do, surely not all arguments are merely replications of exemplars. If only replicatory arguments are good ones, a huge quantity of reasons tacitly recognized as good will be labeled bad. If, on the other hand, the field solution only means that replicatory arguments are good, without

prejudice to unique arguments, then the account does not produce the general solution we seek. Second, the solution is not reflexive. I mean that it does not explain what good reasons justified the exemplars during the field's emergence. Paradigms change, but a field cannot generate its own revolutions: somehow, awarenesses and evaluative standards must come from outside the paradigm and refute the exemplars. Since the same good pre-revolutionary argument can be a wretched post-revolutionary one, we obviously do not have here our general description of how to identify good arguments in particular cases.

4. Conclusion

The rather depressing conclusion to be drawn from this essay is that we cannot specify what a good argument is. We have developed several admirable general statements of what a good argument should be, but these do not lead to reliable empirical tests of whether the ideal has been realized. Certainly, we make evaluative judgments in particular cases, but the grounds for such choices are unclear. Possibly those arguments we judge to be good ones are those that look logical to us; maybe we try to step outside our particular rhetorical situation to estimate the reaction of some universal public; or perhaps we match conclusions or warrants to those we already approve of. But whatever the procedures, they evidently lack the theoretical validation we have been searching for here. "In effect, to the extent to which our intelligence falls short of the ideal of precise formalization, we act and see by the light of unspecifiable knowledge and must acknowledge that we accept the verdict of our personal appraisal..."⁴⁸ It would indeed be ironic if the correct evaluation of argument - a central problem in all intellectual effort - turned out to be nothing more than a knack.

My arguments also lead to another inference, one with perhaps more far-reaching implications for rhetoric. If we may assume that all rhetorics envision argumentation as criticizable, and if I have been right in this paper, then it follows that every rhetoric must forego at least one of my original standards. The rejection of any of these premises will have elaborate consequences for the rhetoric's structure.

First, the theory may not insist that the judgment of validity be "nearly automatic, untainted by idiosyncracy." Different critics will be expected to produce different criticisms. There will be no canon of "correct"

criticism; instead, each critic will experience an argument in his/her own way, and produce a personal reaction. Possibly the worth of such criticism will be judged on extra-theoretical grounds (quality of composition in the critical essay, for instance). Certainly there will exist no expectation that criticism is cumulative, that a new critic of Lincoln will necessarily advance our knowledge of him. We could never enter a period of what Kuhn would call ordinary science, and no topics could ever be foreclosed or settled by any number of critical essays. Kinneavy might call such essays expressive or literary; he would class more "nearly automatic" criticism as scientific or persuasive, I think.⁴⁹ So rejection of this first standard seems to require a particular *purpose* for critical discourse. Naturally, any theory from which an expressive criticism derives will tend to be humanistic and uninsistent on any but the most global principles.⁵⁰

A rhetorical theory could conceivably provide no ideal for valid argumentation. This would amount to bypassing the whole notion of validity entirely. Such a theory would be descriptive.⁵¹ Rhetorical criticism from such a base would be scientific, in Kinneavy's terms. Criticism could be cumulative within a paradigm, and the quality of descriptive criticism would be judged by reference to whatever methodological standards the field might mandate. Critics working out of such a theory might well be tempted into "cookie cutter" criticism, using Aristotle or Perelman (*sans* ideals), for instance. But mechanical work is not inherent to descriptive theory. Some scholars might well be willing to sacrifice possession of an ideal of valid argumentation in order to gain cumulativeness.

As this essay has demonstrated, many of our theories have chosen to bypass specific judgments of validity in order to sustain an ideal. In such a theory "validity" takes on a different meaning – it can characterize a body of standards, but can never describe a specific argument (including the argument supporting the ideal standards themselves). For all practical purposes, then, such theories have no critically-applicable validity components. The frequency with which this strategic choice has been made may well explain why so little argument criticism has been stimulated by some of our more interesting recent theories. The essays which are to be written may borrow specific standards from another rhetoric, or may choose not to make critical judgments about specific arguments at all. The first option seems unlikely on grounds of conceptual coherence;⁵² the second would produce papers with a decidedly expressive flavor. The major challenge to such theories

is to resolve the tension between the ideal and the specific instance; I think our most self-conscious attempt to do this is probably the *New Rhetoric*.

A last alternative is to reject my specification that the judgment be univocally predictive. *Post hoc* judgments, very possibly based on effectiveness or some other actual reaction, could be unambiguous and meet all the other criteria. Such theories could still be predictive ("a fear appeal will probably produce a negative effect unless you present a solution, too"), but any estimates made before the event will necessarily be tentative to some degree. This kind of approach seems well suited to merge with descriptive theory, and to yield carefully documented historical criticism.

These final comments have, I hope, shown how essential the issue of argument validity is for rhetorical theory. How (or whether) a theory tries to answer "what is a good argument?" affects some of the theory's most important features, features which are not obviously related to the first canon. Consequently, some of the issues I have raised here seem to have the potential to ground criticism of theory.

Notes

1. The original draft of this paper was prepared for a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar for College Teachers titled "Rhetoric, Argumentation and Public Competence," held at the University of Wisconsin (Madison) in August, 1978, and directed by Lloyd Bitzer.

2. *Topics*, trans. W.A. Pickard-Cambridge, *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 8. (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952), 1.1.100a25. My definition, however, by not insisting on "necessarily" - as Aristotle would not if he had been discussing rhetoric and not dialectic - is less restrictive. In *Rhetoric*, trans. W. Rhys Roberts, *Great Books of the Western World*, vol. 9, I.2.1356b14-17, Aristotle says, "...when it is shown that, certain propositions being true, a further and quite distinct proposition must also be true in consequence, whether invariably or usually, this is called syllogism in dialectic, enthymeme in rhetoric." (My italics).

3. Unavoidably, some work is inconsistent with my definition. For example, see Ray E. McKerrow, "Validity and Rhetorical *Logoi*: The Search for a Universal Criterion, presented to the Speech Communication Association, New York City, November 1973. McKerrow says in this dialogue – and existentialism-based paper, "The criterion of validity is whether or not the argument defeats the union, weakens the cement that binds us together" (p.9). A related position concerns itself primarily with interpersonal argument, saying that argument should mean "a kind of interaction," and that it "is not a kind of reasoning so much as a kind of relationship into which people enter." Charles Arthur Willard, "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument The Constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument, "Journal of the American Forensic Association, 14 (1978), 125. Some other writers also tend to see argument as being, to a greater or lesser degree, a species of interpersonal communication. See Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 121-28; Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., "Rationality and Rhetoric in Philosophy," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59 (1973), 381-89; and Thomas B. Farrell, "Validity and Rationality: The Rhetorical Constituents of Argumentative Form," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 142-49. These writers might be tempted to say that a good argument is a socially responsible one. But since responsibility, authenticity, dialogic genuineness and the like are probably not rigorous enough for my purposes here, our search is not seriously affected by this exclusion. Much of the research and theory on what O'Keefe calls argument₂ tends to be descriptive rather than normative, and does not find itself naturally addressing the question of argument validity. Some of this work bases itself in the idea of a public, or a community of some kind, and that material will be considered later in this paper.
4. Charles Arthur Willard, "Some Questions About Toulmin's View of Argument Fields," in Jack Rhodes and Sara Newell (eds.). *Proceedings of the Summer Conference on Argumentation* (Alta, Utah: Speech Communication Association/American Forensic Association, 1980), p. 361.

5. But for an unusually philosophical and well considered exploration of the possibilities involved with effectiveness standards, see C.L. Hamblin, *Fallacies* (London: Methuen, 1970), Ch.7.

6. Ch. Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), p. 463.
7. Hamblin, pp. 242-43. The quotation is from p. 242.
8. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, secs. 6-7.
9. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Rhetoric and Public Knowledge," in Don M. Burks (ed.), *Rhetoric, Philosophy, and Literature: An Exploration* (West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1978).
10. Walter Lippmann, *Essays in the Public Philosophy* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1955), pp. 41-42.
11. John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1927), pp. 158-60.
12. This general position has attracted an impressive array of advocates. For instance, Karl R. Wallace, "The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 49 (1963), 239-49, says, "What a good reason is is to some extent fixed by human nature and to a very large extent by generally accepted principles and practices which make social life, as we understand it, possible" (248). Farrell holds that "...the actual premises of rhetorical argument may be regarded as valid, based upon their relation to the social knowledge attributed to specific audiences" (147). A final sample is from Ray E. McKerrow, "Argument Communities: A Quest for Distinctions," in Rhodes and Newell, pp. 214-27: In a socially grounded argument. "What counts as 'truth,' however, is determined by the social community, and not by some external standard of truthfulness. In this manner, the truths... may be no more than the accepted myths of the prevailing ideology" (p. 216).
13. *Phaedrus*, trans. R. Hackforth, in Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns (eds.), *Plato: The Collected Dialogues* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1961), 273e.
14. Lippmann, p. 41.
15. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, p. 31. They explain that the adherence of a universal audience "... refers of course, in this case,

not to an experimentally proven fact, but to a universality and unanimity imagined by the speaker, to the agreement of an audience which should be universal, since, for legitimate reasons, we need not take into consideration those which are not part of it" (p.31).

16. Wallace, 240.

17. Wallace, 248.

18. This is one of many similarities between Wallace's position and that of Walter Fisher. See Walter R. Fisher, "Toward a Logic of Good Reasons," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 64 (1978), 376-84; and Walter R. Fisher, "Rationality and the Logic of Good Reasons," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 13 (1980), 121-30. Fisher's ideas are distinctive in other respects, however, and I will deal with them in their own right later in this paper.

19. Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "Conversational Argument: A Discourse Analytic Approach," in J. Robert Cox and Charles A. Willard (eds.), *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research* (Carbondale, Ill.: Southern Illinois University Press, forthcoming); Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs, "Structure of Conversational Argument: Pragmatic Bases for the Enthymeme," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 66 (1980), 251-65; and Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "Argument as a Natural Category: The Routine Grounds for Arguing in Conversation," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 45 (1981), 118-32. Several other articles using a similar approach are also pertinent. See Robert E. Nofsinger, Jr., "On Answering Questions Indirectly: Some Rules on the Grammar of Doing Conversation," *Human Communication Research*, 2 (1976), 172-81; and John Waite Bowers, Norman D. Elliot and Roger J. Desmond, "Exploiting Pragmatic Rules: Devious Messages," *Human Communication Research*, 3 (1977), 235-42. However, I wish to emphasize that I do not mean to imply that any of these authors intend their work as a normative answer to "what is a good argument?" I am including this discussion because I think that others might find a plausible answer in this work, and because this research offers a particularly concrete example of public criteria.

20. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, sec. 7-8; Dewey, pp. 123-24.

21. Plato, *Republic*, trans. Paul Shorey, in Hamilton and Cairns, 6.511; *Phaedrus*, 273; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, sec. 8.

22. Aristotle, *Topics*, I.2; Plato, *Republic*, 6.511.
23. Plato, *Gorgias*, trans. W.D. Woodhead, in Huntington and Cairns, 486e–487e. The compliments immediately precede the quoted statement, which I regard as a continuation of the bait. In spite of all this, by 495 Callicles has apparently quit responding in earnest. This suggests that the flattery was needful. For a more trusting reliance on the quoted passage, see Perelman and Olbrachts-Tyteca, p. 36.
24. *Rhetoric*, I.2.1357a1–7. Also see Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, introduction and sec. 1; Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 231; and Robert L. Scott, "On Viewing Rhetoric as Epistemic," *Central States Speech Journal*, 18 (1967), 9–17.
25. See Glen E. Mills and Hugh G. Petrie, "The Role of Logic in Rhetoric," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 54 (1968), 260–67; Ray Lynn Anderson and C. David Mortensen, "Logic and Marketplace Argumentation," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 53 (1967), and G. David Mortensen and Ray Lynn Anderson, "The Limits of Logic," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 7 (1970), 71–78.
26. Scott's basic claim is that true and false propositions cannot in fact be simply identified, since truth is contingent. This leads him to discover several important features of rhetoric. See Scott.
27. See note 25.
28. Elsewhere, I have called these the three *loci* for argument theory, and have given more detail. See Dale Hample, "Modeling Argument," in Cox and Willard.
29. See Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited." *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 45 (1959), 399–408.
30. William F. Brewer, "Memory for the Pragmatic Implications of Sentences," *Memory & Cognition*, 5 (1977), 673–78. The examples cited are among those for which respondents "recalled" the "pragmatic implications" of a sentence *more often* than the sentence itself.
31. Anthony G. Greenwald, "Cognitive Learning, Cognitive Response to Persuasion, and Attitude Change," in Anthony G. Greenwald,

Timothy C. Brock and Thomas M. Ostrom (eds.). *Psychological Foundations of Attitudes* (New York: Academic Press, 1968), pp. 147-70. My summary of the research is drawn from several studies reported in Greenwald's paper.

32. For literature reviews, see Gerald Miller, "Some Factors Influencing Judgments of the Logical Validity of Arguments: A Research Review," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 276-86; and P.C. Wason and P.N. Johnson-Laird, *Psychology of Reasoning* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1972).

33. Mary Henle, "On the Relation Between Logic and Thinking," *Psychological Review*, 69 (1962), 366-78; J. Ceraso and A. Provitera, "Sources of Error in Syllogistic Reasoning," *Cognitive Psychology*, 2 (1971), 100-10; Vernon E. Cronen and Nancy Mihevc, "The Evaluation of Deductive Argument: A Process Analysis," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 124-31; and Thomas M. Steinfatt, Gerald R. Miller and Erwin P. Bettinghaus, "The Concept of Logical Ambiguity and Judgments of Syllogistic Validity," *Speech Monographs*, 41 (1974), 317-28.

34. Johnstone.

35. In another paper, I have claimed that many fallacies turn out simply to be inference patterns based upon images, rather than upon serial verbal thinking. See Dale Hample, "Symbolization and Fallacy," paper presented to Speech Communication Association, New York City, November 1980.

36. See Toulmin, Ch. 1, for a general account of argument fields. What I mean here by field is also quite similar to what I think Kuhn means by "paradigm," though of course I do not wish to restrict myself to scientific discourse. See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962). For some problems with the idea of field in Toulmin's work, see Willard, "Some Questions About Toulmin's View of Argument Fields."

37. I think this is so because a field contains a special audience or public. The literatures on fields and publics tend to be distinct, and drawn from different resources, but I am quite conscious that my need to discuss them separately has led to some slightly arbitrary classifications of writers - particularly McKerrow, Farrell, Wallace

and Fisher. I think that many of the arguments I make in one section of this essay also may apply to the other.

38. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, p. 465.

39. James L. Kinneavy, *A Theory of Discourse: The Aims of Discourse* (New York: Norton, 1971), p. 149.

40. If the form were valid, on the other hand, the pattern might be thought to typify thought in general rather than scientific thought in particular. McKerrow, "Argument Communities: A Quest for Distinctions," p. 217, gives examples of invalid arguments used in argumentation addressed to the social community; the oddity of these argument forms also suggests the power of a field to demand a peculiar type of argument.

41. *Rhetoric*, 1358a; Kinneavy, p. 249; Toulmin; Willard. "Some Questions About Toulmin's View of Argument Fields." p. 355.

42. McKerrow, "Argument Communities: A Quest for Distinctions," p. 216. Farrell takes a similar position; see Farrell. And Wallace says, "Things that are morally obligatory and acts that are praiseworthy seem to acquire their meaning and force in the sort of regard that others have for us" (244). The obligatory and the praiseworthy are two of Wallace's three categories of values (the other one is the desirable).

43. I do not mean to imply that the work I discuss in the next few paragraphs is necessarily based on field theory.

44. Fisher, "Toward a Logic of Good Reasons," 379-80. I am aware that I am stretching Fisher's thesis considerably. It is clear in his paper that the five criteria are not expected to make decisions about what to believe, and that they serve a largely educational function; see 383 for this. He also means by "good reason" a reason which properly uses a value. This double meaning of "good" - referring both to the idea of a good argument and to an argument which is about the good - seems also to be present in Wallace; see Fisher, 378n for his definition.

45. This is simply explained in J. Michael Sproule. *Argument: Language and Its Influence* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1980), pp. 84-92.

46. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, p. 461. Hamblin, pp. 251-52, mentions the appraisal of opposing arguments or facts as important to the "rationality" of accepting an argument's conclusions.
47. Paul D. Goodwin and Joseph W. Wenzel, "Proverbs and Practical Reasoning: A Study in Socio-Logic," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 65 (1979), 289-302 discuss the ways proverbs summarize in easily recoverable form some general argument patterns. These seem to me not restricted to any one field, unless we choose to define a field so as to include all of social intercourse (which misses the point of "field"). It is interesting in this connection that Goodwin and Wenzel notice some inconsistent proverbs.
48. Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 53.
49. Kenneavy.
50. I think that McKerrow, "Validity and Rhetorical *Logoi*: The Search for a Universal Criterion," may be an example of such a theory.
51. I would class most of my own work here. See, for example, Dale Hample, "Predicting Belief and Belief Change Using a Cognitive Theory of Argument and Evidence," *Communication Monographs*, 46 (1979), 142-46; and Dale Hample, "The Cognitive Context of Argument," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 45 (1981), 148-58. I would also put the Jacobs and Jackson work here (see note 19), as well as Burleson's research. See, for example, Brant R. Burleson, "A Cognitive-Developmental Perspective on Social Reasoning Processes," *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 45 (1981), 133-47. Possibly, one might decide that any of this work implies the ideal that an arguer ought to conform to the described norm. See the section of this essay on publics for the applicable objections to this formulation.
52. This comment may turn out to be a bit hasty. Wallace and others depend on logic. Perelman has made a serious effort to integrate an ideal (the universal audience) with techniques of argumentation. But I am not sure in either case that the specific standards (i.e., logic or the techniques of argumentation) bear any necessary or close relations to the ideals.

Chapter 18

In Defense of the Fallacy

Walter Ulrich

The fallacy has always been a maligned type of argument. Ever since the time of Aristotle scholars have viewed fallacies as undesirable forms of argument that should be avoided by all rational arguers and condemned by the enlightened critic. Those foolish enough to present such an argument were to be chastised and quickly corrected. This view is still held today by the majority of argumentation scholars. Textbooks frequently define a fallacy as an invalid type of argument or an argument that seems to be valid without being so. Toulmin, Rieke and Janik define fallacies as "arguments that can seem persuasive despite being unsound."¹ Govier suggests "a fallacy is a mistake in reasoning, a mistake which occurs with some frequency in real arguments and which is characteristically deceptive."² Many textbooks in argumentation have attempted to develop a list of common fallacies in an attempt to identify the nature of inadequate argument. Unfortunately, these treatments of the fallacy have often been superficial, often merely consisting of a few examples of the fallacy being described with little explanation of what it is about the argument that makes it fallacious.

In the past few decades Hamblin³ and others⁴ have attempted to develop detailed standards to guide our evaluation of fallacious arguments. This approach to argument has had only limited success, however, since many of these scholars have disagreed, not only about what are the essential characteristics of a fallacy, but whether some traditional fallacies are, in reality, fallacies. Hamblin argues:

The truth is that nobody, these days, is particularly satisfied with this corner of logic. The traditional treatment is too unsystematic for modern tastes. Yet to dispense with it, as some writers do, is to leave a gap that no one knows how to

fill. We have no *theory* of fallacy at all, in the sense in which we have theories of correct reasoning or inference.⁵

While recent works have attempted to develop a systemic approach to the study of the fallacy, there has not yet been a totally satisfactory treatment of fallacies. Woods and Walton observe:

At the present level of theory, an allegation of fallacy is more of a warning than a conclusive indication that an incorrect argument has been advanced, identified and cancelled. If the person accused is able to dispute the point - or if he or she has a defender - the allegation can be too easily dispatched. Merely identifying that the argument seems intuitively wrong by calling it a fallacy, or perhaps by tagging it with a Latin name, is not much use in arriving at some reasonable resolution of the dispute. Reasonable procedures for appealing to or constructing guidelines for argument are needed. In short, what we really need is a theory of the fallacies.⁶

Past approaches to the fallacy have begun with the assumption that a fallacy lacks any utility as an argument. This essay will attempt to develop an alternative view of fallacies. Rather than assuming that all (or most) fallacies are inadequate arguments, it will be suggested that many fallacies play a positive, if limited, function in argument. A fallacy should be viewed as an argument, supporting a degree of probability for a conclusion, that suffers from a generic weakness. This weakness need not be fatal for those types of argument where probability, rather than truth is the goal of the advocate. One implication of this view of fallacies is that, rather than arbitrarily rejecting all arguments that have been traditionally labeled fallacies, we need to develop standards for determining under what conditions fallacies can be useful, as well as determining how much weight should be given to these arguments. Factors such as the nature of the decision being made, the nature of conflicting arguments, and the presence of other supporting arguments would be relevant to such calculations.

It is not the position of this paper to suggest that *all* arguments should be given some weight by a critic of argument; there are undoubtedly numerous examples of arguments that do nothing to support the position being defended. However, many of those arguments that have traditionally been labeled as a fallacy do, in some situations, provide limited support for conclusions. In addition, viewing fallacies as partial-

ly legitimate arguments with a generic weakness may more accurately reflect the nature of this type of argument.

1. The Standard Treatment

Many textbooks in logic and/or argumentation include a section on formal and informal fallacies. This section will usually include a brief discussion of several of the better known fallacies, including some examples of these fallacies. The discussion of the fallacy in these textbooks often does little to increase our understanding of the nature of the fallacy. The "standard" treatment of the fallacy frequently consists merely of a general definition of the concept of a fallacy, a description of various practices which are categorized as fallacies, a classification of fallacies into various groups, and an illustration of the descriptions of fallacies with examples.⁷

Few people have been entirely satisfied with this approach to the study of fallacies. A few theorists, including Lambert and Ulrich⁸ and Massey⁹ have gone so far as to imply that the concept of the fallacy is outdated. Even those who support the concept of the fallacy see several weaknesses in the standard treatment of the fallacy. Woods and Walton note:

... current texts too often acquiesce in the "standard treatment," offering little by way of explanation of the fallacies other than supposedly illustrative examples. Yet, on closer inspection, many of the examples turn out either to be arguments that are not fallacious at all, or arguments in which guidelines are so lacking that a non-arbitrary sorting of the correct from the fallacious cases seems highly problematic or impossible.¹⁰

The main problem with the standard treatment of fallacies is that the discussion of many fallacies in current argumentation textbooks is often extremely simplistic. Texts argue that an appeal to authority, for example, is fallacious, for example, while noting that sometimes an appeal to authority might be valid (but not explaining how one could tell when such an appeal was warranted). The *ad hominem* argument is included as a fallacy, yet a version of that argument is acceptable in a court of law. The definition of many specific fallacies is often so broad as to include a wide range of legitimate arguments.¹¹ Unfortunately, a detailed discussion of what makes an argument

fallacious, as well as a discussion of the conditions that make similar arguments acceptable is rarely provided. In addition, several theorists note that the examples used to support fallacies were often inadequate. Some of the examples of fallacies are so weak that they were unlikely to be presented seriously by any advocate. Other examples do not fit neatly into traditional categories.¹²

Despite these problems, the standard view of the fallacy has remained the dominant one in our textbooks, perhaps following the line of reasoning of one author:

If only by dint of the inertia of a tradition in which there is some wisdom, it [the circumstantial *ad hominem*] should not be turfed out too hastily.¹³

The appeal to tradition dies hard.

2. The Fallacy Formalized

In response to the growing concern with the adequacy of the "standard view" of the fallacy, scholars began re-evaluating the nature of the fallacy. The publication of Hamblin's *Fallacies* in 1970 and the critical reaction to that work played a major role in the re-evaluation of the theory of the fallacies. In the years following its publication, numerous theorists began to systematically study specific fallacies.

This new era in the study of fallacies is still in its infancy, with a few fallacies such as the *petitio principii* (begging the question) and the *ad hominem* receiving a great deal of attention while others have remained neglected. Johnson and Blair observe:

Of no informal fallacy can it now be claimed that we now possess a widely accepted theoretical account, and many of the important fallacies have not yet been investigated in a theoretical way at all: e.g., *straw man* and *two wrongs*. Indeed, by any standard, one of the most important fallacies is *irrelevant reason ("non sequitur")*, yet an adequate analysis of the concept of relevance has yet to be carried out.¹⁴

While the recent work by Woods and Walton has done much to clarify the nature of several individual fallacies, much remains to be done.

This approach to these types of fallacies has resulted in the development of some specific guidelines for determining when an argument is a fallacy as well as determining when no fallacy has been committed. Rarely, however, has there been a claim that the resulting guidelines were comprehensive. In addition, the study of specific fallacies has frequently resulted in fewer and fewer arguments being classified as fallacious. A few examples illustrate this trend.

The *ad hominem* fallacy is one of the most extensively studied fallacies. Ironically, the vast majority of these essays suggest either that the number or irrelevant *ad hominem* arguments is quite small, or that we should consider abandoning the concept.¹⁵ Gerber, for example, suggests that:

Since Locke it has been taken for granted by a large consensus of writers on the subject that at least some varieties of *argumentum ad hominem* are fallacious... it is only by neglecting an important class of *ad hominem* statements that this thesis can be maintained, and the qualifications which would save the view are so serious as to render the chance of developing even a restricted version rather poor.¹⁶

Gerber suggests that the *tu quoque*, a form of the *ad hominem*, may sometimes be a legitimate argument.¹⁷ Other forms of *ad hominem* arguments have also been defended as being legitimate arguments. This view of the *ad hominem* may not be surprising; there are a number of cases where we approve of attacks against the speaker. In a court of law, attacking the credibility of a witness is widely recognized as a legitimate tactic. We encourage students to evaluate the strength of evidence by examining the source's credibility. In political campaigns, some (although not all) arguments relating to the character of a candidate are held to be relevant. Character attacks can be legitimate; the distinction drawn by those supporting the utility of this type of a fallacy is to *unwarranted* or irrelevant attacks. This standard, however is unclear; those making the *ad hominem* attack may often argue that the attack is, in fact, relevant. Whether an argument is a legitimate or illegitimate argument depends on a factual judgement (of relevance) independent of the form of the argument.

Similar problems arise when examining the *slippery slope* argument. Govier suggests that there are at least some slippery slope arguments that are legitimate.¹⁸ She concludes that "slippery slope arguments

may contain many mistakes but need not, as such, contain any.¹⁹ There are numerous examples where this type of argument may be very sound. There are cases where a single decision may commit an individual to subsequent action. This type of argument is heard in law courts, where an individual case may in fact create a precedent for latter decisions. Some literature in philosophy suggests that the slippery slope argument may play a role in the rule-utilitarian philosophical systems;²⁰ after all if individual decisions are based on general rules, an individual act can be justified only if it does not commit us to a class of similar acts. The question becomes whether the immediate decision can be distinguished from later decisions. The legitimacy of individual decisions needs to be determined using neutral principles that go beyond the immediate case; the slippery slope argument can illustrate the logical result of accepting a specific decision rule in the immediate case.²¹

Those who argue that to permit individual violation of rights may lead, one step at a time, to future violations can defend that position by pointing to historical examples where such fears were realized. Those who fight any new programs on the grounds that to permit one new spending program will make it easier to support a second program, then a third, and so on until the budget ceiling is meaningless may be arguing based upon an analysis of political reality. An alcoholic refusing a drink because, once the first drink is taken, others will follow may be acting based upon experience. All of these arguments are examples of slippery slope arguments yet most, if not all, would seem to have some utility. Whether or not a slippery slope argument is valid depends upon at least two factual issues: whether the initial act, in fact, will lead to additional action, and whether the present action be distinguished from other actions in a manner that justifies taking this single action, but not future harmful actions.

Woods and Walton have examined the *ad verecundiam* (appeal to authority) and admit that it, too has some utility.²² This conclusion also makes sense; everyday we resort to experts to tell us if we are sick or well, for information about the economy, scientific and technical matters, and so on. It is often impossible for individuals to know enough about a topic to make independent decisions, so authorities are frequently used to resolve disputes. Woods and Walton note:

In the case of the *ad verecundiam*, whether or not to charge that a fallacy has been committed is often obscured by the

plain fact that sometimes an appeal to authority is perfectly sound.²³

The problem with the fallacy is, in part, that individuals overstate the degree of confidence in the conclusion based on an authority.²⁴ In addition, Woods and Walton suggest specific guidelines for evidence,²⁵ but, as we will see, even these standards may not assist in evaluating when an appeal to authority is warranted.²⁶

The *ad baculum*, or appeal to force, has received less attention.²⁷ Again, there are many instances where the appeal to force may be legitimate.²⁸ For example, any discussion of our nuclear weapons policy will contain an implicit appeal to force: for example, the argument that if we do not freeze development of nuclear weapons the result will be a nuclear war could technically be such a fallacy. This type of argument is obviously a useful one. It might be argued that an appeal to fear is fallacious only if the arguer is the instrument of force, but this distinction may not be helpful. Initially, it means that whether or not an argument is fallacious depends on who makes the argument, not the substance of the argument; a position that further increases the number of legitimate *ad hominem* arguments. In addition, it often unclear when the arguer becomes the instrument of force. For example, if a Soviet leader argues that the deployment of the cruise missile in Europe might cause a war because radar errors may cause a mis-judgment on the part of the Soviet leadership, is that a fallacy? What about an arguer who suggests that if an action is taken place, he or she might become violent, even though this violence might be unintentional (e.g., the individual knows he/she has trouble controlling her or his temper). In these cases, the use of force might be the inevitable effect of a policy, independent of the argument.

I will discuss some other fallacies in the next section, but it is worth noting that theorists have argued that many other common fallacies may, in numerous situations, be legitimate arguments. Both Barker²⁹ and Sanford³⁰ agree that in some cases begging the question may be legitimate. Others have suggested that some versions of the fallacy of many questions are legitimate arguments.³¹ Even the "two wrongs make a right"³² and the fallacies of composition and division³³ have their supporters.

It should be clear that the broad categories employed by the traditional view of the fallacy results in numerous arguments being labeled as

fallacies that are, in fact, legitimate arguments. Toulmin, Rieke and Janik concede that

Most disturbingly to some people, arguments that are fallacious in one context may turn out to be sound in another context. Therefore, we shall not be able to identify any intrinsically fallacious forms of arguing.³⁴

The question becomes, how can we best distinguish between legitimate types of "fallacies" and illegitimate arguments.

3. A Reformulation of the Fallacy

Traditional treatments the fallacy have begun with the assumption that a fallacy is an illegitimate type of argument. After examining the specific fallacies, in a number of cases it has become clear that arguments initially considered fallacious have turned out to be legitimate arguments. It might be useful to approach fallacies from the opposite viewpoint, assuming they are legitimate unless they share certain characteristics. From this perspective, a fallacy could be viewed as an argument, supporting a degree of probability for a conclusion. There are two implications of this view for the study of fallacies: the fact that this view of fallacies sees them as establishing the probability of a conclusion, and this approach's emphasis on the generic weakness of fallacies. Both of these implications will be examined in this section of this essay.³⁵

Fallacies and Probability

That many arguments are based on probability has been developed by a number of authors.³⁶ We often are forced to make judgments based upon inadequate information. Often we have incomplete information about a problem, or we are forced to act before additional information can be gathered. In other cases we may lack the time to gather and assimilate all available information. In short, we are forced to act based on probabilities, not certainties.

In addition, there are a number of arguments studied by students of argument (in a favorable light) that do not establish certainty. A typical textbook will contain sections on induction, even though perfect

induction is rare. Argument based on causality, while an important part of argument, is, at best based on probability. The strength of even good sign reasoning is well below certainty. While many arguments seek to establish certainty, at best they can establish a certain level of probability for a conclusion.

If a fallacy is viewed as establishing certainty, it most certainly will be viewed as an inadequate argument. Once one lowers the standard for argument below the level of certainty, however, the door is opened for the utilization of a number of arguments that have traditionally been viewed as being fallacious. While these arguments may be fallacious if they are claimed to demonstrate certainty, they may be legitimate if they are viewed as demonstrating probability (or less).

To illustrate this concept, consider a type of argument, that has been neglected by many theorists. In the previous section I indicated that several theorists began with the traditional concept of the fallacy, only to discover that some of these traditional fallacies might be legitimate after all. What does it mean, however, to say that these arguments are not fallacious? For example, some appeals to authority are legitimate arguments. Does that mean they demonstrate certainty? For example, it is unlikely that Woods and Walton would suggest that even if an appeal to authority met all of their five standards it would demonstrate certainty. Similarly in many cases *ad hominem* arguments may be useful arguments, but they are not conclusive arguments. In short, the "lost fallacy" arguments, those arguments that initially seem to be fallacies but are not, do not demonstrate certainty; they merely establish some level of probability.

Other fallacies may function in a similar, though perhaps not as useful, manner. Many fallacious arguments add something to our knowledge, even if they might not add significant amounts to our knowledge. How much credibility should be given to a fallacious argument should be determined by weighing it against other available evidence. Where no counter-evidence or arguments exist, even weak fallacious arguments might be useful; where there is strong counter evidence, even the 'lost fallacies' may not be sufficient to alter our beliefs.

For example, an appeal to authority may not be considered fallacious for Woods and Walton if the authority is an expert. However, if I am also an expert in the field with access to other information, such an appeal should not be strong, even if the other experts are very

reputable. Presumably I should rely on my own reasoning, rather than deferring to others. If there are more objective ways to determine the truth of a position, even a strong appeal to authority would be of little use. On the other hand, if I have no information on a subject except the testimony of a sometimes unreliable source, I might have to act on that information because it is all that is available. In short, while stronger evidence increases the confidence I may have in a decision, the weight given to the evidence might depend on the availability of other evidence.

In addition, the question of whether a specific argument falls into the "clearly fallacious" category or into the "lost fallacy" category is rarely clear. The revised view of the fallacy assumes some type of a threshold; arguments above this threshold have some utility, those below this threshold can be termed fallacious. In reality, however, this threshold is, at best, unclear. At what point is an authority enough of an expert so that the *ad verecundiam* is not committed? How many examples must be given to avoid a *hasty generalization*? The dividing line is not clear; instead there is a grey area blurring the distinction between the two types of fallacies. Nor is it clear that the fallacies that do not meet this standard have no utility.

Rather than waiting for the perfect argument, we should recognize that we frequently must rely on imperfect argument. The test for a fallacy should not be whether it demonstrates truth, but whether it adds to something our understanding of the problem. From this perspective, many traditional fallacies, even weak ones, may be useful. While the strength of the argument may vary, most fallacies may add something to our understanding of the world, even if this is not enough to produce a certain conclusion. Viewed from this perspective, many traditional fallacies might be useful arguments. Rather than developing a threshold for when a fallacy is a legitimate argument in isolation, it might be wiser to draw the line between fallacious and nonfallacious types of arguments based on the nature of the decision and the availability of other evidence. Better still, it might be wise to focus on what weight should be given to these arguments.

The *appeal to tradition*, for example, is frequently cited as being undesirable; after all, traditions can be wrong, and changing conditions may require new actions. At the same time, virtually every debate textbook defends the concept of presumption; that we should remain with the present system until it is shown to be inadequate.³⁷ While

there may be a question about the nature of presumption as an argument, it is clear that, in the absence of any evidence on a topic, many theorists would sanction the use of this fallacy to guide an audience. Whether an argument is a fallacy or a legitimate use of presumption should not depend on the section of the textbook mentioning it.

The *appeal to ignorance* may also be useful in some arguments. Robinson³⁸ concedes that at least some of these appeals are legitimate, even if other appeals to ignorance may be suspect. In a court of law, for example, it would be legitimate to note that there is no information that a client is guilty to support the conclusion that the client is innocent. While the argument does not prove the conclusion, it does help support the position. This is particularly clear when there is no evidence supporting a position when there *should* be such evidence. If I suggest that New York City was not destroyed yesterday because there is no evidence that New York City has vanished, that would seem to be a powerful argument. In addition, combined with other fallacies, the appeal to ignorance might be useful. For example, I might argue that many people are eating at a certain diner, and since there is no reason to believe the food is bad, I might assume the food will be good. This conclusion might not be certain, but it is strong enough to warrant eating at the establishment.

The *hasty generalization* poses other problems. Here the question is one of a threshold: at what point do we have enough examples to act? Even with very few examples, however, we do have some information about the conclusion. If I know one member of a family I know more about that family than if I knew no family members. While I may not be able to reach a perfect conclusion about the family, I can reach some tentative, even if not totally reliable, conclusions. Even in social scientists theorists are working on ways of understanding reality by examining only a few cases³⁹ In addition, sometimes there are only a few examples relevant to the argument, and therefore we must rely on those few examples. How many Vietnams must the United States be involved in before we decide intervention is undesirable? One is reminded of the social psychology journals that refused to publish articles about the holocaust because they were not replicable; this hardly suggests that we cannot learn *something* about the world by examining a few examples.

This same principle may apply even to formal fallacies. For example, *affirming the consequent* is commonly termed a formal fallacy. Consider the following example:

All basketball players are over six feet tall
Fred is over six feet tall.
(so) Fred is a basketball player.

Obviously this argument is invalid; the conclusion does not necessarily follow from the first two premises. However, I do think that the first two premises do add to our knowledge concerning the conclusion. Until we know the second premise, the odds against Fred being a basketball player may be very remote. Once we learn the minor premise, while we may not know the conclusion is certain, the probability of the conclusion is much greater than it would be without knowing the two premises.

[Without the second premise, the odds of Fred being a basketball player are 1/(all individuals concerned), while with the second premise the odds are 1/(those individuals over 6 feet tall); a much lower number.]

The strength of a fallacy should be viewed compared to alternative evidence and arguments on the topic. The fact that a fallacy does not demonstrate certainty is not an indictment of the argument. The question is whether or not the fallacy adds to our understanding of the issue being debated. By this lower standard, many fallacious arguments can be viewed as useful. The arguments may not be as strong as we would like, but we must act on the information available to us. Even in statistics, there are those who argue that we can learn a lot from using methods that may not be perfect.⁴⁰ The critic is forced to weigh weak arguments against each other. It should be realized, however, that whether action is warranted may require the meeting of a thresholds in some cases. Various presumptions in law and public policy have been developed to set minimum standards for evidence and argument; many fallacies may not meet these standards. That does not mean, however, that these arguments are of no use for those arguments where the risks involved are low and no alternative evidence exists.

Fallacies and Generic Weaknesses

There should be a second component of a revised view of fallacies; the *weakness of a fallacy should be viewed as generic*. By this I mean that to call an argument a certain type of fallacy is to say that the argument tends to have a certain type of weakness. This type of weakness can suggest certain types of counterarguments that might be made against the fallacy. These weaknesses might act as *topoi* for the critic of argument. There is a tendency of many critics to attach the label "fallacy" to an argument when the accuracy of that label depends upon a factual assumption that is, at best, debatable. For example, a critic may dismiss an argument as being a hasty generalization when the advocate believes both that a sufficient numbers of examples have been presented and that the examples are typical. In short, the labeling of the argument may be done to prematurely dismiss arguments, rather than to promote an analysis of the strength of the argument.

For example, an argument dismissed as a *false dilemma* may be legitimate if the arguer can explain why the other alternatives can also be dismissed (presumably in most debates the advocates do not have time to discuss *all* alternatives; or they might think it "obvious" why the alternatives left out were undesirable). Fallacies relating to causality are frequently so labeled because the critic makes an assumption about the subject being argued. A critic that suggests there is a third cause that produces both the cause and the effect might make such a claim prematurely. The advocate might be able to deny the factual assumption made by the critic. Causality is a complex field of study, and many attacks on causal studies attempt may assume too rigorous a standard; other attacks may turn out to be in error. In almost all cases the criticism involves an attack that is compelling only if one assumes the truth of other elements in the causal relationship.⁴¹

The fallacy of suppressed evidence makes the factual assumption that the evidence left out is relevant to the conclusion. To label an argument as a slippery slope requires assuming that the slope is not slippery, which as previously indicated is not always the case. Rowland gives the example of a false analogy that compares U.S. and British gun control laws⁴², yet a case can be made that, in the critical areas being compared, these countries might be analogous (and the strength of Rowland's attacks may depend upon the nature of the conclusions

being drawn). Even if Rowland is accurate in this specific instance, it is only because his attack can withstand counterattack.⁴³ After all, no analogy is perfect; the adequacy of the analogy depends upon how well the analogy can be defended against attacks.

Understanding the theory of fallacies may be useful in assisting speakers to isolate weaknesses in arguments, much as preparing debaters to argue generic arguments helps them prepare for a debate. In neither case is the preparation of the attack conclusive; given the opportunity the initial advocate may be able to easily dismiss the attack. In some cases the generic weakness may be fatal; in others it will be of little consequence. This determination should be made in the open market place of ideas, not by an individual critic who does not have access to the defense of the fallacy.

Some theorists have suggested the use of a *principle of charity*⁴⁴ in evaluating fallacies: the critic should formulate the argument (supplying missing premises, etc.) in a manner that produces the strongest possible argument. Even these theorists, however, disagree about how this can be done. In addition, this does not solve the problem when the criticism concerns the *factual* truth of the missing premise, nor does it address the inability of the arguer to defend the argument against the criticism of the individual labeling the argument as a fallacy.

By viewing the fallacy as an argument establishing probability with a generic weakness we emphasize the contribution that even fallacious arguments might make to our understanding, while noting the limitations of those arguments. How serious these limitations are will depend on the specific argument and the nature of other arguments available. Many times the criticism may be fatal for an argument. In other cases the importance of the decision might dictate a high standard for argument that the fallacy cannot meet. This does not deny that in some cases the fallacy might be an acceptable type of argument.

4. Conclusion

All argument cannot have truth as its goal. Often we must act based upon evidence that may not be conclusive. In other cases perfect evidence and/or arguments are not available. In still other situations the effort required to discover anything approximating the truth is

too difficult. Frequently the decisions involved may be so trivial that absolute truth is an unnecessary goal.

The fallacy has always been a misunderstood argument. Even those theorists working in informal logic will concede that there are many examples of arguments erroneously labeled as fallacious. In fact, in those arguments where probability (or even lower levels of understanding) is the goal, we may be forced to rely on fallacious argument. In the absence of stronger arguments to the contrary, the fallacy may have a legitimate role in argument. To prematurely discount an argument as being fallacious emphasizes the argument's weaknesses while at the same time ignoring any positive contributions such an argument might have to our understanding of the world. Given that few "perfect" arguments can be found in ordinary discourse, such a strategy is unwise. At the same time, it is important to understand the nature of the weaknesses of these types of arguments, if for no other reason than to avoid placing undue weight to these arguments. The objections to fallacies may act as *topoi* for a critic of argument; suggesting potential arguments against an advocate; in some cases these attacks will prove successful, in others not. The fallacy may have only a limited function in argument, but that function should not be ignored.

Notes

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12. See Finocchiaro, 13-22.

13. Douglas Walton, "What is Logic About?" *Informal Logic Newsletter*, 4 (November 1981), 4.

14. Ralph H. Johnson and J. Anthony Blair, "The Recent Development of Informal Logic," in Blair and Johnson, p. 8.

15. See D. Gerber, "On Argumentum ad Hominem," *Personalist*, 55 (1975), 23-29; John Woods and Douglas Walton, "Ad Hominem, Contra Gerber," *Personalist*, 58 (April 1977), 141-144; Lawrence M. Hinman,

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17. Trudy Govier, "Worries about *Tu Quoque* as a Fallacy," *Informal Logic Newsletter*, 3 (June 1981), 2-4.

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20. See, for example, L. A. Whitt, "Acceptance and the Problem of Slippery-Slope Insensitivity in Rule-Utilitarianism," *Dialogue*, 23 (1984), 649-659.

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43. It may be argued that the truth of the premises assumed by the critic are acceptable if they are commonly assumed to be true. This, of course, would be either an *ad populum* or an *ad verecundiam*. In addition, it would bias the assessment of the argument against those that question current values. While it might be claimed that those who attack current values should have to support that attack, the time constraints imposed on an advocate might preclude the detailed explanation and support of all assumptions made by the advocate. In addition, the advocate might be using assumptions of the specific

audience being addressed, which may not be the same as that of the critic.

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Chapter 19

Everyday Argumentation from an Informal Logic Perspective

J. Anthony Blair

1. Introduction

My title conjures up several questions. What is "everyday argumentation"? What is "informal logic"? What informal logic perspective am I giving: my own, or that of a consensus in the field? By and large I shall mean by "everyday argumentation" the non-technical arguyngs of people who are not aware of or self-conscious about discussions of the nature of argument, argumentation, or logic. What I understand by "informal logic" is partly descriptive - there is a body of work declared by its authors to be informal logic - and partly prescriptive - I have my own views about how informal logic ought to be conceived. In the paper I will be presenting views I subscribe to. Sometimes others share them, and sometimes they don't (I will try to indicate which are which).

Most philosophers who work in informal logic did so at first and do so still partly because they are teachers whose classroom goals include showing students how to interpret and assess everyday argumentation, and in some cases how to construct arguments for everyday reasoning purposes. The instructional origins and continued instructional reference of informal logic are tied closely to two of the key words of the title: "everyday" and "informal." The informal logic movement [as constituted by philosophers in the U.S. and Canada starting in the 1970's] was begun by logic teachers who (a) wanted their courses to be useful to students reacting to and using argumentation in their daily lives, not merely in certain esoteric or highly technical contexts, and (b) had come to believe that formal logic (that is, mathematical or symbolic logic, but also non-formalized purely deductive logic) does not meet this need (some say not at all, others say not by itself) (Johnson and Blair, 1980).

I take it as my first task to spell out the working concept of argument shared by many in informal logic. Then I focus on the microstructure models of argument this concept implies. All of this I take to be background for tasks informal logicians set their students: first, identifying everyday arguments, and second, evaluating them, and these two topics are taken up in the next two sections. In the latter, particularly, I present my own developing views.

2. A Concept of Argument

What is argumentation, from this point of view? Initially it was conceived as the species of *persuasive* discourse in which the persuasion is supposed to be rational.

Argumentation thus understood is a pragmatic concept, not a semantic or syntactic one. The arguer is trying to change the audience's mind in some respect. Imagine the range of possible doxastic attitudes towards a proposition, P , represented by the following simplified list:

- (1) convinced of not- P ,
- (2) provisionally believe not- P ,
- (3) undecided about P ,
- (4) provisionally believe P ,
- (5) convinced of P .

The aim of the arguer, so understood, is to move the audience from some lower number to some higher number on this list.

Second, argumentation is seen as *rational* persuasion or advocacy in the sense that reasons – instead of non-rational devices – are used by the arguer to persuade the audience. The notion of rationality is given content partly by certain contrasts: e.g., with force, emotion, or non-verbal means of persuasion. [These contrasts turn out, on examination, to be less sharp than it is sometimes assumed they are. For example, there are disputes about whether appeals to force or to pity are rational (e.g., Kielkopf 1980).] In general terms, argumentative discourse is considered rational persuasion if it consists of a set of propositions, advanced as reasons for accepting another proposition or for performing an action, which are intended to be so related to it that it would be inconsistent (in some sense) to accept the set of reasons but not accept the proposition or endorse the performance of the action in question. The operative sense of inconsistency

is not limited to logical contradictoriness (see Scriven 1976, 30–33). Argumentation is either the process or the product of such rational persuasion. I think this picture is roughly accurate, although it is painted in very broad strokes.

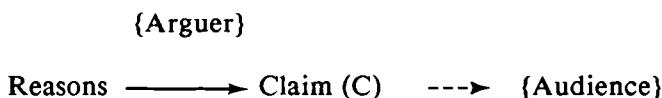


Fig. 1. *Argumentation as Persuasion or Advocacy*
(much simplified)

More recently, some informal logicians have attached to the conception of argumentation as *rational persuasion or advocacy* the distinct but compatible notion of argumentation as *rational inquiry or investigation* (e.g., Johnson and Blair 1983, 198–200). The roles occupied in the process of investigative or inquiring argumentation are those of proponent and critic, or questioner and answerer, instead of the roles of advocate and audience, which belong to persuasive argumentation. The inquiry's aim is to discover whether an hypothesis or postulate is worthy of rational acceptance. Since "non-rational inquiry" (unlike "non-rational persuasion") seems self-contradictory, there are no contrast terms to give content to the notion of rationality here, and I think it is best given sense by reference to the requirement of consistency (in a broad sense) between reasons or evidence and claims accepted on the basis of them.

Two additional components of rationality have recently been emphasized, namely the requirements of impartiality and completeness (Paul, 1982; Perkins *et al.*, 1987). Both are matters of degree, but the idea is that it is not rational to accept a claim under investigation on the basis of an incomplete survey of the available or needed evidence (even if the data already collected support it), or on the basis of occupying a perspective which may distort one's appreciation of the extent and force of evidence or reasons. Paul, for instance, cites egocentricity and stereotyping as limitations of perspective. The two are often related, since various kinds of partiality can prevent one from being aware of the presence, weight or need of additional evidence. The inquiry is fully rational, then, when the claim in question

is thoroughly examined and a final position taken based on a balancing of all the relevant considerations on both sides of the issue, including an estimation of the weights of the various lines of support and objection.

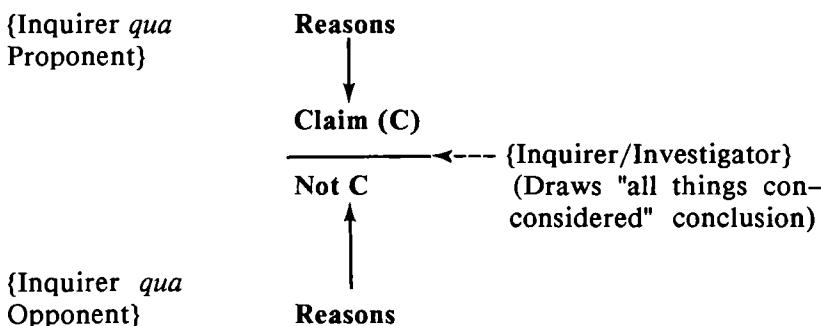


Fig. 2. *Argumentation as Inquiry or Investigation*
(much simplified)

From a normative point of view, I believe the two conceptions of argument – rational persuasion and rational inquiry – can be joined, and indeed ought to be assimilated. Descriptively, it is true, they represent two distinct models or ideal types. However, if the assent of the audience of persuasive argumentation is to be rational, it presumably should be based on a thorough examination of the best available cases for and against the claim in question, in other words, on a rational inquiry. (See Meiland 1981, Ch. 4, for an example of one possible way to accomplish this assimilation in practice, from the point of view of the arguer.) Viewing argumentation dynamically, as process (instead of statically, as product), there will be a time-related difference between arguer and audience of rational advocacy/inquiry argumentation: the arguer will have become convinced of the claim in question as a result of an investigation *prior to* the time at which s/he presents the investigation to the audience, and the audience's acceptance will occur (if it does) only at the end of the arguer's presentation.

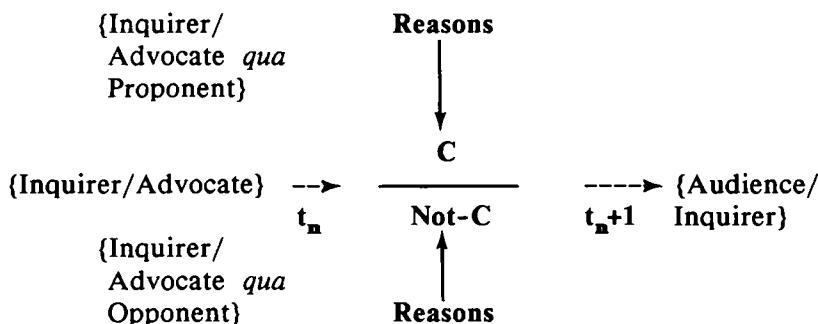


Fig. 3. *Argumentation as Inquiry-cum-Advocacy*
(much simplified)

The distinction between advocacy and investigation cuts across another, mainly pedagogically-motivated distinction made in informal logic – the distinction between evaluating arguments and constructing them.

Initially, informal logicians were interested only in teaching the understanding and use of standards for evaluating the cogency of persuasive arguments, taking the point of view of a critic in the audience. (A persuasive argument is "cogent," in the sense in which I am using the term, just when the reasons adduced make it rational to accept the claim which they are offered to support.) "Does the arguer give good enough reasons to support his or her conclusion?" was the key question, followed by, "What are the standards of good argument?" The perspective was that of a passive (but judging) observer of arguments as products or *faits accomplis* and it remains the prevalent perspective in the informal logic classroom (see any of the textbooks referred to in Johnson and Blair, 1985, 193–196). From this perspective it was often forgotten that the judge or critic of argumentation forms opinions which themselves are supposed to result from rational inquiry (Hamblin 1970, 244). Moreover the judge or critic also often promulgates his/her critique, which in effect constitutes advocating the acceptance of certain claims.

The teacher who insists that students argue in support of their assessments of others' arguments cannot overlook these compli-

cations for long. As a result of observing deficiencies in students' abilities to construct cogent arguments in support of their critical judgments, some informal logic instructors began to try to teach their students how to construct cogent arguments. The anecdotal evidence of their own students' performances led many teachers to hypothesize that the automatic transfer of a skill in critical evaluation to a skill in argument construction is low. In spite of this development, strategies for teaching argument construction remain underdeveloped in informal logic (Johnson and Blair 1985, 191–192). [Johnson and I (1983, Ch. 8) teach argument construction by teaching the structure of dialectical argumentative inquiry and by having students construct such inquiries.]

Given these purposes of argumentation, and given these objectives of informal logic instruction, how is argumentation identified in everyday discourse, from the perspective of informal logic? There are really two questions here. One is: What will everyday discourse arguments look like? The other is: How is it determined that an argument is present? These questions may seem equivalent, but they are not. The first one asks for structures or models. The second asks for ways of determining that a piece of discourse contains material which should be interpreted as having one of those structures, as fitting one of the models.

3. Argument Models

There are two necessary conditions for the presence of **an argument**, from this point of view. (1) There is some position or point of view that some person wishes to investigate or to get others to accept. This position (**P**) will be the affirmation or the denial of a single proposition (**p**): **P** = "It is the case that **p**" or "It is not the case that **p**" – where **p** represents any proposition expressible in a simple positive assertive sentence. (2) There is at least one proposition adduced to support the position. "Adducing" is the act of putting or bringing forward for acceptance. An adduced proposition "supports" a position just when it would be inconsistent or implausible in some sense to accept the adduced proposition but reject the position (see Scriven 1976, 31–33). (I am quite aware that I owe an account of "inconsistent or implausible in some sense." In this paper I must rely on intuitive understanding of these concepts to make the concept of argument intelligible.) Notice

that by this definition there can be an argument even if the reason adduced to support the position fails to support it or if the adduced reason is not itself accepted.

The minimal argument will be a position backed by a single proposition; I call it a "simple atomic argument." The next order of complexity consists of the conjunction of two or more single propositions adduced to support a position, where no conjunct alone supports P , but the conjunction does. I call such arguments "linked atomic arguments" (cf., Thomas 1986, 58). It is common to use "argument" to refer, variously, to the reasons plus the position they are adduced to support, or to the reasons alone. I will use it both ways, and the context should make clear which is meant.

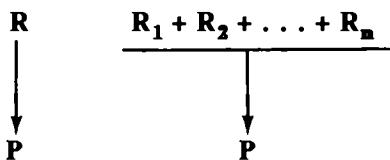


Fig. 4. *Simple and Linked Atomic Arguments Patterns.*

Arguers can give reasons which are unrelated to each other to support a position. Thus one can find, or offer, a number of simple and/or linked atomic arguments for a position. Thomas (1986, 60) calls this convergent reasoning; Nolt (1984, 31) calls it a "split-support" argument. It may be diagrammed as follows:

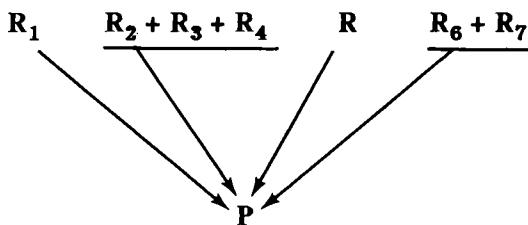


Fig. 5. A Typical Convergent or Split-Support Argument Pattern.

How many arguments are pictured in Figure 5? Clearly, the answer depends on what you are counting. There is one convergent or split-support argument, because there is just one position supported. There are four atomic arguments because there are four sets of propositions each of which separately and independently supports the position.

The models discussed so far are arguments largely abstracted from argumentation, and so are great oversimplifications. Argumentation as a process consists of the engaging of advocate and audience, in the case of persuasion, or of proponent and opponent, in the case of inquiry. The relationship between occupiers of these roles is interactive; they take turns in a dialogue: argumentation is dialectical in this sense. Hence any diagram of the structure of argumentation will have to move across or down the page following a time-line, or else will have to be complex enough to show functional differences.

Nevertheless, each simplest "move" in a dialectical interchange will consist of an atomic argument. The moment one begins to produce iterations of atomic arguments, or else convergent arguments, one has encountered or anticipated a dialectical interchange. For example, if one gives a reason for a position, and then offers support for that reason, one has either anticipated or received a question about or an objection to the reason. Otherwise there is no point to supporting it. Similarly, if one offers more than one line of argument in support of a position, as in the case of a convergent argument, one has either anticipated

or received a question about or an objection to all but one of them, for otherwise one alone would suffice.

<i>Proponent</i>	<i>Opponent (actual/anticipated)</i>
(a) 1. P , because R_1 2. R_1 , because R_2 .	1. Why R_1 ?
(b) 1. P , because R_1 2. P , because S_1	1. Not (P , because R_1), because....

Fig. 6

- (a) *Dialectical basis for iteration of atomic argument.*
- (b) *Dialectical basis for convergent argument.*

An advocate might argue: " P is true, because it follows from R_1 , and R_1 is true because it follows from R_2 ." Or the advocate might argue: " P is true because it follows from R_1 , and moreover because it also follows from R_2 ." My contention is that when the argument incorporates the second atomic argument for P (line 2.), that is always because an opponent responds (or is imagined or anticipated to respond) to the proponent's first atomic argument (the move on line 1).

An exception occurs for that special class of arguments that consist of unfolding implications. Let me illustrate. Suppose the advocate, who is trying to get you to accept P , knows that you accept proposition R , and also believes (s/he can show) that P follows indirectly from R . In that case, the arguer might lay out the steps that lead from R to P : S because R , T because S , U because T , and R because U . This chain of reasoning would have to be allowed to count as a single step or move in a dialectical exchange.

It might be argued that the simplest move in a dialectical interchange will consist of only a simple atomic argument: even a linked atomic argument contains more than one premise, so it cannot be the simplest possible move. Whether that would be a mistake depends upon which of two varieties of "linked" arguments one

is dealing with. I class linked arguments as simple precisely because I have in mind arguments in which it is the *set* of linked premises which functions as support for the position. (E.g., Jones is left-handed and the murderer was left-handed, so Jones could be the murderer.) In these arguments, any incomplete subset of the premises considered by itself is not relevant to the position at issue. [(a) Jones is left-handed, so Jones could be the murderer. (b) The murderer was left handed, so Jones could be the murderer.] Hence to permit adducing such a single statement as a premise in a dialectical interchange is to permit blatantly irrelevant statements to count as arguments. This does seem to me to be a mistake, for an interlocutor must at least *intend* a statement to be relevant in order to be arguing.

A second sort of "linked" argument, however, is complete with one premise, or some subset of its premises. This is an argument in which evidence accumulates, with a single piece of evidence constituting some support for the position, and each additional piece of evidence adding strength to that support. (E.g., "It's sunny this morning so today will be a sunny day." Addition #1: "In this part of the world, a sunny morning is rarely followed by clouds that same day." Addition #2: "The forecast stated that once the sun comes out we are in for 24 hours of clear skies." Etc.) I shall call such arguments "cumulative" arguments, to distinguish them from linked arguments as I defined them in the previous paragraph. (As far as I know, the distinction between linked and cumulative arguments has not been made in the informal logic literature.)

The details which I have been discussing belong to the microstructure of argumentation. Normally argumentation in everyday life consists of large complexes of these components. However I think it is necessary to understand the microstructure in these dialectical terms in order to be able to explain some of the features of everyday argumentation encountered in its natural habitat. I now want to turn to the task of spotting and identifying arguments in their everyday dress doing their everyday jobs.

4. Argument Field-Marks

Faced with a sample of everyday discourse, (a) how is it decided that argumentation is present, (b) how is it determined what parts of the discourse belong to the argumentation, and (c) how is it decided what are the argumentative functions performed by the various units of discourse identified as belonging to the argumentation?

A. Factors indicating the presence of an argument in everyday discourse.

1. The speaker's or writer's intentions. (i) *Expressed intention.* If the speaker or writer declares that she is giving an argument, that strongly indicates the presence of argument. (ii) *Terminological cues.* The use of illative particles (such as "therefore," "so," "since," "because," "for," "hence") and of argument-signifying phrases (such as, "I conclude that," "which goes to show," "for the reason that," "from this it follows that") are strong indicators that the writer or speaker intends to be arguing. (Some of the conjunctions and other expressions that can function as illative particles and argument-signifying phrases, such as "because" and "that's why," can also serve to introduce explanations, so they are not definitive indications of the intention to argue.)

However, the speaker's or writer's intentions, stated or inferred, while highly indicative of argumentation, are not conclusive evidence or grounds for interpreting the discourse as argumentative. One reason is that people do not always understand the concept of argument. Some confuse arguments with explanations, for instance. As well, some people do not know how to use the language well enough for their verbal signals to be trustworthy. Also, people can intend to be arguing, and try to argue, but fail. Arguing is a social practice, and as such it must be learned and requires a modicum of skill and understanding. While it might be difficult in practice to decide whether someone is arguing badly or is failing to argue, the two cases are in principle distinct. I am thinking of cases where the context and terminological cues indicate argument, but what the writer or speaker says is so totally garbled that no reasons that have the faintest connection to the

point can be identified – not even question-begging ones. Admittedly such cases are rare, but they do occur.

2. The habitat or occasion of the discourse. The habitat of the discourse can be an indication of the presence of argument. For instance, argument is to be expected in contexts where there are two or more parties in disagreement (courts of law, negotiations), or in contexts in which there is a traditional expectation that positions taken will be supported by evidence or other kinds of reasons (scholarly writing). As well, the situation which occasions the discourse can indicate the likelihood of argument. Arguments occur in disputes or quarrels, or when one person contradicts another, or when someone challenges conventional wisdom. The habitat and the occasion of the discourse supply grounds for expecting argument, and for deciding borderline or hard-to-judge cases. They do not guarantee that the discourse will be argumentative: they are not criteria of the presence of argumentation.

3. The "logic" of the discourse. Taking the statements more or less in the given order and organization, if it is possible to find a subset of them which supports one of the others, then, provided that such support is plausible, or at least provided that it is more plausible than interpreting the discourse as not containing an argument, then the discourse should be interpreted as containing that argument. The criterion of "the logic of the discourse" relies on what has been called "the principle of charity" – the principle that, other things being equal one should interpret discourse in the most rational way (see Johnson 1981). This principle is in fact a general principle of textual interpretation, and it presupposes general rational intent by human beings. Employing this indicator also entails the existence of, and requires an appeal to, normative standards of cogent argument.

B. Factors distinguishing extraneous discourse.

The speaker's or writer's intentions and the logic of the discourse also serve to distinguish the argument in the discourse from other sentences which do not belong to the argument. Language users have uneven skills in the employment of what might be termed metacognitive indicators, those expressions which point to the argument without themselves being part of it (e.g., "I have three

reasons for my view. First,... "or "Now someone may object that ..."), but these indicators do help the interpreter identify the discourse belonging to the argument. Also, a sentence in the discourse that would be irrelevant to the conclusion, or that cannot plausibly be fit in as a reason, would be ruled out as extraneous to the argument itself. The principle of charity operates here as well – even after it is clear that *some* argument is present – as do normative standards of cogent argument.

C. Factors deciding the precise argumentative function of different parts of the discourse.

One component of the task of identifying an argument in a sample of discourse is putting its parts in place. That job is not just a simple matter of distinguishing reasons or premises from claims or conclusions. The dialectical nature of argumentation means that there is a long list of possible argumentative functions performed by sentences that belong to an argument. This list would include, but not be restricted to:

1. claims;
2. reasons directly supporting a claim;
3. anticipated objections (i) to the claims, or (ii) to the reasons, or (iii) to the logical connection between the reasons and the claim;
4. replies to the anticipated objections of all three sorts;
5. anticipated objections to the replies, and so on.

And many of these different argumentative moves can instantiate different varieties of function. An objection, for instance, can range in force from a refutation to a question. A reply to an objection can itself be a refutation, or it may consist of a qualification, or a proviso.

Furthermore, some of the discourse can play an important role in the argumentation without itself belonging to the argument – I have in mind what I call "meta-argumentative" discourse. Included here would be discussions about who has the burden of proof. I would also contend that statements attesting to a premise's credibility, such as appeals to authority, are meta-argumentative, though most informal logicians treat these as themsel-

ves arguments. I think when people give arguments in everyday contexts they not only present the argument, but they also comment on it and on the interchange with their interlocutor, while they are presenting it. In other words, arguers are aware of the communicative function of their discourse, and while they are sending their message, they help it along in ways designed to ensure its favorable reception.

5. Assessment

The business of extracting an argument from the everyday discourse in which it is embedded is preparation for the task the informal logician is primarily interested in – assessing the argument, or more exactly, assessing the logical cogency of the argument. Here we move into territory that is more contested. My own specification of the concept of cogency, which I shall state without defending it here, is as follows:

An argument is cogent, that is, logically compelling, for some person S at some time t just in case its reasons constitute an adequate basis at t for S 's accepting the position they are adduced to support, other things being equal.

Although there is some disagreement among informal logicians about the criteria of a logically cogent argument, there is general agreement that such criteria exist – that there are non-relativistic standards of logical cogency. It is assumed, without much questioning, I think, that these standards apply equally to everyday argumentation and to argumentation in specialized fields.

My favored concept of cogency permits a degree of relativism. I think a particular set of grounds one has for accepting a claim might at one time (say, before a surprising discovery) be perfectly adequate, but at another time (say, after the discovery has been publicized and its implications made well known) be not at all adequate. And a given set of grounds may be adequate for me to draw a conclusion from, but not for you to (say you, a CIA agent, have some information I am not privy to, and I cannot fairly be expected to even suspect its existence).

However, even this relativism does not imply subjectivism – that anything goes. Johnson and I contend that there are three general standards or criteria of a cogent argument (Johnson and Blair 1983, Ch. 2). Two of these apply to the connection between the reasons or evidence adduced and the claim they are supposed to support. First, the reasons must be relevant to the claim. Second, the reasons must supply sufficient support for the claim. The third criterion applies to the reasons or evidence themselves: they must be acceptable to the audience or interlocutor. "Acceptable" here is used normatively, meaning "*worthy* of being accepted." We sum these up by saying that for an argument to be cogent, the premise-conclusion "connection" must be acceptable (i.e., relevant and sufficient) and the premises must be acceptable. (Cf., Govier 1985, Ch. 3; Damer 1987, 6–9.)

Of course, the sixty-four-thousand dollar question is: What precisely are the conditions of premise and connection acceptability? One thing that should in my view distinguish the informal from the formal logic treatment of argumentation is the recognition that there can be acceptable argument connections which are not deductive implications and that some deductive implications are not acceptable argument connections. In this respect, I recommend that informal logic be empirical in its attention to everyday argumentation. [Clearly, "You should give me an 'A' grade because you admit my essay is as good as his and you gave him an 'A' grade, and the only difference between us is that he shares your adulation of Springsteen, while I prefer Bach" is, other things being equal, a cogent argument, although the conclusion does not follow deductively from the premises (nor is it a standard sort of scientific inductive argument). Clearly, "You promised because you promised," is question-begging, yet the implication is deductively valid: any proposition implies itself.]

Similarly, some informal logicians are coming around to Johnson's and my view that the requirement that an argument's premises be true is not the correct criterion of premise adequacy (Govier 1985, 77; Damer 1987, 7). It is not sufficient, because arguer and audience must in addition either know or have good reason to believe that the premises are true if they are to be warranted in drawing conclusions from them. It is not necessary because arguments with merely plausible or believable premises can warrant acting on their conclusions, even if the premises turn out

to be false. (For example, we rely, entirely reasonably, on weather, market, crop, and many other kinds of forecasts, some of which turn out to be false. They often constitute the only available relevant information.)

If relevance and sufficiency are not to be unpacked as logical implication, and if acceptability is not to be analyzed as truth, then how are we to understand these standards? Well, we are not sure. This is the question we are working on at the moment. An entirely reasonable reaction to this admission would be to demand on what basis we have confidence that relevance, sufficiency and acceptability are the criteria when we can produce no analysis of them. My reply has three parts. First, I concede that our commitment to these standards has to be provisional, and any great confidence in them is conditional on being able to provide a satisfactory detailed analysis of each one. Second, I think there is a lot of evidence (admittedly not systematically gathered) that these criteria work. For instance, we believe they permit the classification of the standard informal fallacies without remainder (Johnson and Blair 1983). Third, it is far from clear to me that in this case detailed brushwork ought to precede painting the picture in broad strokes. I think the way such descriptive-prescriptive theory develops is properly as a result of the interaction of a general account and its detailed elaboration.

I shall sketch the direction our analysis is taking at the moment, starting with the acceptability of reasons or premises, since that is what I have been working on (Blair and Johnson 1987, 48–53). My present view is that acceptability is best analyzed in dialectical terms. Thus my initial step was to propose that your premise is acceptable if it is accepted by your audience or more generally by your interlocutor. This formulation, however, is unacceptably relativistic. It has some hard-to-swallow implications. It implies, for example, that a premise I accept when I am drugged or drunk, but which I reject when I am thinking clearly, is both acceptable and not acceptable. It implies that if you can get gullible me to believe a premise you know to be ridiculous, it is acceptable. Seeing that the initial specification of acceptability won't do, my problem was to find a substitute that does not commit me to a Platonic realm of inaccessible truth, but one that allows for standards, humanly accessible and manageable standards. My present solution is again inspired by empirical attention to the practice of everyday

argumentation. The standards we accede to are the standards of the best among us, so I formulated the construct of a community of model interlocutors – a different one for every specialized domain. The more clearly defined the domain, the more sharply specifiable will be its standards. In general, on this view, our premises are acceptable when they would be accepted without objection by the community of model interlocutors for our argument.

"Everyday argumentation" is a woolly domain, so its standards will be fuzzy, but they exist nonetheless. Letters to the editor, for example, often show citizens invoking them when they chastise their fellow epistlers or yesterday's editorial. The domain of everyday argumentation, unlike specialized fields of science which have high entrance standards and guardians of the membership rolls, are democratic, open to anyone: membership is by declaration rather than application. Certain figures stand out as exemplars, nonetheless: a Walter Lippmann, for example, or an I.F. Stone; perhaps the late Sidney Harris; and as well, you and I, in our finest moments.

If the concept of a community of model interlocutors stands up as the reference for appeals to the acceptability of premises or reasons in arguments, I should like to try to extend it to cover the criteria of connection-adequacy – relevance and sufficiency. In our paper in *Argumentation*, Johnson and I outlined how we would try to do this for sufficiency (Blair and Johnson 1987, 53–55). To put the point briefly: when advocating or investigating a claim, one has the onus of meeting the objections to that claim which are standard in the community of model interlocutors for that issue. A failure to cover one of these objections would then be a failure to meet the sufficiency requirement. So, for example, someone arguing in support of the American administration's Strategic Defense Initiative who failed to deal with the objection that the system requires impossible demands on computer programming, would have failed to meet the sufficiency requirement.

I do not have a sketch to offer on how the construct of the community of model interlocutors can be invoked to illuminate our intuitions about relevance. The analysis of relevance is vexing, and all I can do at this point is take cold comfort from the fact that, as far as I know only Douglas Walton (1982) has a book on

the topic, and references to current literature in his bibliography are sparse.

6. Concluding Remarks

What is *everyday argumentation* from an informal logic perspective? Well, it is nothing else than the attempt to advocate a claim before an audience or to investigate a claim for oneself, using reasons, sensitive to the questions and objections of others in one's community. Originally, for informal logic everyday argument was the argument of the non-specialist, the argument of the media, of the political forum and the marketplace. It was the argumentation that was by and large uninformed by the standards of deductive validity and truth. But I am now inclined to believe that there is no *need* for a special subject matter of "everyday argumentation," from the informal logic point of view. One might focus on argumentation in the public domain, but I am inclined to believe that physicians and lawyers and scientists and foreign policy specialists and philosophers and speech communication theorists are engaged in argumentation within their practices and disciplines, and between disciplines, which in no dramatic or drastic way differ from the argumentation that is carried on by non-specialists.

"Everyday argumentation" from an informal logic perspective does abstract the *reason-giving* of everyday contexts of argumentation (such as quarrels, disputes, controversies, speechifying, editorializing and so on) in which other activities besides adducing reasons in support of a claim are being carried on at the same time (e.g., trying to win a power struggle, impressing one's boss, keeping one's party in the public eye, kow-towing to advertisers). In doing so it invokes one particular normative conception of argumentation: its interest lies in applying normative standards of argument cogency.

The story I have told is the story of everyday argumentation from the point of view of the community of informal logicians – up to a point. That community is a fractious lot, some of whose members never agree with me, and many of whose members only sometimes agree with me. So what is reported above is told from an informal logic point of view – my own. A good deal of what

I have described, up to but most emphatically excluding the last section, is, I believe, fairly widely subscribed to, but I have to invoke the standard disclaimer that I alone should be held responsible for the errors, omissions, and misrepresentations.

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IV

THE GROUNDING OF ARGUMENT

Introduction: Argument and Values

Argument is often used to influence decisions. For example, a person may use arguments to persuade his or her spouse to agree to buy a new car (or to buy *this* car rather than *that* one). A college graduate may use argumentation to convince a prospective employer to offer him or her a job after an interview. Political candidates often participate in debates to convince voters to decide to vote for them, instead of for their opponents. Each of these decisions will be made on the basis of a belief and a value – or, as is more often the case, several related beliefs and values. Most people are unaware of how beliefs and values work together to influence decision-making. However, before showing how decisions depend on beliefs and values, these two important terms must be defined.

Beliefs are ideas that can be expressed as statements about the nature of the world, and the people, things, and ideas in it. A belief can, at least in principle, be tested for correctness. They are either true or false, so they are what we might loosely call "facts." Values, on the other hand, are judgments or opinions about the quality of something. They too can be expressed in statements. The key difference is that a value holds that something is good or bad, beautiful or ugly, useful or wasteful, and so forth. Although we often think and act as if our values are correct or true – "I don't care what you say, that painting is ugly!" – there is no way to look and verify that a value is correct in the same way we can look to see if a belief is correct. So, beliefs are quite different than values. However, they are both thoughts or ideas that can be expressed as statements. How are they involved in decision-making?

Beliefs and values work together to influence a decision. If we *value* good gas mileage, we are more likely to buy a car if we hold the *belief* that it has that quality. A candidate for a job opening will probably be hired if the employer holds beliefs that the candidate has skills or qualities which are valued. Political candidates are often expected to explain their stands on important issues in the campaign. For example, the candidate may pledge to lower taxes, help farmers, and improve the postal service. These pledges, if accepted by the audience, create beliefs about what the candidate will do if elected.

A voter who thinks that we need lower taxes, that the farmers need assistance, and that the postal system is important (three values) would be likely to vote for the candidate. So, beliefs and values are both necessary for decisions, and if either one changes, the decision may well be different.

The first article in this section, by Wallace, speaks of rhetoric (persuasion) more than argument. However, his discussion is clearly relevant to the related field of argument. Wallace argues that theorists have tended to focus on matters such as structure (organization) and style, neglecting the substance or content of discourse. He asserts that the substance of rhetoric is ethical and moral values, as well as information that is relevant to each. This sounds very much like pairs of values and their related beliefs. Wallace's essay shows that we must realize the key role values play in rhetoric (and argument). He identifies three general types of values: the desirable, the obligatory, and the admirable or praiseworthy. He also stresses the importance of political values. Finally, he defines "good reasons" as statements presented as support for a value judgment (or an "ought" proposition). There is an intentional ambiguity between a "good" argument as a sound one and a "good" argument as one that supports a value.

Wenzel's article, the second one in this section, argues that the principles of argumentation can provide a "rational framework" for understanding (and evaluating) values and the good reasons supporting them. Drawing heavily on Toulmin's (1970) work on ethics, he takes the idea that humans live in a community (with obligations) and asserts that values (related to obligation) must be treated differently than factual statements (beliefs). Three alternative approaches to understanding values are discussed and rejected. He then suggests that value-centered arguments should be evaluated not by logic but on the basis of community experience. Finally, Wenzel proposes a framework for understanding and arguing rationally about values. He identifies four classes of value argument: subjective expression (small talk), appreciative judgment (aesthetics), moral judgment (ethics), and instrumental judgment (politics). Arguments relevant to each type of value argument are also described.

Other useful articles not reprinted here can be consulted to learn more about values and argument. Eubanks and Baker (1962) argue for the importance of in rhetoric. Fisher (1978, 1980) articulates an approach to evaluating the reasons offered in discourse, and values play an important role in his system. A typology of values important for public discourse is presented by Steele and Redding (1962). Wenzel

and Hamble conduct an exploratory study into the categories used by ordinary social actors to classify values (1975).

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Chapter 20

The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons

Karl R. Wallace

Rhetorical theorists have always recognized that speeches have content and substance, and that the content of a particular speech is derived from the setting and occasion. Yet unlike classical rhetoricians who presented systems of invention, modern writers who offer theories of rhetoric are unclear and uncertain what to say about the materials of discourse. They will include in their theories statements about methods, principles, techniques, and styles of discourse; that is, they talk of the forms and the handling of ideas and are mostly silent about substance of utterance. Perhaps they are silent for three main reasons. Under the influence of structural linguistics, rhetoricians may uncritically believe that language is like the symbols of music and mathematics - empty and devoid of substantial meanings. Or they may overlook the full implication of Donald Bryant's reference to rhetoric as an art of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas.¹ The notion of adjustment - and for that matter, adaptation - directs attention chiefly to acts of manipulation and treatment. It is easy to forget that one cannot engage in manipulation without manipulating something, and that speakers and audiences stand on common ground only through commonalities of meaning and partial identities of experience. If this simple fact is acknowledged, there always bobs up that old, bothersome question: With what ideas, with what materials do speakers adjust and adapt to their hearers? Finally, for the last century or so students of rhetoric seem to have been trapped into accepting a sort of scientific realism, or perhaps I might better say, a naive realism. The argument runs something like this: Since man derives his substantial information and knowledge through his sensory apparatus and since the natural sciences have successfully claimed for themselves both the acquisition and interpretation of sensory materials, discourse is left with nothing to say about the real world that does not properly belong to the sciences. Furthermore, since the behavioral sciences and the disciplines of philosophy and ethics have asserted property rights over the study of human experience and conduct, rhetoric has nothing to say about the behavior of speakers and listeners that these sciences cannot say with greater reliability.

and authority. Ergo, the substance of discourse comes from finding the right scientific and historical facts and of consulting the right authority. To me this is very much like saying that rhetoric is nothing more than the art of framing information and of translating it into intelligible terms for the popular audience.

I

My position is this. First, rhetorical theory must deal with the substance of discourse as well as with structure and style. Second, the basic materials of discourse are (1) ethical and moral values and (2) information relevant to these. Third, ethics deals with the theory of goods and values, and from ethics rhetoric can make adaptations that will result in a modern system of topics.

In developing these ideas we must try at the outset to indicate what we mean by *substance*. The concept has carried many meanings, but theories that are relevant here may be suggested by calling attention to certain words as correlatives. On one side are *substance*, *matter*, *material*, *content* and *subject matter*. On the other are *form*, *structure*, *order*, *arrangement*, *organization*, *shape*, and *figure*. The words on each side reveal overlapping meanings. This fact must be recognized, of course. But what is important is that the terms on one side are not fully intelligible in the absence of the terms on the other. The notion of form is useless without the notions of matter and material; the notions of order and arrangement are senseless without the notions of matter and substance - of something to be ordered and arranged. In every case we recognize the relationship of figure and shape to that which is figured and shaped, the relationship of form to that which is formed - to that which is material and substantial. In the same sets of words there is also lurking the idea of substratum - of that which stands under, of support. In this sense, form is inconceivable without something as its basis. One does not arrange and order bricks, or think of arranging or ordering them, without having bricks or the idea thereof. One does not build a house without a foundation, nor an oration without spoken or written words and the meanings they carry.

In what sense, then, do we understand substance? An attempt to meet this question requires us to regard an utterance, a linguistic event, a speech, as an object. There are natural objects. These exist, or come

into being, without the agency of man. There are the things of land and sea, vegetable and mineral. We say, depending upon our point of view, that natural objects are made by God, by Nature, or by some mysterious force. There are artificial objects, and these are said, in our language, to be man-made. Among these are language itself and whatever one makes with language - novels, poems, commands, instructions, laws, speeches, et cetera. If speeches are objects, rhetoric is related to speeches as theory is related to behavior. Since a theorist tries to explain the particular group of objects, events, and behaviors in which he is interested, a rhetorician endeavors to explain what speeches are, and this task involves his setting forth what speeches are about and how they come about. If speeches exhibit substance and materials - and it is nonsense to say that they do not - the rhetorician must, among other things, characterize the substance of speeches, the materials of which they are made. Theories of rhetoric in the classical tradition, as we know, almost always said a good deal about the substance and materials of speeches. Under the heads Invention and Topics, they described the general materials of speeches and their chief kinds, together with lines of argument that often recurred. Except for Kenneth Burke, the principal writers on modern rhetorical theory - e.g., I. A. Richards - neglect substance and concentrate on processes, methods, techniques, and effects. Most of our textbooks pay little attention to what speeches are about; rather, their point of view is pedagogical. They concentrate on how to make a speech and deliver it. I do not think this condition of affairs could long endure if rhetoric were to rediscover and reassert its concern with subject matter.

Rhetoric, then, ought to deal with the substance, the substratum or foundations of speeches. What is this stuff? In answer to this question, I shall offer three propositions. First, the underlying materials of speeches, and indeed of most human talk and discussions, are assertions and statements that concern human behavior and conduct. They are prompted by situations and contexts that present us with choices and that require us to respond with appropriate decisions and actions. Second, such statements are usually called judgments and appraisals. They reflect human interests and values, and the nature of value-judgments and the ways of justifying them are the special, technical, and expert concern of ethics. Third, the appearance and use of value-judgments in practical discourse are the proper, although not the sole, concern of the theory and practice of rhetoric.

Probably most thoughtful persons will at once agree that the foundation materials of speeches are statements that are evoked by the need to make choices in order that we may act or get ready to act or to appraise our acts after their doing. Furthermore, choosing itself is a substantive act and the statement of a choice is a substantive statement. Rhetoricians will recall that the time-honored classifications of speeches are based upon the typical choice-situations that audiences confront. The deliberative or political kind of speech helps an audience decide what it *ought* to do, and the materials most often appearing are those that bear on the particular audience's ends and purposes and the means to those ends. More specifically, so Aristotle thought, these things give rise to considerations of what is good and evil and what is useful, and these again with respect to the problems of war and peace, of national defense, of taxation (or support of the state in relation to the citizen's purse), of the standard of living (or the welfare of the citizen), and of the making of laws and the good that laws can do. The forensic or legal speech helps a jury to decide upon the manner of treating a person who is accused of breaking the moral codes enshrined in law. What is justice in the case at hand? Is the man guilty or innocent? And if guilty, how should he be treated? The epideictic speech helps an audience to assess the ethics and morality of a person's actions. Whether the decision is to praise or blame him will depend upon whether his acts are judged virtuous, noble, right, and good. Evidently, then, large numbers of speeches employ statements whose content is ethical or moral, or they use language in setting and in ways that imply ethical and moral ideas.

Still it may be asked whether there are not speeches in situations that have nothing to do with ethics and morality? What about discourse that is called informative, expository, or scientific?

We consider this question by pointing out that we often label a speech informative when in its proper context it is persuasive. Thomas Huxley's famous lecture, "On a Piece of Chalk" consists predominantly of factual sentences, yet to its English audiences in the 1870's it functioned as a plea for evolution. Much discourse and discussion that is thought of as didactic is probably persuasive in effect if not in intent. The character and bias of the state and nation function to select what is taught in the public schools. The teacher-learner relationship is accordingly less neutral and colorless than we think. Moreover, many teachers employ a method of learning that encourages students to think for themselves, to weigh and consider, to be intelligently appreciative

and critical, to select and reject ideas and information that function indirectly, if not directly, to build attitudes and determine preferences. Furthermore, much newspaper discourse is in response to the widespread belief that knowledge is a good thing, and that certain kinds of materials and events are interesting, useful, and satisfying to readers, and other kinds are not. In brief, it would appear that expository speaking and writing recognizes choices and values that differ from those of persuasive discourse principally in that they are more remote and less apparent. So in saying that the materials and the substrata of speeches come about in response to contexts that present alternative possibilities, I want to include what is ordinarily thought of as informative utterance. First, much exposition is functionally persuasive, whether in intent or effect. This fact we have just remarked upon. Second, scientific discourse in itself cannot be utterly devoid of value. It owes its being to two assumptions: (1) knowledge in itself is a good thing, and (2) the information transmitted is accurate, reliable, valid, and true. Furthermore, scientific reporting of observations and experiments – and the criticism thereof – involves *what* a scientist did and did not do, *how* he did it and did not do it, and *why* he did it in one way rather than another. The scientist cannot escape choices, whether he is addressing other scientists or a popular audience. His decisions are anchored in contexts governed by rules, conventions, and practices, whether they be those of the scientist or those of the non-scientist public.

II

Although the basic substance of speeches comprises statements that are made when human beings must make choices, the consideration of such statements in their special and technical character is the proper concern of ethics. To support this assertion I must indicate what students of ethics today seem to be focussing on.² Despite differences in their special points of view and in the treatment of their material, they see the human being as he uses his reason in practical situations that involve choice and decision. Practical reason is revealed in judgments that guide man's conduct, i.e., judgments are statements having to do with action, motives, feelings, emotions, attitudes, and values. They are responses to one of two fundamental kinds of questions: What shall I do or believe? What ought I to do?³ Both Toulmin and Baier talk in terms that are familiar to every historian and theorist of rhetoric.⁴ Practical reason, for example, appears in three types

of behavior: deliberation, justification, and explanation. Deliberation uses reason prior to the act. Justification and explanation use reason after the act. When we justify, we praise or blame; we use terms like right and wrong, good and bad; in general we *appraise*. When we explain, we show what moved the agent and use terms untinctured by praise or censure. Because these three types of rational behavior are carried on almost exclusively in symbolic and linguistic terms, some writers tend to treat ethics as consisting of statements, of kinds of statements, and of the content of statements. Of proper concern are statements in whose predicates are the words, *is a desirable thing*, *is morally obligatory*, *is morally admirable or reprehensible*, *is a good thing*, *is praiseworthy*, and the like.⁵ Included, furthermore, are all statements that imply, though they do not specify, such evaluative words. Edwards achieves considerable simplicity when, following Broad and Findlay, as he says, he presents his theory in terms of two classes of judgments.⁶ The first is the value-judgment or moral judgment in which key predicate words are *good*, *desirable*, *worthwhile*, and their equivalents. The second is the judgment of obligation, as signalled by words like *ought*, *oblige*, and *duty*. We may say, then, that students of ethics are concerned with the choice situations that are always signalled by the question, "What ought I to do?" They are concerned, also, with the rational and reasonable responses that human beings make to the question, i.e., with the judgments that we use in making choices and in justifying them.

Since judgments either state values directly or imply them indirectly, ethics as a study examines all values that influence action and are imbedded in judgments. It attempts to explain value-terms and how they are used, to classify them, and to find values that apply widely to our actions. Those of greatest generality are called standards or criteria of conduct. Some of them are compressed in concepts with which all of us are familiar: good and evil, pleasant-unpleasant, duty, obligation, self-interest, altruism, truth-telling, promise-keeping, honesty, fairness, courage, law-observance, utility, right and wrong, and the like. They appear typically in general statements called rules of conduct, regulations, laws, codes, principles, and moral maxims. With such values in mind, ethics also asks and tries to answer questions like these: Why these values rather than some other ones? And are the methods employed to identify them valid and trustworthy? In a word, modern ethics undertakes to present a theory of values which include an account of how value-judgments are justified.

It would seem apparent, accordingly, that ethics as a study derives its materials in large measure from men's linguistic behavior when they must choose among alternatives. Their behavior constitutes judgments, and these appear in their reasonings when they deliberate, explain, and justify their choices. It is possible to observe such behavior systematically, to analyze it and theorize about it, and this ethics does. It is also possible to observe such behavior, to note what judgments all men, or most men, or wise men, or the wisest of men in practice accept or reject, and to perceive which of these recur in the materials and premises of men's reasonings. This is what classical rhetorical theory did, and this is what modern rhetorical theory should do. If the modern rhetorical theorist feels that he cannot in his textbook present a workable account of the material basis of speeches, perhaps much as Aristotle did in his *Rhetoric*, at least he can assert that rhetoric is related to ethics as theory is to practice. He can point out that the science of ethics deals with moral principles and standards of conduct as they are abstracted from practice, and that the art of rhetoric encounters moral principles in particular situations, in specific cases in which man in his social and political roles must make up his mind and act in concert, or be ready to act in concert.

If the materials of rhetorical discourse are fundamentally the same as the materials of ethics, it should be possible to derive a scheme of rhetorical topics from the study of ethics. Indeed, this can be done. I shall present now a brief outline of *topoi*. In doing so I am not suggesting that it is a perfect product and ready for incorporation into a textbook on public speaking. I aim only to point the way to a practical instrument.

First I shall sketch the general categories of values that help us to decide whether our decisions and actions are good or bad, right or wrong. There appear to be three, all-embracing classes - the desirable, the obligatory, and the admirable or praiseworthy, and their opposites.⁷

Whether or not something is desirable depends upon one's motives, goals, or ends - upon that for the sake of which we act. We act to reduce certain painful or unpleasant tensions. We rid ourselves of disease and illness to restore health; we banish hunger by seeking and eating food. On the other hand, some tensions produce pleasure, the chief among these being activity associated with sexual behavior, competitive activity in both work and play, and aesthetic excitement. Pleasurable tensions are involved, too, in activity that is venturesome

and that involves learning and knowing. We desire things, also, that are in our own interests. Among interests, some are primarily self-centered, such as property and security (although both of these directly depend on social institutions and practices). Some interests are directly social - those for the sake of the general welfare. Other interests are professional, vocational, and recreational in nature. Desirable, furthermore, is personal and group achievement and its attendant pleasure and exhilaration. We derive satisfaction in making and creating something. We take pleasure and pride in achieving the "right" self-image. With this image is associated status - the respect and deference of others to us, and the power and ability to do what we wish. Desirable, moreover, is freedom of choice and action; undesirable are arbitrary restraints. A much-prized good is being loved and liked by others. Finally, there is an overriding, hedonistic desire, that of seeking anything that gives us pleasure and of avoiding acts and states of being that are painful or unpleasant. These, then, are things generally regarded as desirable and good. They are reflected directly or indirectly in the statements through which we make choices and explain or defend them.

Things that are morally obligatory and acts that are praiseworthy seem to acquire their meaning and force in the sort of regard that others have for us. The self-image is built up through the approvals and disapprovals of others, and thus we learn what is "right" and "wrong." Our integrity, our respect for ourselves, is a function of social rewards and sanctions. On the other hand, acts that are desirable and conduct that is goal-directed and that is said to be motivated, all seem to be built around, and come to focus on, the individual organism. The distinction between the desirable and the obligatory appears to be imbedded in our language. It is acceptable to say that playing golf is a good thing to do, but it is odd to say that playing golf is a right thing to do, or that golf playing is a matter of duty.

Within the class of things obligatory are duties. These are acts specified by one's position or role in a group or in a social institution. With respect to the family, a father has duties. With respect to his profession, a physician, a lawyer, a teacher has duties. With respect to the state, a governor has duties, and so does the citizen. There are obligatory actions so deeply woven into the social fabric that, once learned, they are rarely examined. They are truth-telling, promise-keeping, the paying of debts, and obeying of law. Finally, there are the *mores*

of the group, as revealed in codes, customs, commandments, and moral maxims, and enforced by unwritten, social sanctions.

The last class of goods and values is that of the praiseworthy-blameworthy, the admirable-reprehensible. These value-terms are meant to refer to character traits, to behavior classes that have become stable, to what in the older literature of ethics were usually called *virtues*. Among these is conscientiousness, a term that refers not to some mystical, innate sense of the good, but to a concern for living up to one's own self-image and for fulfilling one's obligations. There are, too, the familiar virtue names - kindness, fairness, courage, veracity, honesty, prudence, persistence, tolerance, reliability, and good will (i.e., concern for the welfare of others). Although space does not permit the elaboration of these behavior traits, two or three observations should be made. Some writers call these traits *extrinsic* goods, or instrumental goods, because possession of them leads to the acquisition of other goods and ends. Honesty, for example, leads more often to desirable ends and less often to punishments than stealing and cheating. Although these terms may enter into all kinds of value-judgments, their long usage and genetic development suggest that they typically apply to behavior that is completed and past. Hence, to some writers they are technical terms of appraisal, and we use them most appropriately when we size up conduct that has become history. Yet terms of appraisal often appear in deliberative or policy contexts with persuasive intent. As Aristotle once observed, to praise a man is to hold him up for the imitation of others.

III

This sketch of value categories has been presented entirely from the point of view of ethics. The categories represent a sort of *topoi* of values. Doubtless it is evident that rhetorical topics can be derived from them. One has only to recall the ordinary ways of analyzing a problem - the Dewey steps in problem-solving, for example, and the surveys for a proposition of fact and a proposition of policy - to perceive that they refer to situations in the present and the past and point to the possible future in terms that are ethical and moral. Such schemata of analytical thought originally had their basis in the logic of choice, decision, and conduct. Their long use and ready application have turned them into formulae whose derivation has been forgotten.

In presenting *topoi* of ethical values, I am not forgetting that the system must also include political values. Although this is not the place to spell out the significant differences between politics and ethics, we do well to remember that politics can be properly included within the scope of ethics, for the art of government is the art of adjusting the desires and values of the individual to the desires and values of others. Accordingly, rhetorical topics derived from ethics will point to political topics in the ways that genus relates to species, in those ways that the general idea suggests the specific idea. So some ethical premises will in use be indistinguishable from political premises. Take, for example, Kant's famous categorical imperative: Do only that thing which you would will all others to do. It appears to apply to political conduct as well as to individual conduct.

Nevertheless, some rhetorical topics will be characteristically political. We all know where to look for them. Government may be viewed as the formal instrument whereby individuals accept a system of law for the benefit of themselves and of each other. Hence from the point of view of politics there is always a triadic relationship of parties: the individual, the political group in which the individual plays the role and goes under the name of *citizen*, and the governor or ruler. With this relationship in mind, one can at once locate the foci of political explanations and arguments. These will center on such concepts as the powers, obligations, and duties of both the ruler and the citizen. These in turn derive much of their meaning from the concepts of liberty, freedom, and justice, and from our ideas about rights, both individual rights and civil rights. From these spring the standards, rules, and maxims of political conduct. Some political theorists, for example, believe that Roman law settled our custom of defining "private affairs in terms of rights, and public affairs in terms of power and responsibilities."⁸ Political rules become the substantial bases and premises of appraisals and judgments. They also dictate the method and tone of rational criticism. These, perhaps, are our special heritage from the Greeks.⁹ Possibly the deep-rooted, long-unquestioned habit of waiving aside the 'constitutionality' of debate propositions has led debaters to ignore the real sources of arguments that are simultaneously material, moving, and interesting.

To see that a *topoi* of values would indeed be possible we need only to glance swiftly at the debater's issues and sources of argument. The debater refers to "evils" and "difficulties" that give rise to "problems." These terms, I suggest, can refer only to situations, persons, groups,

or institutions that have experienced unpleasant tensions of one kind or another. They are frustrated because they haven't secured their desires, their goals, their pleasures, and their interests. Somebody is threatening their freedoms, their status, or their power. Somebody is accused of breaking the law, and his character and that of witnesses and of the trial system itself are put to the test. Self interest, vested interest, or the entrenched power of some group or institution is interfering with the general welfare.

Once the debater has located the evils of the situation, he defines the problem. His explanation of it cannot avoid value-judgements and even his facts that support explanation function in a context of values. If the question be medical care for the aged, the description of the present state of medical care may well support different interpretations of the problem and point to different decisions.

Such, then, are the kinds of materials which, assembled and analyzed, provide the basis of decision. The decision itself - the solution of the problem - emerges either as a proposition in which the words *should* or *ought* appear, or as a proposition in which value-terms are expressed or clearly implied - e.g., the party is innocent (or guilty), the state has an obligation to provide employment opportunities for everyone, this person or this institution is responsible for doing so-and-so. It is well to remark that the *ought* in a proposition of policy means more than a vague pointing to the future. It is a decision in response to the question, What ought we to believe or do? And this question is always, so Baier asserts, an ethical or a moral one.¹⁰ Moreover, an *ought* proposition carries a meaning of obligation about it, such that if one accepts the proposition one feels bound to do what is specified or implied.¹¹ With either individuals or institutions in mind, one can ask sensible questions: Are obligations to be found in the context of the problem? Who is obligated to whom? What is the nature of the obligation? Furthermore, an *ought* seems always to imply that the decision is the best thing to do; it suggests that the speaker has compared all relevant alternatives.¹²

Perhaps enough has been said to show that many rhetorical *topoi* may be readily derived from ethical and moral materials. Indeed, I believe that topics and lines of argument *inevitably*, in the nature of things, lead the investigator to ethical and moral considerations, guide him to decisions and propositions that are ethical and moral, and furnish him with most of the explanations and arguments that support his

decision and in whose terms he will recommend it to the consideration of an audience. If modern rhetoricians will face the fact that language symbols are not empty symbols, like those of symbolic logic and mathematics, that the language of practical discourse bears meanings that testify to man's attempt to identify and solve problems of action and conduct, modern rhetoric will formulate a theory of invention and will present a plan of *topoi* in the language of ethics and morals.

IV

If rhetoricians would see the materials of speeches in this light, they would do well, I believe, to take a special term from the field of ethics and employ it, perhaps with minor adjustments. The term is *good reason*, or in the plural form, *good reasons*. What are these? A good reason is a statement offered in support of an *ought* proposition or of a value-judgment. Good reasons are a number of statements, consistent with each other, in support of an *ought* proposition or of a value-judgment. Some examples may prove illuminating.

The Federal government ought to provide for the medical care of the aged. (Or, more technically: It is desirable that the Federal government....)

It will contribute to the security of the aged.

It will be in the welfare of everybody.

It is in the interest of equity.

The aged spend a disproportionate amount of their income on medical care.

Their bill for drugs is twice that of persons in age brackets below 60.

The government has an obligation to finance medical care for the aged.

X should not have copied from Y's paper.

It was an act of cheating.

Cheating is wrong.

Jones made a good speech.

It conformed to most of the principles and rules of speechmaking.

Its consequences will be good.

This man ought not be elected sheriff.
He is not qualified to hold the office.
He cannot be depended on.

These illustrations serve to point out what good reasons are and what they support. If the rhetorician were to adopt the term, good reasons, he would have a technical label that refers to all the materials of argument and explanation.

There are advantages to the use of the term, good reasons. Both rhetorician and teacher would be ever reminding the speaker, as well as themselves, that the substance of rhetorical proof has to do with values and value-judgments, i.e., with what is held to be good. One can scarcely declare that something is desirable without showing its relevance to values. It may be desirable, for example, to adjust the balance of power between management and labor, on the ground that justice has become too partisan, that basic rights are not being respected, and the like. Moreover, the word *reason* indicates that the process of proof is a rational one and can be used to cover such traditional forms of reasoning as deduction and induction, the syllogism, generalization, analogy, causation, and correlation. Furthermore, the term *good reason* implies the indissoluble relationship between content and form, and keeps attention on what form is saying. If we could become accustomed to the concept, good reasons, we might cease worrying over our failure to find perfect syllogisms in the arguments of everyday life; rather, we would recognize, as the examination of practical reason seems to indicate, that reasons which govern practice are quite different from the syllogism as usually presented. I think that most ethicists would agree that the measurement of validity in practical discourse quite commonly resides in the general principle and its applicability. Brandt has this to say on the point: "Any particular ethical statement that is valid *can be supported by a valid general principle....*"¹³ X should not have copied from Y's paper, for in doing so he cheated, and cheating is wrong. In this case, clearly there are facts that could or could not be established. Clearly, the general principle, "cheating is wrong," is relevant and functions as a warrant. The principle is applicable, or is applicable as qualified, if particular circumstances call for qualification. The principle itself is valid to the extent that it corresponds with the beliefs and conduct of the group which gives it sanction. Such statements, Edwards observes, are objective in the sense that they are independent of the speaker's subjective attitudes. It is true, of course, that the speaker's attitude

may prompt his giving a general principle as a reason; nevertheless, the general principle can be tested for its truth-value quite apart from his attitude.¹⁴ What a good reason is is to some extent fixed by human nature and to a very large extent by generally accepted principles and practices which make social life, as we understand it, possible. In a word, the concept of good reasons embraces both the substance and the processes of practical reason. One could do worse than characterize rhetoric as the art of finding and effectively presenting good reasons.

If rhetoricians could accept good reasons as the substance of discourse, we would immediately secure additional advantages. Any distinctions that modern rhetoric may be trying to maintain between logical, ethical, and emotional modes of proof would immediately become unreal and useless, except for purposes of historical criticism. For the practitioner, both communicator and respondent, the correct questions would always be: What is my choice? What are the supporting and explanatory statements? What information is trustworthy? It would be absurd to ask: Is my choice a logical one? Shall I support my position by logical, ethical, or emotional means? For the theorist, analyst, and critic of discourse, the disappearance of those weasel concepts, logical proof and emotional proof, would permit a description of the materials of practical discourse in terms of two broad categories: materials deriving from the specific occasion, and materials consisting of general value-judgments. Furthermore, perhaps practitioners would get into the habit of applying first and foremost to any instance of communication, the searching queries: Who or what is the responsible agent? What person or agent is taking the responsibility, or should take it? If the proposition be supported by reasons that immediately or ultimately relate to value-statements whose content reflects the desirable, the obligatory, and the admirable, then for whom is the message desirable and admirable? Upon whom do the obligations and duties rest? Discourse to which such questions are habitually applied cannot long remain abstract, distant, colorless, and unreal. Rather, it could well become personal and direct. The speech-making of the Greeks, who understood ethos, was eminently personal.

V

It seems probable that if students of rhetoric looked to the substance as well as to the forms of practical discourse they would discover

a set of statements or value-axioms that would constitute a modern system of invention. The axioms would consist of those political and ethical values that apply to public discussion. Derived in theory from politics and ethics and in practice from the rules and conventions that speakers appeal to explicitly and implicitly when they explain, advocate, deliberate upon, and justify their choices, the axioms would serve as a base for finding good reasons and thus for providing fundamental materials in any given case of rhetorical discourse. Eubanks and Baker have recently reminded rhetoricians of Aristotle's position that "If rhetoric has any sort of *special* subject matter province, that substance is constituted in the popular and probable value axioms related to the civil decision making of a free society."¹⁵ The hypothesis should be put to the test.

Notes

1. The point of view is fully expressed in Donald C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Functions and Its Scope," *QJS*, XXXIX (December 1953), 401-424.
2. My chief informants have been Richard B. Brandt, *Ethical Theory: The Problems of Normative and Critical Ethics* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1959); Kurt Baier, *The Moral Point of View: A Rational Basis of Ethics* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1958); Paul Edwards, *The Logic of Moral Discourse* (Glencoe, Ill., 1955); P.H. Nowell-Smith, *Ethics* (Baltimore, Md., 1954 [Penguin Books]); Philip Blair Rice, *On the Knowledge of Good and Evil* (New York, 1955); Charles L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language* (New Haven, 1944); and Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics* (Cambridge, Eng., 1961).
3. Baier, p. 46.
4. For example, see Baier, pp. 148-156.
5. See Brandt, pp. 2-4.
6. Edwards, p. 141.
7. In developing general categories of values, I have been most helped by Brandt.

8. D.G. Hitchner and W.H. Harbold, *Modern Government: A Survey of Political Science* (New York, 1962), p. 175.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 174.
10. Baier, p. 86.
11. Brandt, esp. pp. 353-354.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Ibid.*, p. 20.
14. Edwards, pp. 148, 157.
15. Ralph T. Eubanks and Virgil L. Baker, "Toward an Axiology of Rhetoric," *QJS*, XLVIII (April 1962), 162.

Chapter 21

Toward a Rationale for a Value-centered Argument

Joseph W. Wenzel

Most campuses seem to be fairly peaceful places nowadays. But all of us can remember the troubled times in the sixties, when radical students made non-negotiable demands and college administrators took adamant positions. I imagine we all shared the feeling in those days that rational dialogue had failed. Perhaps we felt that failure most keenly when the parties to a dispute agreed on the facts of a situation, but still found themselves at odds. Often, then, we heard some such statements as this: "Well, we have a difference of values here. So there's no point in talking anymore!" The implicit assumption - of both radicals and conservatives - was that values are so personal, so purely subjective that they cannot be supported or justified except by throwing oneself on the barricades.

Wayne Booth explored that problem in a series of lectures at Notre Dame University in 1971, subsequently published under the title *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent*.¹ He attributed the failure of dialogue to a set of ideas he calls the dogmas of modernism.² Booth describes the central notion this way:

What is most interesting here is the automatic reliance on the distinction between facts and values, and the quality of the reply one often receives if he questions that distinction. If the word dogma is applicable to any general notion that cannot, for the believer, be brought into question, the belief that you cannot and indeed should not allow your values to intrude upon your cognitive life - that thought and knowledge and fact are on one side and affirmations of value on the other - has been until recently a dogma for all right-thinking moderns.³

The acceptance of this central dichotomy has inevitably led to the choosing of sides. On the one hand, one may choose the camp that Booth calls "scientismists," the positivists who put the highest value (irony intended) on science, reason, and knowledge grounded in empirical fact. On the other side are those "irrationalists" who simply "leapt blindly for the value side" of the dichotomy, and who, "feel free to assert any value that 'feels' right."⁴ Ironically, this crucial philosophical assumption, on which they did agree, retarded efforts to reach agreement on substantive issues.

The problem I have described so far may be called a failure of confidence. As Booth says, "we have lost our faith in the very possibility of finding a rational path through any thicket that includes what we call value judgments."⁵ A second aspect of the problem, which follows from the first, may be called a failure of method. Having accepted the assumption that values are somehow nonrational, we have failed to develop methods of analysis and justification for coping with value disputes. Many of us have felt rather helpless in the face of powerful arguments by positivist philosophers. We have had no answer to those like Charles Stevenson, for example, when he argues that, to the extent that a value dispute is based on differences in belief about the facts, it can be resolved logically; to the extent that such a dispute involves disagreement in "attitudes," i.e. evaluations, it cannot be resolved rationally, and one merely has recourse to "persuasion" - a term he uses to denote any form of irrational exhortation.⁶

Writers on rhetoric have been somewhat more willing than many others to deal with the problem in a practical way. Surely, when one attends to practical discourse, it is impossible to ignore the pervasiveness of value premises. And so in recent years several writers on rhetoric have taken steps, at least tentatively, toward the sort of analysis that I am sketching here. Booth's book is a major contribution in clearing away some misconceptions arising from the dichotomy of fact and value.⁷ Steele and Redding have clarified the American value system for students of public address.⁸ Gerald Miller urged teachers and scholars in argumentation and debate to experiment with propositions of fact and value and suggested some bases for arguing them.⁹ Bruce Gronbeck surveyed several philosophers' approaches to the logic of value argument and related them to the responsibilities of advocates.¹⁰ Recent articles in *Philosophy and Rhetoric* have attempted to join the interest of philosophers and rhetoricians on value centered discourse.¹¹ Karl Wallace devoted much time in his last years to elucidating

the theory of good reasons as the substance of discourse.¹² *The New Rhetoric*, of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca though it does not develop an analysis of value statements *per se*, deals implicitly and explicitly with value argument throughout.¹³

In *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, Robert Scott recently argued for an intersubjective set toward reality as the most appropriate underpinning for an enlarged conception of rhetoric. Such an epistemological view, he claims, helps us to appreciate "the irreducible modicum of human valuing in every human action."¹⁴ After characterizing the levels on which we sense rhetoric as the strategic, the substantial, and the dynamic, Scott observes:

We may find it helpful to think of the second and the third senses of rhetoric as forming together a new rhetoric of value-evolution. Undoubtedly there has always been rhetoric of this sort, but the traditional theories did not tend to focus on it. An enlarged concept of rhetoric is necessary if we are to comprehend the substantial and dynamic senses in which rhetoric functions to generate continuous validation of ways in which communities act together.¹⁵

Now the "ways in which communities act together" are defined by the shared values that bind their members. It is in that sense that Karl Wallace called values "the ultimate substance of discourse."¹⁶

My thesis in this paper is that argumentation can provide the rational framework for a "rhetoric of value evolution," that the study of value-centered argument can clarify the logical and epistemological status of value claims and the reasons supporting them. I will, first, review one philosopher's solution to the traditional problems concerning the justification of values, and secondly, sketch the broad outline of an approach we might take to advance our understanding of value argument.

I

It seems odd that, for all the use we have made of Stephen Toulmin's *Uses of Argument*,¹⁷ there are so few references in our literature to his equally important book, *An Examination of the Place of Reason in Ethics*.¹⁸ In that book, Toulmin skillfully clears away much of the philosophical underbrush that has impeded both philosophers and

rhetoricians in seeking to bridge the so-called "is-ought gap." I can think of no better place to begin than the passage Toulmin quotes from Sophocles:

Of all the many wonders, none is more wonderful than
Man...who has learnt the arts of Speech, of wind-swift
Thought, and of living in Neighbourliness....¹⁹

The idea of community, of "living in Neighbourliness," undergirds Toulmin's account of the place of reason in ethical discourse. The fact of human community, of duty, of the recognition of mutual obligation, is what gives significance to the class of value statements that we call ethical. For such statements function rationally to harmonize the interests of members of a community. On that view, it is clearly a mistake either (1) to seek to justify values on the same epistemological basis on which we justify factual statements, or (2) to suppose, because value statements cannot be justified in the same manner as factual statements, that they are in some way epistemologically inferior. Yet, just such mistakes have led many philosophers to raise imaginary difficulties over the justification of values.

Toulmin examines three positions in philosophical ethics which are founded on the mistaken assumptions alluded to, and which have exacerbated the problem of the "is-ought gap." The first is the "objectivist" approach which treats "goodness," "rightness," and all such ethical terms as references to properties of the thing evaluated.²⁰ One comes to know these peculiar properties through some sort of "moral sense," just as one comes to know certain physical properties through the senses of sight and touch, etc. But the objectivist approach leads us to such difficulties as the following. If I say, for instance, that this paper is good, and you reply that it is bad, one of us must have misperceived the inherent property of the paper. One of us must be right, and the other wrong, in the same sense that one of us would be right and the other wrong if one asserted that the paper is white and the other that it is green. In short, because the objectivist cannot explain ethical disagreement rationally, they can give no account of what is to count as a good reason of an ethical claim. As Toulmin concludes:

The objective doctrine is, therefore, not just unhelpful to us: it is a positive hindrance, diverting on to arguments about

a purely imaginary 'property' the attention which should be paid to the question of ethical reasoning.²¹

The second position Toulmin examines is the subjectivist approach which "puts forward the doctrine that, in saying that anything is good or right, we are reporting on the feelings which we (or the members of our social group) have towards it."²² This approach is a sort of mirror-image of the former, objectivist approach. For, whereas the objectivist cannot account for rational disagreement over value judgments, the subjectivist cannot account for rational agreement. In the dispute over the quality of this paper, on the objectivist view, *one* of us *must* be right and the other wrong; on the subjectivist view, neither of us *can* be right or wrong, for we are merely reporting our purely personal reactions. Our judgments refer to our internal states of mind, merely, and there are no independent standards to which we can appeal. Thus, as Toulmin concludes, "no subjective theory can give any account of what is a good reason for an ethical judgment, or provide any standard for criticising ethical reasoning."²³

A third position in meta-ethica theory is the "imperative" approach, a more recent and more sophisticated variant of the subjective doctrine.²⁴ According to this school, ethical statements merely evince our feelings, and have no more logical force than exclamations of approval or disapproval. For the imperativist, "truth," 'falsity' and 'proof' or 'verification' are features of logical, mathematical and factual statements only, and strict proof of factual verification the only kind of good reason which can be said to support any statements.²⁵ With the domain of reason thus limited - by mere definition - to the analytic and empirical, it follows that we can never support a value statement rationally. All we can hope to do is command, cajole, or exhort.

Three things may be said of these meta-ethical theories. First, none gives an adequate answer to the question Toulmin takes as central: what sort of argument shall we accept as providing good reason for a value claim? Secondly, their weaknesses spring from the modernist dogma that Booth attacks, the dichotomizing of fact and value with the concomitant alignment of reason with the former. Third, they invoke another false dichotomy between the objective and subjective as the locus of values. But of course values are neither in the object, nor in the subject merely. Rather, values exist in an intersubjective realm of agreements that are the fabric of a community; they exist in the actions and discourse of persons constructing, sustaining, testing

and revising the rules by which they will live and act together. Nor is the dichotomy of fact and value tenable when it subsumes the tacit dichotomy of rational and irrational. For practical men and women will persist in expressing "reasons" for their moral judgments, despite the chorus of positivist philosophers who cry "mere rhetoric!" (and thus, by their own account, only evince their attitudes without reasons!).

On what foundation, then, can we build a rationale of value argument? Toulmin urges that we recognize the function of ethics as different from, but not inferior to, the function of science. The function of our most disciplined empirical language, i.e. scientific discourse, is "to correlate our experiences in such a way that we know what to expect."²⁶ The function of ethical discourse is "to correlate our feelings and behavior in such a way as to make the fulfillment of everyone's aims and desires as far as possible compatible."²⁷ Or in other words:

...ethics and ethical language can be regarded as part of the process whereby, as members of a community, we moderate our impulses and adjust our demands so as to reconcile them as far as possible with those of our fellows.²⁸

Thus, statements of the general form, "This practice would involve the least conflict of interests attainable," or "This practice will promote the general welfare," function as perfectly good reasons for ethical claims like "this is the right practice."²⁹ And, thus, the "is-ought-gap" is bridged in the common-sensical way that men have bridged it since they began discussing their practical affairs. And arguments are validated, not by recourse to scientific procedures or analytic logic, but by the experience of the social group in question.³⁰ Thus, it makes as much sense to say of a child, "He doesn't know the difference between right and wrong," (implying that he lacks sufficient social experience), as it does to say of an adult, "He doesn't know the mating habits of the African wart-hog," (implying that he lacks sufficient experience of observation). In both cases, there is a straightforward, rational sense of what it means to "know" something. The *force* of the term is the same in each case; the *criteria* for judgment differ because the two statements differ in their functions.³¹

This review of Toulmin's position is cursory, indeed, but perhaps it will suffice to suggest the general considerations that may restore our confidence in inquiring further into the logic of value argument. If we resolve to seek the rationale of value discourse in its own realm,

we will not be led to misjudge value arguments because they do not conform to irrelevant standards. Toulmin helps us to understand the realm of *ethical* statements, specifically, and of course there are other types of value statements which we have not yet accounted for. But Toulmin's work can stand at least as an illustration of the general principle that a rational basis can be found for every sort of value discourse that has real significance for people, whether it be ethical, aesthetic, or some other. If we attend to the *function* that each sort of value statement serves, we will find there a general indication of what is to count as a good reason, and an opportunity to develop a more refined set of standards. We may now say more about how that development might proceed.

II

My second object in this paper is to sketch the broad outlines along which we need to develop an understanding of value argument. We should, I believe, aim to develop an *extensive* understanding of distinct types of value judgments or claims, and an *intensive* analysis of the patterns of argument related to each type.

The first requirement of the extensive study is to discover or devise a classification of value statements that will help us to exhibit the forms and substance of arguments relevant to each type. The treatments in the literature of argumentation and of philosophy range from excessively simple to overly complex. Textbooks on argumentation and debate have not been especially helpful in this respect; typically, they just advise the debater to seek appropriate criteria and apply them.³² One philosophical work lists nine features according to which value statements can be classified, including eight "points of view" or "realms of value" basic to all civilized cultures.³³ Eventually, we may want to achieve such elaboration, but as a starting point I want to offer a more basic set of categories.

Table 1 presents a scheme of classification that I have been using for a few years to teach a differential analysis of value statements. I was led to this approach by Nowell-Smith's analysis of the different functions that value terms perform in different contexts.³⁴ Although by now my classification differs from his, the underlying principles remain the same: that value statements are used to express different things in different contexts; that we can discover their "meaning"

Table 1
Tentative Classification of Value Statements

<i>Sample Ambiguous Statement:</i> "Exercise is good."				
POSSIBLE MEANING	CLASS	CHARACTERISTIC RELEVANT LINES OF REALM OF DISCOURSE	CHARACTERISTIC RELEVANT LINES OF ARGUMENT	
Trivial Expressions	"I enjoy it"	Subjective expressive	Small talk	[Argument irrelevant]
Consequential Statements	"It is a pleasurable experience"	Appreciative judgment	Aesthetics	Choice of criteria (and) Application of criteria
	"It fulfills one's duty to keep physically fit"	Moral judgement	Ethics	Application of a moral rule (or) Weighing consequences of acts (or) Weighing consequence of rules
	"It will contribute to good health"	Instrumental judgment	Politics	Justification of ends (and) Establishing efficacy of means

only by exploring each context, including the speaker's intention; and that such a determination of meaning (or function) is necessary to enable us to identify the relevant grounds for argument about the statement. Thus, my scheme, first recognizes that some value statements serve as relatively trivial expressions of subjective feelings, while others are consequential and important; second, it identifies what I take to be fundamental types of judgment that our evaluations express; and third, the scheme suggests, in a general way, what would constitute good reasons for each type of judgment.

The sample ambiguous statement, "Exercise is good," cannot be supported or justified until we know just what is meant by it. Further discussion might reveal that the speaker means to express some judgment based on a principle of pleasure, arguing that exercise will give pleasure to persons in general, thus, going beyond mere subjective expression of his own enjoyment. Or, the speaker might mean to say that the "goodness" he attributes to exercise is based on its meeting some moral principle. Or, finally, he might turn out to mean that exercise satisfies some principle of utility, i.e., it is good for some purpose. The example is meant to show, therefore, that value statements are often ambiguous. Before a value proposition can be profitably argued, it must be assigned to some "field" of value discussion. Such fields will be found to be characterized by clusters of key terms: in aesthetics, such terms as "beautiful," "pleasurable," "sublime;" in ethics, "right," "duty," "obligation;" in politics, "useful," "advantageous," "effective." The study of such key terms, furthermore, may help us to discover the criteria appropriate to judgments in each field, and hence to recognize "good reasons."

Whether or not these categories withstand further investigation, they appear to be reasonable starting points. They represent the categories that I have encountered most often in the works of philosophers. Karl Wallace reached the same sort of conclusion from his study of ethics and value theory, for he sets out a system of value *topoi* under the headings: "the commendable" (appreciative), "the obligatory" (moral), and "the desirable" (instrumental).³⁵ A recent study by Hamble and Wenzel suggests (though not unequivocally) that the categories have some validity even for persons untrained in ethics and value theory.³⁶

Finally, the most persuasive evidence I have for the utility of the system is the experience of my students in argumentation classes. They have been able to understand the categories, construe value

statements in terms of them, comprehend (and even tolerate) varying interpretations of the same statement in different contexts, and discuss clearly the rational bases for justifying each type. They can, it turns out, be weaned from the dogmas of modernism.

Certainly the categories – aesthetic, moral, political – are familiar areas in which we are used to finding value judgments, and in each area there exists extensive literature by specialists that would help us to refine our criteria for judging arguments. And that should be our next task, the intensive study of each class of value propositions to discover its unique characteristics and the criteria appropriate to assess arguments therein. In order to illustrate the kind of analysis that is possible here, I will draw again on Toulmin's *Reason in Ethics* in which he posits three patterns of moral argument.³⁷ (The lines of argument relevant to moral judgments in Table 1 correlate with the three patterns.)

The first case is the classic situation in which a moral question is answered by applying an appropriate rule or principle. Given certain factual conditions (E), a rule (W) applies to yield a decision (C). See Figure 1.) If the rule is not understood or not accepted, it can be explained or supported by reference to the experience of the social group in question. (B). Naturally the argument is open to appropriate reservations (R) and qualifications (Q). The second pattern of moral reasoning arises from the inevitable conflicts of duty in a complex world. Suppose that, in the same situation outlined in Figure 1, I have also been charged with the responsibility for caring for an invalid relative who cannot safely be left alone. With that complication added to the factual circumstances (E), a second moral rule (W) comes into play, having to do with discharging one's responsibility to an ill or infirm relative. The question then becomes, not which rule is better, for both may be perfectly sound rules, but rather which course of action is likely to produce the least harm (or greatest benefits) in this specific situation. One thus proceeds to weigh the consequences of particular acts in order to reach a decision in the given situation.

A third pattern of moral reasoning arises when a rule or principle is subjected to criticism in the abstract. So, for example, when a modern young couple who have been living together without civil or religious sanction say to their parents, "Marriage just isn't necessary any more," they call into question (presumably) a moral principle of long standing in their society. The question to be decided is not merely the concrete

one about what they should do. The form of their statement focuses clearly on the soundness of the rule as a rule. Appropriate arguments will thus focus on the past experience of their society in following the rule, and on the foreseeable consequences of continuing to follow it or of adopting some alternative. In other words, they weigh the consequences of rules in general in order to choose rationally between alternative abstract principles.

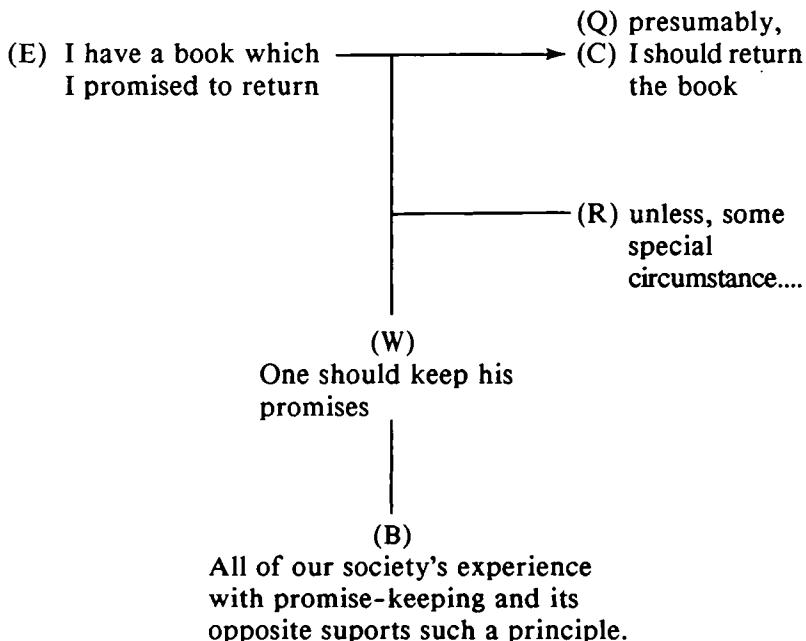


FIGURE 1

This analysis has brought us a long way from the simple treatment of most textbooks.³⁸ It should be clear by now that an extensive analysis of different sorts of value statements and an intensive analysis of each type will put us more surely in touch with the actual rationales of value-centered discourse in many contexts. The field of argumentation has much to gain from this undertaking, chiefly by expanding and refining our rational strategies for encompassing value conflicts. In a larger sense, we will be developing the logical framework for

a rhetoric of value evolution. Thus, in Chaim Perelman's words, "The theory of argumentation will help to develop what a logic of value judgments has tried in vain to provide, namely the justification of the possibility of a human community...."³⁹

Notes

1. Notre Dame: U. of Notre Dame Press, 1974; paper ed., U. of Chicago Press, 1974.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 22 *et passim*.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 13.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
6. Charles L. Stevenson, *Ethics and Language*, (New Haven: Yale U. Press, 1944), p. 138.
7. Another interesting work that addresses the same problem is currently enjoying some popularity on college campuses: Robert M. Pirsig, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* (NY: Bantam Books, 1975).
8. Edward D. Steele and W. Charles Redding, "The American Value System: Premises for Persuasion," *Western Speech Journal*, 26 (Spring 1962), 83-91.
9. Gerald R. Miller, "Questions of Fact and Value: Another Look," *Southern Speech Journal*, 28 (Winter 1962), 116-122.
10. Bruce Gronbeck, "From 'Is' to 'Ought': Alternative Strategies," *Central States Speech Journal*, 19 (Spring 1968), 31-39.
11. For example, Hugh G. Petrie, "Practical Reasoning: Some Examples," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 4 (Winter 1971), 29-41; John Hardwig, "The Achievement of Moral Rationality," *Ibid.*, 6 (Summer 1973), 171-185.

12. See especially, "The Substance of Rhetoric: Good Reasons," *QJS*, 49 (October 1963), 239-249; "Topoi and the Problem of Invention," *QJS*, 58 (December 1972), 387-395.
13. Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: a Treatise on Argumentation* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame U. Press, 1969).
14. Robert L. Scott, "On Not Defining 'Rhetoric,'" *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 6 (Spring 1973), 88.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
16. Karl R. Wallace, "The Primacy of Substance and Ideas in the Teaching of Practical Discourse," *The English Journal*, 53 (January 1964), 3.
17. Cambridge: The University Press, 1958; paper ed., 1964.
18. Cambridge: The University Press, 1959; pater ed., 1960.
19. Sophocles, *Antigone*.
20. *Reason in Ethics*, ch. 2.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 29, and the whole of ch. 3.
23. *Ibid.*
24. *Ibid.*, ch. 4.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 54.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 125. The point is developed in chapters 7 and 8.
27. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

30. See also, Wallace, "The Substance of Rhetoric," p. 248.
31. The notions of *force* and *criteria* are, of course, from Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, esp. pp. 29-35.
32. For example, Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, *Decision by Debate* (NY: Dodd, Mead, and Co., 1963), pp. 221-223; Austin J. Freeley, *Argumentation and Debate* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Publ. Co., 1971), pp. 54-55; Glen E. Mills, *Reason in Controversy*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1986), pp 101-102; Wayne N. Thompson, *Modern Argumentation and Debate* (NY: Harper and Row, 1971), pp. 56-57.
33. Paul W. Taylor, *Normative Discourse* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1961), pp. 299-300.
34. P.H. Nowell-Smith, *Ethics* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1954), esp. chs. 5-6.
35. Wallace, "Topoi and the Problem of Invention," pp. 392-394. See also, Donald C. Bryant and Karl R. Wallace, *Fundamentals of Public Speaking*, 4th. ed. (NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), pp. 36-39.
36. Joseph W. Wenzel and Dale J. Hample, "Categories and Dimensions of Value Propositions: Exploratory Studies," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 11 (winter 1975), 121-130.
37. Toulmin, *Reason in Ethics*, ch. 11
38. It is possible to develop the analysis of a given class of value propositions to an even greater degree of specificity. Consider, for example, the analysis of legal reasoning as a species of ethical discourse; Toulmin's analysis has been adapted to that purpose in Gidon Gottlieb, *The Logic of Choice* (NY: Macmillan, 1968).
39. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*. p. 514.

Introduction: Argument Fields

Toulmin first advanced the notion of "argument fields" in his book *The Uses of Argument* (1958; cf. Toulmin, 1972; Toulmin, Rieke & Janik, 1979). He suggested that some features or characteristics of argument are field invariant (occur and/or are used in the same way wherever argument occurs), while others are field dependent (vary from field to field). This is an intriguing idea, and, if correct, it is useful for argument critics and theorists to identify which aspects of argument are field invariant, as well as to specify the various argument fields and the field dependent features of argument found in each.

While this project may seem fairly straight-forward, two important questions arise. First, which characteristics of argument should we examine, in order to determine whether they are field invariant or dependent? Among the many choices available are: (1) components of an argument (data, reasoning, claims, qualifiers, etc.); (2) procedures (rules, presumption, order of speeches, etc.); (3) styles of arguing, and (4) strategies in advocacy. Any distinction that we can make concerning arguments and arguing could serve as the basis for inquiry into field invariant and dependent traits. However, these possibilities may not necessarily vary between different fields. That is, procedures might differ, but components might not. The field theorist or critic must decide which characteristics of argument to examine.

Second, we must decide how to divide up discourse into argument fields. They could, for example, be defined by academic specialties (economics, politics, law, etc.). However, should political arguments made by politicians about, say, the annual budget, be considered to occur in a separate field from the arguments of political scientists who try to understand the budget-making process? Furthermore, would the argumentation of ordinary people about government spending and taxation be considered yet another field? Another example to indicate the difficulties inherent in defining argument fields concerns doctors and economists. When doctors argue about medicine and economists argue about economics we have two different fields. However, when doctors and economists dispute about medical economics is that a third field, or two additional ones? We could also

distinguish argument fields in other ways besides academic disciplines (e.g., by audience, by situation). So, the theorist or critic of argument fields must also decide how to divide up the argumentation that occurs around us into coherent argument fields.

It is important to note that while each of these questions (what characteristics of argument should field scholars study? how do we distinguish argument fields?) are difficult separately, the problem facing the field theorist becomes even more difficult when we consider the two questions together. For example, it is possible that procedures can be seen to vary according to the audience, while the parts of an argument vary by academic discipline. If true, the scholar who studied parts of an argument in conjunction with audience would find nothing. Finally, it seems intuitively obvious that argument field research must study (either in a single study or in a systematic research program) more than one field. Only by comparing at least two argument fields can we show that a characteristic of argument varies from field to field (or that it remains constant across fields). Studies of argumentation in a single field may help illuminate that particular field, but they cannot advance field theory generally.

Willard's essay identifies and explores the minimal conditions required for the notion of argument fields to be useful. We must be able to identify the individuals who participate in argument fields, the individuals who argue in a field, and the characteristics that distinguish one field from another. In his discussion, he breaks with Toulmin on several issues (e.g., that fields should be construed as academic disciplines), articulating a perspective on fields he labels "sociological-rhetorical."

Zarefsky's article identifies and discusses three recurrent questions in work on fields of argument. These topics are undeniably central to progress in our understanding of fields: the purpose of the concept of argument fields, the nature of argument fields, and the development of argument fields. He also addresses several "sub-questions" associated with each topic. For example, in discussing the nature of fields, he discusses approaches found in the literature: fields have been distinguished by argument form, by subject matter, by situational factors, by the arguer's purpose, and by the audience. This article clearly orders central issues concerning scholarship on argument fields.

Rowland takes Toulmin's work as a departure, explaining for example that four characteristics distinguish fields: formality, precision of measurement, modes of dispute resolution, and ultimate goal. He then argues for one of the alternatives addressed by Zarefsky: fields should be determined by the arguers' shared purpose. He argues that

purpose influences the characteristics of argument fields mentioned above (formality, precision, mode of dispute resolution) as well as argument form. He also discusses implications of the decision to distinguish fields by arguer's shared purpose.

Other writers discuss various sociological implications of argument fields (including Gronbeck, 1981; Klumpp, 1981; McKerrow, 1980). (see also Willard, 1982). Farrell (1984) replies to Rowland (cf. Rowland, 1984). Fisher discusses relationships between the notions of argument fields and rhetorical genres (1981). Several case studies in argument fields were published in a special issue of *Journal of the American Forensic Association* (1986).

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Chapter 22

Persistent Questions in the Theory of Argument Fields

David Zarefsky

At first, the concept of argument fields seemed to be a straightforward matter. In *The Uses of Argument*, Toulmin wrote, "two arguments will be said to belong to the same field when the data and conclusions in each of the two arguments are, respectively, of the same logical type."¹ He proposed that, for any given field, there are accepted standards for judging the worth of arguments. The notion of field-dependent standards permitted analysis and criticism according to a criterion which avoided both extremes of universal formal validity and utter relativism.

In the nearly twenty-five years since the appearance of *Uses*, however, the concept "argument fields" has been used in a variety of ways. In *Human Understanding*², Toulmin appears to regard fields as "rational enterprises" which he equates with intellectual disciplines. His purpose is different, though: tracing the development and change of concepts rather than judging claims. Other writers have used the term in still other ways. In reviewing the "field" literature, Willard maintained, "It is arguably the case that its diffuse and open-ended nature has been [the field notion's] most attractive feature and that its widespread employment is owed to the fact that it can be made to say virtually anything."³ There are so many different notions of fields that the result is conceptual confusion rather than wholesome diversity. Faced with so many competing "proto-theories" of fields, the argumentation scholar might well wish to eschew the theoretical concept altogether.⁴

But the "field" concept offers considerable promise for empirical and critical studies of argumentation. It may be useful, therefore, to try to dispel confusion without abandoning the concept altogether. Such is the admittedly ambitious purpose of this essay, which extracts from the literature on "fields" a sense of the persistent questions and problems in theory development. The questions are grouped under

three headings—the purpose of fields, the nature of fields, and the development of fields.

Often, one's answer to one question, such as the work one wants the "field" notion to do, will affect how one answers other questions, such as whether fields are defined by their subject matter or by their form. It should be possible, therefore, to construct a small number of consistent viewpoints about the "field" concept. At the same time, there are questions which apply regardless of how one defines a field's nature or a scholar's purpose, and these are explored as well.

1. The Purpose of Fields

(1) For what purpose is the concept of argument fields introduced? Since the principle of parsimony would call for abandoning an unnecessary construct, we should be certain that the notion of fields is useful. And since identical terms can be used with different meanings, we should be clear about what work the "field" notion is intended to do.

(1a) Does "field" explain how arguments originate? One approach might be to view fields as the places where arguments occur. On this view, since there is argument in the courtroom, we have the field of legal argument. Since scientists argue, we have scientific argument. The logic behind this approach is that disputes develop within a social community. By identifying the shared norms and purposes of a community, a critic would be sensitized to those matters which are "settled" and those about which there is disagreement. Likewise, the critic could gain a feel for what are the accepted standards for resolving disagreements. In science, for example, a commitment to empiricism reigns; disagreements among scientists are seldom likely to be resolved by appeal to Biblical text or by the toss of a coin.

This approach to the purpose of the "field" concept is both descriptive and sociological, and it is useful if one's research purpose is to investigate the origins of argument within specialized communities. It also may be useful in explaining why an impasse develops when an argument occurs between members of different specialized communities. For example, a dispute about abortion in which one advocate defines the issue as religious and another defines it as a question of personal autonomy is unlikely to proceed very far. The assumptions about what is relevant to the dispute and what already is "settled" will vary between the arguers. This concept of field also may explain disagreements between advocates who define an issue as belonging to a specialized field and those who see it as a more general matter

for deliberation by a larger public. In their study of the accident at Three Mile Island, Farrell and Goodnight describe just such a conflict over whether the issue was a matter for science or for public judgment.⁵

In recognizing the uses of this view of "fields," one also should recognize the purposes for which it is *not* suited. Since it is sociological in nature, it characterizes situations or occasions for arguing, not argument products themselves. Situations may influence but do not totally determine the argument products. It does not explain how the claims, data, warrants, and so forth adduced by a theologian will differ from, say, those proffered by an artist. And since it is descriptive, it does not speak to the question of quality either of an argument or of a situation which produced it. Theorists interested in these objectives also have employed the "field" concept, but they appear to have different purposes in mind.

(1b) *Does "field" serve to compare and contrast arguments?* A second possible purpose for the concept of "fields" is to examine similarities and differences among arguments. Arguments which are alike on the dimensions examined would belong to the same field. This seems to be the approach Toulmin had in mind in *Uses*. On this view, a field would consist of arguments - regardless of the circumstances of their origin - in which the notions of what constituted evidence, what were acceptable grounds for inferring conclusions, and so on, were the same. Law and science might be distinguished, for example, because one relies heavily on reasoning from precedent whereas the other relies primarily on direct observation and reasoning from probabilities. Ethics might differ from either field because of its emphasis on reasoning from an *a priori* nature of the good. Psychoanalysis would be a distinct field from behaviorism on the basis of how each would answer the question of what counts as evidence.

It is important to recognize how this purpose of fields differs from the first. In some cases, the two approaches would lead to different views of the boundaries of a field; in others, to similar views for quite different reasons. Like the first approach, this one is descriptive. But it is a description of argument products rather than of situations in which arguing occurs. It therefore may be a useful conception if one's research purpose is to explore similarities and differences in the arguments which actors produce or to identify recurrent patterns of reasoning by induction from actual arguments rather than by an *a priori* taxonomy.

(1c) *Does "field" provide a standard for the validity of arguments?* Yet a third view of the purpose of the "field" concept is that it offers a standard for evaluating arguments. Whereas the first two purposes

were descriptive in nature and hence conducive to an empirical research program, this sense of purpose is frankly normative and hence serves the interest of the argument critic.

This point of view represents a mid-point between two unacceptable extremes for answering the question, "What is a good argument?" If goodness, or validity, were treated as a matter of form, then few if any meaningful arguments could achieve the standards of formal validity. Both Toulmin and Perelman have pointed to the difficulties in treating formal logic as the paradigm case of argumentation, noting the inability of this paradigm to accommodate most actual disputes.⁶ Recent writing in mathematics calls into question the ability of a formal system fully to account for arguments even in that most formal of realms.⁷

The other extreme position, that an argument is valid if someone thinks it is, seems equally unsatisfactory. It would force the abandonment of any impartial standpoint for assessing the value of arguments, and would lead to the vicious relativism characterized by Wayne Booth: "Charles Manson will be confirmed by the assent of his witches, Hitler by his SS troops, every Christian sect by its hundreds or millions of adherents, and indeed every political and religious program by its ability to present witnesses."⁸ If we abandon both the quest for formal validity and a commitment to *any* notion of "reasonableness" which transcends individual occasions, it is hard to see how we could evaluate the soundness of arguments.

Having rejected the absolutism of formal logic and the implications of vicious relativism, one might arrive at the field concept - as Toulmin did - as a middle ground. The fragmentation of knowledge is thus viewable as a temporary setback, held in check by the promise of an impartial standpoint of rationality. Plausibly, the impartial standpoint may turn out to be a procedural principle capable of authorizing evaluations of arguments while doing justice to interfield relativity.

If one uses the field concept to pursue such epistemic/judgmental purposes, identifying fields and their boundaries becomes critically important. Only a clear conception of fields can yield a clear impartial standpoint of rationality since the former is the "ground" from which the latter "figure" emerges. Right now - without the impartial standpoint - the soundness of arguments depends upon their fit with the procedural and substantive ecologies of different fields. This perspective suggests that fields should be defined by their judgment criteria for what counts as "reasonable" or "valid." Whether the mapping of fields which results from such a standard would correspond in any significant way to

the maps produced by the other two approaches is an open and largely unexplored question.

It is idle to speculate about whether sociological or argument-centered perspectives, description or evaluation, empirical research or criticism, is the more important task. Certainly we need both. What needs to be recognized is that one's view of fields will depend heavily on the work one wishes the concept to do. Much of the confusion in the extant work on fields may result from using the concept and arguing about its ramifications without making one's research purpose clear.

Whatever the purpose, one must assume that where argument occurs significantly affects its nature, or the concept of "fields" would be superfluous. As Cox puts it in discussing public policy argumentation, we must assume that the concepts of "public" and "policy" *inform* argumentation in a meaningful way.⁹ Whether one's goal is description of situations, description of arguments, or critical evaluation, one must posit characteristics which define the nature of a field. There is considerable divergence among writers as to what these characteristics should be.

One approach to this problem may be to employ different labels. In his essay in this issue, Wenzel distinguishes among fields, forums, and contexts of argument.¹⁰ Fields are grounded in the contents of knowledge structures; forums are grounded in the practices of a rational enterprise which attempts to create knowledge structures; and contexts are grounded in the general sociocultural environment. Fields relate to argument products; forums to procedures; and contexts to processes. These distinctions identify different perspectives which can be taken in studying argumentation.

2. The Nature of Argument Fields

A second persistent question is (2) *For any given argument, what determines the field it is in?* In some respects this question follows naturally from the first - one might be expected to define the characteristics of an argument field consistently with one's goal in invoking the concept of fields. The literature, to be sure, reflects wide variation in how fields are defined. Some of the variation is caused by differing answers to the first question but some is independent. What follows is an attempt to identify the variety of usages.

(2a) *Are argument fields determined by the argument's form?* If one holds, as Toulmin seemed to in *Uses*, that fields are groups

of arguments in which data and conclusions are of the same logical type, it would follow that formal differences would distinguish among fields. Few contemporary writers take this strict position, probably because it assumes a degree of formalism which is not appropriate to practical reasoning.¹¹ In a recent essay in this journal, Willard makes a cogent case against the equation of fields with logical types.¹²

Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik seem to have adopted a modification of this position. They describe the structure of argument in five different fields - law, science, management, ethics, and the arts.¹³ They maintain that what are regarded as acceptable data and warrants vary by field, as do the importance of backing, rebuttals, or qualifiers. But these are not really *formal* differences. Toulmin and his colleagues have first identified fields according to the criterion of subject matter, and *then* have asked how fields differ according to what types of substantive statements count as the various parts of the argument. To see in this procedure a *formal* criterion for the definition of fields is to beg the question.

(2b) *Are argument fields determined by subject matter?* This approach to defining fields focuses on argument content rather than form. The assumption is that arguments dealing with the same subject are alike in important ways - origins, structural features, validity standards, etc. - and that they differ on those same dimensions from arguments on a different subject.

A particular version of this approach which has received widespread attention is the equation of fields with academic disciplines. Toulmin distinguishes among compact disciplines, diffuse disciplines, would-be disciplines, the undisciplined, and the undisciplinable. Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik identify law, science, management, ethics, and the arts as examples of fields. This same approach is evident in several papers at the Second Alta Conference which attempt to characterize legal argument as a distinct field.¹⁴

For some purposes this approach may be useful, particularly for understanding the norms and conventions of an academic discipline and how they constrain argumentation. For example, it may help to explain why scientists might dismiss certain data or claims as unscientific while another discipline might embrace the very same data and claims.

But as a way to define fields or to distinguish among them this approach has serious problems. First, where, for example, does psychology leave off and sociology begin? As Gronbeck notes in his recent paper on "socioculture," a concerted effort seems underway to blur disciplinary boundaries.¹⁵ Moreover, different disciplines

address common problems (and their members are able to argue meaningfully with one another when they do). And disciplines-psychology or communication studies, for instance-may be so broad that the variance in approach among scholars *within* a discipline is greater than that among scholars *between* cognate disciplines.

There is a more serious difficulty with the equation of fields and academic disciplines. This approach may well recreate the same error which Toulmin finds in formal logic: selection of an inappropriate paradigm for general argumentation. Most instances of argumentation do not occur within the confines of any academic discipline. They involve personal and public matters on which the arguers lack the specialized expertise associated with an academic discipline. Even when arguers concern themselves with, say, the budget and national finance, they often generate arguments uninformed in any meaningful way by the discipline of economics. One could define public and personal arguments as fields in their own right, but doing so would confound our attempt to define fields by the *subject-matter content* of arguments. In short, defining argument fields by reference to subject matter will fail to account for a substantial portion of everyday informal argumentation.¹⁶

(2c) *Are argument fields determined by situational features?* Since Bitzer's seminal essay,¹⁷ the concept of "situation" has loomed large in rhetorical theory. A third approach to defining fields is by reference to features in the situation or in the orientation of the arguers to it. Variations on this approach range from Willard's personal-construct assumption that "A is in field X when he thinks he is," to generic exploration as recommended by Fisher, to identify the recurrence of situations of the same basic type.¹⁸

This approach would seem most useful for researchers investigating arguing as a process, who would be interested in probing the circumstances under which argumentative interactions occur. In viewing argument from a dramatistic perspective, for example, Klumpp is concerned with the enactment of symbolic drama in response to a situation.¹⁹ In adopting a constructivist/interactionist orientation, Willard appears to be concerned with the personal constructs by which people define situations as arguments, and with the sort of behavior for which such a definition of the situation calls. Our literature has seen diverse approaches masquerading under the common label "constructivism." But whether one takes the personal-construct view identified with Willard or the social-construction-of-reality view identified with Kneupper, the common thread is to define fields by reference to aspects of the argumentative situation.²⁰

A specific variation on this approach may be worthy of special note. In referring to Freudianism and behaviorism as distinct fields within the subject area of psychology, Willard introduces the possibility that arguers' schools of thought or world-views determine the field in which their arguments reside. Of course, one might regard a world-view as being an integrated set of personal constructs consistently applied. Pepper's work on root metaphors²¹ suggests that one's world-view affects argumentative choices in significant ways. This suggestion is borne out by Linder's historical research on the rhetoric of the American Revolution and the anti-war protest movements of the 1960's.²² In each case she found that arguers who had the same basic conclusions defended them in quite different ways, arguing often from different presuppositions and interpreting data differently.

Defining fields in this manner seems appropriate for one particular type of research objective. It is well-suited to Willard's goal of investigating how people come to decide that they know something.²³ Since this purpose is descriptive and social psychological, it is sensible to define fields according to descriptive features of the social situation. Even such a seemingly broad statement as "A is in field X when he thinks he is" makes sense within the context of Willard's research program. What clouds the matter is either the grafting of this definition onto research purposes for which it is ill-suited, or the criticism of this definition on the grounds that it is unsuited for research purposes for which it never was intended. Here is a good example of how one's answer to the first question—the purpose for invoking the field concept—powerfully influences how one determines what field an argument is in.

(2d) *Are argument fields determined by the shared purpose of the arguers?* One might regard the arguers' purpose as one dimension of the situation and hence subsume this question under the immediately preceding one. But its implications are sufficiently different to warrant separate treatment.

In a paper for the 1981 Summer Conference on Argumentation, Rowland makes a forceful plea that it is *purpose* which energizes the activity of arguing in the first place.²⁴ Accordingly, two arguers are in the same field if they share a common purpose, and—probably because of the shared purpose—the arguments they produce will differ in important ways from arguments which derive from a different purpose. Presumably, purpose may be identified either explicitly by the arguers or implicitly in their discourse.

This view has much to recommend it, particularly since purpose (or motive) may well be the root term from which different conceptions

of the situation, or different academic disciplines, derive. Rowland's case studies of the law and newspaper criticism do seem to bear out the utility of his approach. Moreover, it is an approach which potentially could serve each of the three objective mentioned earlier. It could explain how arguments develop, it could explain and predict differences in the structural features of argument, and it could serve as the basis for critical evaluation by prompting the question, "Did the advocate argue appropriately in light of the purpose?"

Still, there are problems in regarding purpose as the defining characteristic of fields. Arguers have multiple purposes. Meaningful discussion does occur among people whose purposes are not only different but incompatible. (Sometimes these exchanges may be productive if either party can step outside his own conception of purpose to imagine the other's. Sometimes they are futile, as in Willard's example in conversation of the dispute between the creationist and the evolutionist over the meaning of the Bible.) Arguers do not always know their purposes - much of everyday argument is produced spontaneously, even mindlessly. Even if an arguer knows his purpose, the analyst or critic may not, and hence may be unable confidently to classify the argument according to its field. Finally, for a critic who wishes to avoid the intentional fallacy, the arguer's purpose may not matter. Such a critic would focus on argument as discourse, a product of an interaction which has come to have a life of its own.

(2e) *Are argument fields determined by the audience for argument?* A final approach to characterizing argument fields is to examine the question of who constitutes the appropriate audience for the arguments. On this view, fields would be distinguished according to the composition of the appropriate audience to evaluate claims. This approach has its roots in any theory of knowledge which holds that *consensus* is a test for the soundness of claims; the question naturally follows, "consensus among whom?" Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca distinguish between the universal audience and particular audiences,²⁵ presumably the field of argument would be determined by which type of audience was addressed.

More recently, both McKerrow and Goodnight have distinguished among audiences which arguments address. In his paper on "argument communities," McKerrow identifies the social, philosophical, and personal as three distinct "communities" of argument, distinguished by the nature of the audience.²⁶ To be sure, McKerrow does not offer this view as a *definition* of fields, but he employs the concept of "community" in an analogous way. It is the community who determines what norms are appropriate and what evaluative standards should

prevail. In his critique of fields, Rowland identified some of the difficulties of attempting to equate fields with audiences in this manner.²⁷ Such immense differences may be found among arguments addressed to the same community as to compel the conclusion that the common audience is an incidental rather than essential feature of the argumentation. Moreover, in genuine controversies often multiple audiences are addressed simultaneously. In such a case, it seems impossible to determine which audience's standards of validity or appropriateness should prevail.

Goodnight's view is somewhat different. Since he takes one of the purposes of the "field" concept to be providing grounds for the evaluation of argument, he maintains that to define a field is in effect to define the set of persons competent to evaluate the argument.²⁸ If we are in the field of science, for example, only scientists ultimately are capable of judging the discourse. The distinction here is between *listener* and *judge*: scientific discourse may be addressed to virtually any audience, but only one audience is presumed competent to assess it. Hence, nonscientific objections to an argument in the field of science can be dismissed precisely on the grounds that they are not scientific. They do not address the special concerns of that audience which is ultimately competent to rule in the matter.

For Goodnight, the fact that arguments are addressed simultaneously to multiple audiences helps rather than hinders his claim. For he explores how, in just such ambiguous situations, one statement of who is competent to judge comes to prevail over another. How is it, for example, that nuclear accidents are seen as falling under the rubric of technological rather than religious authority, or that abortion is a matter for decision by criminal law rather than medicine? There are interests involved in assigning arguments to one field or another, and Goodnight attempts to show how the interplay of interests accounts for the growth and decay of entire realms of argument. Just as Schattschneider called attention to the interests involved in widening or narrowing the scope of a conflict,²⁹ so Goodnight suggests the strategic interests involved in classifying an argument within one or another field. For him, as for McKerrow, fields designate audiences. If McKerrow focuses more on actual audiences, Goodnight is more concerned with the audiences to whom one attributes standards for evaluation.

(2f) *Are inferences from fields to characteristics reversible?* There is an additional issue related to the way in which argument fields are defined; it concerns the relationship between a field and its properties. If we have defined and mapped fields correctly, then once we

know we are in field X (or witnessing an argument from field X), we would know that the argument would have certain features different from those of an argument in field Y. But is the converse also true? If, for example, we hear someone make an assertion that sounds "legal," can we infer that the speaker is in the field of law? We used the concept of field to identify the features of an argument within it; can we use the features to identify the field?

In a logical sense, the answer must be no, since the principle, "All As are Bs," does not imply its converse. One could assert that all legal arguments cite precedent cases without knowing that all arguments which cite precedent cases are legal. But in fact we make just this sort of "logically invalid" inference all the time. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca describe the interaction between essence and accident. From repeated observations of an act's accidental features we form an impression of its essential nature, though that nature is not directly knowable. Then, from our impressions of its essence we make predictions about the accidental features which might be subsequently displayed.³⁰ The point is that there is an ongoing interaction between the view one has of a field and one's view of the characteristics displayed by arguments in the field. What prevents the reasoning process from circularity is the cumulation of cases. From an examination of the features of arguments 1, 2, 3, ..., n, all of which are commonly recognized as belonging to field X, we form a notion of the essential nature of X which we then use to predict the features of argument n + 1.

The answer to this question is of special value to the critic. To determine what a speaker's statements mean and hence what their truth conditions are, one must locate the statements in a particular field. (Wenzel employs the terms "context" and "forum" instead of "field" for this sort of usage.)³¹ From features of the argument the critic infers the field; from the nature of the field he or she predicts the appropriate validity standards or truth conditions. The question for the critic is whether, in any given argument, the features of one field are more prominent than the features of another. The concept of field, however, provides a principle according to which one can interpret ambiguous claims.

In summary, the extant literature reveals considerable variation in how argument fields are defined. In part, this variation reflects diversity in the work which scholars expect the "field" concept to do. However, variation in definition is at least partly independent of variation in purpose. Some of the approaches to definition either cross-cut various purposes for the concept of "field" or else are com-

patible with multiple purposes. Moreover, once one has defined a field, the relationship between a field's essential nature and its surface properties is complex and troublesome. One observes the features of arguments universally located within a given field, infers from those features what is the basic nature of the field, and then predicts – based on the assumed nature of the field – the characteristics of other arguments which may be taken to reside in the field. Through this sort of sign reasoning, the field concept enables a critic to determine what ambiguous statements mean and what are the appropriate grounds on which to test them.

3. The Development of Fields

The final question to be considered relates to the growth and decay of argument fields: (3) *How do fields develop?*

The importance of this question can be seen from the consequences of failure to answer it. As with "instincts" in psychology, the temptation is great to "invent" fields as it suits one's purpose to do so. Whenever an argument does not fully fit within existing categories – whether of subject matter, purpose, audience, or whatever – the eager researcher might proclaim the existence of a new argument field. This proliferation of fields, made all the more likely by the amorphous nature of the field concept itself, threatens to rob the idea of its significance. If every argumentative encounter has become its own field, then the concept has been trivialized. It no longer explains the genesis of arguments, except in a tautological way; and it thwarts the possibility of identifying argument structures or evaluating arguments in any way that transcends the details of the particular case. To avoid these pitfalls, we need an account of the growth and demise of fields against which we can check individual claims for the emergence or disappearance of fields. Toulmin offered such an account of how concepts change in *Human Understanding*; what is needed is a similar if less ambitious account of the rise and fall of fields. Several specific aspects of this question are explored here.

(3a) *Do arguers create their own field?* An affirmative answer to this question seems implied by the several variations of "constructivism." Kneupper, for instance, maintains that fields are formed by actors' creation and transformation of symbols.³² Willard believes that fields can be understood best as psychological constructs.³³ Both writers appear to share the belief that fields are called into being by arguers in specific situations. What saves this approach from a vicious

relativism is the assumption that, because arguers validate assumptions intersubjectively, there is a finite range of situations and that types of situations recur. Still, this perspective on the evolution of fields is probably more useful in accounting for an argument's genesis than it is for the other possible purposes described above.

(3b) *Are fields different from the public?* In his essay in this issue, Goodnight poses the possibility that fields, as specialized interests, stand in opposition to the public, a term which refers to a general community interest.³⁴ On this view, the way a field emerges is by an expert group's successfully defining a topic area or exigence as not the proper concern for the general public. The effect, Goodnight surmises, is to denude the concept of "the public" and to deprive individuals of responsibility for their collective choices. Hence, fields grow at the expense of the public. The motive for their growth is the desire by specialists to assume the power to decide about matters which affect or interest them. This desire can be rationalized with the claim that the public is incompetent. The attempt to see in economic or scientific issues matters which are technical rather than ideological, is an illustration of how separate argument fields emerge.

Goodnight's case is cogent, but it depends upon a particular stipulation: the belief that the personal, technical, and public are not only different spheres but wholly different orders of magnitude. On Goodnight's view, fields are subdivisions of the technical sphere. Whether an argument is assigned to one field or another is a matter of little consequence except to the technical experts themselves who are battling for the prerogative to control discussion of the issue. The crucial question is whether a dispute is assigned to the technical sphere *at all* or whether it is reserved for the public domain. If, however, one views public argument as *coequal* with any of the specific specialized fields -as Cox appears to do³⁵ - the nature of the problem is somewhat different. Advocates for the public would be on an equal footing with advocates for any specific field and hence would not be at the disadvantage Goodnight's essay implies. His account of field origins would be attenuated since the contest to control the discussion would occur between one field and another rather than between *any* field and the more general "public."

(3c) *How do time and historical experience influence the demarcation of argument fields?* Several scholars have addressed the issue of how fields progress through time and are affected by experience. For example, Campbell's provocative analysis of historical epochs suggests that they constitute "new model[s] of ultimate explanation," subsuming earlier contexts of argument.³⁶ And, in his essay in this

issue, Goodnight draws upon the relationship among the personal, technical, and public spheres in order to explain how entire realms of argument may come to be lost, no longer representing live options for speakers or audiences.³⁷ Farrell's essay, "Knowledge in Time," also addresses how a society's conception of knowledge is shaped by time.³⁸ Central to all of these essays is the recognition that an argument field is shaped by a larger sense of chronology. If, for example, there are cycles in the emergence and disappearance of issues of a certain type, or cycles in the optimism or pessimism of a people, or any of the other varieties of historical cycles which have been theorized, these cycles will affect the constellation of argument fields. To cite but one example, in a time of economic expansion social welfare programs are advocated as economic investments, but in tight times the same arguments are assigned to the field of "charity."

Not just the passage of historical time, but experience more generally affects argument fields. Two of the 1981 Summer Conference papers suggest that an audience's notion of validity standards is affected by history. In surmising that fields differ in their assumptions about what is reasonable, I observed that reasonableness is dependent on history: "Audiences are willing to make an inference confidently because the inferential pattern in the past has led to satisfactory results far more often than not."³⁹ The ways in which experience affects fields should be of particular interest to those whose research purposes are descriptive and sociological. A theory which grounds fields in experience leads these communities to spawn significantly different approaches to the nature of argument.

(3d) *Other than in their defining characteristics, how do fields differ?* If our interest in argument fields is to have value beyond the taxonomic, identifying different fields must somehow make a difference. Having said, for example, that legal argument and scientific argument are discrete fields, we should be able to make sound predictions about how these differences would be manifest. Otherwise little has been gained from the "field" usage. If it were determined, say, that fields were defined by logical types and that they differed only in logical type, we might just as well abandon the "field" construct and say that *arguments* vary by logical type.

Two major answers have been offered to this question. One, represented by Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik, is that fields differ in the component parts of arguments or in their configuration. In *An Introduction to Reasoning*, the authors maintain that the nature and pattern of data, warrants, claims, backing, and so on differ across the range of fields they examine. In like fashion, Klumpp has suggested

that fields determine what types of data are even considered relevant to the support of a given claim. And Farrell's recent work involving the concept of "authority" implies the question of whether fields differ according to judgments of what constitutes authority.⁴⁰ These and other differences in argument structure should be of special interest to researchers whose goal is to describe argument products as they are affected by fields.

The other major suggestion is that fields differ according to validity standards, or – put more broadly – how they answer the question of what makes an argument reasonable. A reasonable argument is one which most people would accept when they were exercising their critical judgment. This approach to the question assumes that each field has its own "standpoint of rationality" and that these standpoints represent the middle ground between formalism and vicious relativism. Several recent papers suggest that standards of reasonableness may vary from field to field. This possibility is implicit in Gronbeck's suggestion that the correctness of an argument depends on contextual validity standards and that these are determined by a socioculture. It is likewise implied by Fisher's contention that the nature of *reason* varies with genre. It is made explicit in my own hypothesis that fields will differ in the substantive underlying assumptions made about an argument and that these assumptions are a key determinant of an argument's reasonableness.⁴¹ The claim that public policy arguments are deemed reasonable if they appeal to both liberal and conservative presuppositions represents a beginning effort to delineate the ways in which standards for reasonableness are constrained by an argument field. This approach has been of primary interest to scholars seeking to use the field concept as a tool for the critical appraisal of arguments.

For researchers whose goal is to describe argumentative situations, less has been done to explicate the ways in which fields differ, perhaps because there is a strong tendency to regard "field" as synonymous with "situation," assert that fields exist in the minds of the arguers, and then conclude that no two situations are exactly alike. Willard, however, has suggested that fields vary by the audiences for argument. Unlike McKerrow or Goodnight, Willard does not *define* fields by reference to audiences. Nevertheless, he suggests that it may be more productive to view fields as characterizations of audiences than of speakers, because the speaker's affiliation may be difficult to determine and because it is the audience as well as the speaker who bring predispositions and values to the argument.⁴² Certainly such a position is consistent with a view of fields as sociological categories, and it is compatible with much of what we know about audience analysis.

4. Conclusion

There is a certain temptation to throw up one's hands in the face of conceptual fuzziness and confusion, abandoning the troublesome concept altogether. But the "field" concept has useful purposes to serve. It is a potential aid to explaining what happens in argumentative encounters, to classifying argument products, and to deriving evaluative standards. To be sure, researchers on argument fields are not yet pursuing a coherent program. By identifying the different jobs that the "field" concept is expected to do and explicating some of the key questions in theory development, we may bring greater coherence to this work.

One value of the field concept is that it has forced argumentation scholars to re-examine their discipline's purposes and methods, and to see the relationship between a purpose or method and the sort of theory it produces. This disciplinary self-consciousness is not only valuable in its own right but essential to the integration of empirical and critical studies on which mature and robust theories of argumentation will depend.

Notes

1. Stephen E. Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 14.
2. Stephen E. Toulmin, *Human Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972).
3. Charles Arthur Willard, "Field Theory: A Cartesian Meditation," *Dimensions of Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation*, eds. George Ziegelmüller and Jack Rhodes (Annandale, Va.: Speech Communication Association, 1981), p. 21. This anthology hereafter will be cited as *Dimensions*.
4. For example, McKerrow admits to "skepticism regarding the value of 'field theory' as a rationale for the explication of arguments." Ray E. McKerrow, "Field Theory: A Necessary Concept?" paper presented

at the Speech Communication Association convention, Anaheim, California, November 1981.

5. See Thomas B. Farrell and G. Thomas Goodnight, "Accidental Rhetoric: Root Metaphors of Three Mile Island," *Communication Monographs*, 48 (December 1981), 271-300.

6. See, for example, Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument*, pp. 146-210; Chaim Perelman and L. Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric*, trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969), pp. 1-10.

7. See, for instance, Morris Kline, *Mathematics in Western Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp. 42-43; J. van Heijenoort, "Gödel's Theorem," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (New York): Macmillan, 1967), III, pp. 348-357.

8. Wayne C. Booth, *Modern Dogma and the Rhetoric of Assent* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1974), p. 106.

9. J. Robert Cox, "Investigating Policy Argument as a Field," *Dimensions*, p. 126.

10. Joseph W. Wenzel, "Fields, Forums, and Contexts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, this issue, pp. 204-5.

11. McKerrow does tend in this direction, however, in arguing that fields ought to be regarded as logical types. See Ray E. McKerrow, "On Fields and Rational Enterprises: A Reply to Willard," *Proceedings of the [First] Summer Conference on Argumentation*, Eds. Jack Rhodes and Sara Newell (Falls Church, Va.: Speech Communication Association, 1980), esp. p. 403.

12. Charles Arthur Willard, "Argument Fields and Theories of Logical Types," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 17 (Winter 1981), 129-145.

13. Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke, and Allan Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning* (New York: Macmillan, 1979).

14. These papers appear in *Dimensions*, pp. 159-278. Also, in the discussion period of the program, "Theoretical Perspectives on Argument Fields," Michael C. McGee argued from the floor that the concepts of "discipline" and "field" were redundant.

15. Bruce E. Gronbeck, "Sociocultural Notions of Argument Fields: A Primer," *Dimensions*, pp. 1-2.
16. For a thorough statement of this problem, see Charles Arthur Willard, "Some Questions about Toulmin's View of Argument Fields," *Proceedings of the [First] Summer Conference*, pp. 348-400.
17. Lloyd F. Bitzer, "The Rhetorical Situation," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, I (1969), 1-14.
18. Charles Arthur Willard, "Cartesian Meditation," p. 34; Walter R. Fisher, "Good Reasons: Fields and Genre," *Dimensions*, pp. 114-125.
19. James F. Klumpp, "A Dramatistic Approach to Fields," *Dimensions*, pp. 44-45.
20. Readers of this journal should be quite familiar with the ongoing dispute between Willard and Kneupper. For their most recent positions, see Charles W. Kneupper, "Argument: A Social Constructivist Perspective," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 17 (Spring 1981), 183-189; Charles Arthur Willard, "The Status of the Non-Discursiveness Thesis," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 17 (Spring 1981), 190-214.
21. Stephen Pepper, *World Hypotheses* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1942).
22. See Patricia L. Linder, "World-View and Rhetoric: The Ideological Foundations of American Revolutionary Communication," Thesis Northwestern 1978; World-View and Rhetorical Choice: The Ideology and Tactics of Selected Antiwar Protest Groups During the Vietnam Era." Diss. Northwestern 1980. For a description of her method, see Linder, "World-View and Rhetoric: A Proposed Methodology for Ideological Definition," paper presented at the Speech Communication Association convention, San Antonio, November 1979.
23. See Charles Arthur Willard, *Argumentation and the Social Grounds of Knowledge* (University, Ala.: University of Alabama Press), in press.
24. Robert C. Rowland, "Argument Fields," *Dimensions*, esp. pp. 61-68.

25. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, pp. 17-45.
26. Ray E. McKerrow, "Argument Communities: A Quest for Distinctions," *Proceedings of the [First] Summer Conference*, pp. 214-227.
27. Rowland, p. 60.
28. See G. Thomas Goodnight, "The Personal, Technical, and Public Spheres of Argument: A Speculative Inquiry Into the Art of Public Deliberation," this issue, pp. 220-23.
29. E.E. Schattschneider, *The Semisovereign People* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1960), pp. 16-18.
30. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. pp. 293-330.
31. Wenzel, "Fields, Forums, and Contexts of Argument," this issue.
32. Charles W. Kneupper, "Argument Fields: Some Social Constructivist Observations," *Dimensions*, pp. 80-87.
33. Willard writes, "the field notion is most useful to argumentation theorists as a psychological idea, taking account of the idiosyncratic perspectives of situated actors." Charles Arthur Willard, "Some Questions about Toulmin's View," p. 348.
34. Goodnight, "The Personal, Technical, and Public Spheres," this issue, pp. 219-20.
35. Cox, "Investigating Policy Argument as a Field," *Dimensions*, pp. 126-142.
36. John Angus Campbell, "Historical Reason: Field as Consciousness." *Dimensions*, pp. 101-113.
37. Goodnight, "The Personal, Technical, and Public Spheres," this issue, p. 215.
38. Thomas B. Farrell, "Knowledge in Time," *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research*, Eds. J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), in press.

39. David Zarefsky, "'Reasonableness' in Public Policy Argument: Fields as Institutions," *Dimensions*, p. 88. For a similar view, though not described in the terms of argument fields, see Dale Hample, "What is a Good Argument?" *Dimensions*, p. 884.
40. Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning*, Part IV; Klumpp, p. 49; Farrell, "Knowledge in Time."
41. Gronbeck, pp. 1-20, esp. p. 15; Fisher, pp. 114-125; Zarefsky, p. 89.
42. Willard, "Cartesian Meditation," p. 24.

Chapter 23

Field Theory: A Cartesian Meditation

Charles Arthur Willard

It is not necessarily true that ideas have to be well understood to be influential. Witness the notion of argument fields. It is sufficiently fuzzy and imprecise that it can be made to authorize entirely incompatible projects. It can be read as an extreme sociological relativism that undercuts any but the most bland universal standards of judgment. Or it can be more narrowly seen (a la Toulmin) as the anthropological face of philosophy which is to be transcended by philosophy's critical face.¹ It can be defined in terms of logical types or in terms of real social entities bearing no clear relation to types. It can serve as a surrogate term for what ethnographers call "speech communities" or as a label for "rhetorical communities" - two different sorts of distinctions which blur each other's boundaries. Notwithstanding these ambiguities, the field notion has been enthusiastically received. It is arguably the case that its diffuse and open-ended nature has been its most attractive feature and that its widespread employment is owed to the fact that it can be made to say virtually anything.

One way to clarify a concept is to consider the conditions of making coherent claims about it. Another way is to consider what the concept has to look like in order to vouch for coherent claims. These approaches can function in tandem when the focus is upon concrete rather than abstract claims. The capacity to authorize coherent claims is (plausibly) the litmus test of a useful theoretical construct; if these claims are particular (case-specific) as well as coherent, all the better.

To consider the conditions of making coherent claims by and about a concept is to entertain the possibility that it cannot survive scrutiny. It opens the door to the possibility that the concept - in this case the field notion - serves only as a wastebasket for conceptual problems. It raises the possibility of sharply drawn battle lines and predatory exchanges between schools of thought. Either case seems preferable

to the present indistinctness of the field notion. Since the field notion is clearly being adapted different theoretical frameworks for many different purposes, the drawing of sharp disputational lines would not be all that bad.

It may prove useful to think through the conditions of making coherent claims by and about fields. In particular, it may be enlightening to ask whether one can plug content (specifics) into the following claims:

- (i) *A is in field X*: read differently. *A is a member of X*. Claims of this sort are surely the enabling condition of using a body of thought or a social frame of reference to define the meaning of someone's utterance.
- (ii) *A is arguing in (or from) field X*. The fuzziness of the field notion is exposed if (ii) is thought to collapse to (i). The two are distinct, for reasons to be elaborated.
- (iii) *Field X has n characteristics; or field X is distinguishable from fields Y and Z by virtue of n*. Can we distinguish among fields at all? Preferences aside, what are the preconditions of such distinctions? Failing (iii), field theory will prove untenable.

Can we, i.e., make concrete claims of the three sorts? Straightforwardly, can we say that Smith is (say) an astrologist, is arguing in or from that social field - and can we say these things because we can confidently describe astrology? Or - a more difficult case - can we say that Jones, who is a professional psychologist, is in this case making a claim drawn from economics - this distinction being permitted by our clear demarcations between the two fields? Does success vis-a-vis any single claim suffice to justify field theory; or can any of the claims be coherently instantiated if and only if all three claims work out?

1. Theoretical Framework

These three claims were not conjured from thin air but from considerations of what the most useful field theory might look like.² While fields might well be defined as alternative critical perspectives, logical types, or ideal entities, it is just as plausible to think of them as real social entities. So viewed, they would function similarly to notions such as "communities of discourse," "social frameworks of knowledge,"

"rhetorical communities," "domains of objectivity," "groups," "relations," and the like. They would be frames of reference by which critics might assign meaning to utterance - this on the assumption that fields function in precisely the same way for speakers who are "in" them or are using them.

Consistent with this thinking, fields are construable as psychological perspectives, points of view on the order of Mead's "general other." Thus, the most basic sense of the word field - by this reasoning at least is the "psychological field," the person's phenomenal field. The sociological concepts enter this picture as the interpreting person shifts from perspective to perspective, i.e., enters and exits communal traditions. My assumption is that actors are "multi-valent" - moving from one frame of reference to another depending on the needs of the moment. Consider, e.g., that a physicist (i) deals with colleagues about physics, (ii) argues with the spouse about child rearing, (iii) argues with a neighbor about food prices, and (iv) argues with the priest about abortion. The list may be as lengthy as the interests and activities of any person permit.

I intend this thinking to square with what I take to be two seminal notions, viz., the centrality of communication and the definitive importance of the definition of the situation. Following Chicago School symbolic interactionism, I want to say that fields exist in and through the ongoing defining activities of their actors, that they are not things (and that any variant of object language is inappropriate to them). Fields, i.e., are traditions of practices, inferences we make about recurring themes in a group's practices; they are generalizations we make about unifying threads uniting particular activities.

Proceeding this way, field theory becomes a piece of a broader epistemological package. It is holistically embedded in three lines of thinking, viz., the psychological sense of field, the sociological sense of field, and a view of utterance which I have defended elsewhere. The intuitive idea is that the claims made of any of the three ought to square - more than that, they ought to mesh together into a unified social theory.

Corresponding to these theoretical elements are three aspects of relativity - each comprising in its respective way an organizing problematic for argument critics and naive social actors alike. Subjectivity describes the differences and incommensurabilities of

psychological fields; relativism describes differences between sociological traditions (fields); and intentionality describes differences in the ways speakers intend toward utterance.

These theoretical elements and their corresponding sorts of relativity find their bluntest expression in terms of knowledge and value claims. Thus "subjectivism" takes individual viewpoints to contain the truth conditions of utterances; field theory focuses upon substantive and procedural differences between the things different groups take to be knowledge and in the ways they pass muster on knowledge and value claims; and the view of utterance - which I have defended under the theory "constructivist/interactionist" rubric - focuses upon alternative constructions which may be placed upon utterances depending upon the speaker's definition of situation and referential field.

The centrality of communication processes to epistemic and value judgments is embodied in Festinger's notion of social comparison. My assumption is that subjectivism is problematic for individuals and that they seek to objectify their thinking by checking it against selected communal standards. Their entry tickets to such comparisons are (typically) other people. Thus, a person turns to a field, or in senses to be specified "enters" a field, in order to firm up subjective interpretations. Thus, to study fields is to study the ways actors deal with the problems of interpersonal relativity, their attempts to wrest order and security from events, their efforts after *objectifying*.

It very much matters which field a person enters to check his thinking. In the first place, it tells us much about a field when we know that people in thus and so contexts, who define things in thus and so ways, appeal to field X. In the second place, interfield differences are sometimes such that any particular belief or statement may be true in X but false in Y, rational in X but irrational (or nonrational) in Y, good in X and evil in Y. Interfield comparisons need not all be this lurid; plausibly, most are not. Nonetheless, I have used three examples which depict interfield relativity of just this strength: (i) *neo-Kant ethics versus cost-benefit analysis* - the main difference being that the former insists that values cannot be expressed as quantities while the latter stipulates that values *only* be expressed in the language of quantity; (ii) *existential ethics versus military science* - the main difference being that the General who says that "we had to destroy the town in order to save it" is beyond critique from ethics unless (say) Sartre, who condemns the abstraction of that which is

concrete, can defend his principle *in* military discourse; and (iii) the *creationists versus the evolutionists* - both sides impute religious fervor to the other; both accuse the other of closed mindedness and censorship; neither side can translate the other's presuppositions into a common language; and only one - the creationist - side has attempted to adapt to the perspective of the other.

The processes by which field actors argue among themselves, i.e., exclusively on the grounds of their fields, and those by which actors engage in interfield disputes are objects of central interest to "field studies." I introduced, for example, the notion of "closure" to denote the posture fields take when they insist, not that someone avoid their mode of argument, but that the only acceptable line of argument is their own - a posture which is the mirror opposite of what Henry Johnstone calls "bi-laterality." Thus, e.g., cost-benefit analysts insist that one cannot reply to their equation of values with quantities with unquantified value claims; analytic theorists insist that their claims cannot be denied with empirical evidence; and so on. Since fields, more often than not, can never be defeated on their own grounds (think, e.g., of Toulmin's or Rescher's claims that skepticism can never be defeated on its own grounds but only by *a shift to practices*), some interfield disputes seem insoluble.

The aim of critics is not to "solve" such disputes but to understand them. The core concern is not whether field X is right while Y is wrong but which fields ought to be attended to, i.e., which fields we ought to put ourselves at risk to. Fields which close themselves off from other fields, *by their own standards*, can make no demands on our attention and belief. The schools of thought (cost benefit analysis or some variants of analytic philosophy) which effect closure do so at this price. The proper course is not to prove them wrong - which cannot be done - but to ignore them. Extreme skepticism suffers this fate when critical attention shifts from abstract conditions of knowledge to particular practices by which social actors guarantee their knowledge.

Field theory is thus a way of thinking about social life, a way of distinguishing among substantive domains which brackets the grand ontological disputes. Pascal said that no one can be a skeptic all the time, and humans prove this through their practices. While they may trust their fields differently (ranging from blind true believership to reflective doubt) they function in fields by virtue of an "as if"

maxim. They proceed as if the field's judgmental and veridical standards are dependable guarantors of knowledge, value, or whatever.

This means that the search for the "authority of concepts" begins (and conceivably ends) with considerations of the rhetorical bases of social communities. However particular field disputes between "sociologists" (who make the final arbiter of knowledge and value social consensus) and the "rationalists" (those unwilling to reduce knowledge and value to the counting of noses) turn out, the rhetorical bases of fields are obvious. People orient themselves for reasons falling within our usual accounts of persuasion - which makes rhetoric the glue binding fields together. Thus, one way of characterizing fields is *audiences*. The notion of the speaker is less useful for reasons that will shortly be clear: basically, it is difficult to point to particular people (or credentials) that invariably mark a representative of a field. While there are exceptions to this, Foucault's attempt to make physicians speak for medicine ignores too many obvious distinctions between ordinary views of medicine, differences in substantive doctrines within medicine, and the nature of physician-patient interaction (e.g., that the physician makes arguments of a nonmedical sort, as in seeking placebo responses).

There is an article of faith scholars of many schools often take for a fact, viz., that there is a known difference between convention and orthodoxy on the one hand and justified or plausibly true beliefs on the other. The latter is nearly always said to be superior (in many senses) to the former - the most basic reason being that convention and orthodoxy are said to be happenstances - social accidents. This view conventionally permits the inference that the ideas of convention and orthodoxy cannot do philosophic work, i.e., they are merely "sociological" concepts that cannot bear upon "rational" questions. Field theory is often held hostage to this view. If fields are nothing but descriptions of social accidents, they are bland and innocuous philosophic concepts; they merely describe the desiderata of daily life. So viewed, field theory describes barriers to be circumvented, the layers of deception waiting to be peeled away (in Russell's view) or mere shadows of genuine claims (in Plato's sense). The aim is to burrow through these social - incidental - practices to lay bare the bases of genuine worthiness. This will function to determine the outcomes of field research before it starts.

As far as I know, there are no conclusive empirical arguments that this thinking is faulty; but, as well, there is not one whit of evidence

that it is correct. The belief that convention and orthodoxy are (by nature) distinguishable is merely a doctrine often taken for a fact. The familiar skeptical questions arise when such claims are made. If the advocate of universal principles is beaten back to a particular field (i.e., to point to a field's standards as a final guarantor of a claim), the *coup de grace* comes not from skeptical questions but from field theory. One can point to fields which justify everything fideistically and others which do not. But on what basis could the latter be said to be superior to the former *for certain purposes*? The fact, e.g., that a particular science succeeds with its interests cuts no ice in a different field grappling with different questions. Moreover, it is not entirely plausible to categorically claim that particular sciences are never justified fideistically - especially if they cannot justify their method by their method. Witness the dispute between the creationists and the evolutionists - both sides claim that the other functions religiously; and to an extent these charges are equally deserving of our attention.

It seems prudent to bracket such grand scheming, i.e., trying to settle once and for all the dispute between the sociologists and the rationalists. At best, this is premature given the infancy of field studies. I prefer to proceed on the assumption that the social practices ungirding fields are interesting in and of themselves, worthy of attention because they reveal much about the bases of the grander arguments.

I have developed these preliminary assumptions about argument fields by considering Toulmin's program. It may prove useful to review, not the specific arguments but some of the main conclusions I have drawn from this critique.

Professional associations, contrary to Toulmin's claims, are poor field exemplars. Toulmin uses professional associations (e.g., "psychologists," "sociologists," "philosophers," etc.,) as exemplars of rational enterprises, although these do not square with his stipulation that a community of scientists is one organized around a shared problem focus. Nor does this square with defining fields by reference to logical types *unless* type theory is tied closely to some picture theory (or variant thereof) that would say that the propositions of sociology and of psychology are straightforwardly different by type.

This thinking is less useful than seeing fields as organized along issue lines, i.e., focusing not on "psychology" and "sociology" but on the names for schools of thought within them, viz., "behaviorism,"

"Freudianism," or "constructivism." Two "behaviorists" have more in common with one another, even if one is a psychologist and the other a speech communication scholar than do a behaviorist and a Freudian even if they are both members of the American Psychological Association. The behaviorist holds the Freudian's problem foci in disdain; and a constructivist has little truck with the problem foci of either. So, the broad labels for schools of thought *rather than* labels for professional academic divisions are the best ways of seeing what I have called "issue fields."

There is another fatal weakness of Toulmin's linkage of professional associations with the rational enterprise concept, viz., that very few Americans are actually members of formal organizations. Moreover, this formal membership is usually a characteristic of the relatively prosperous upper middle class. *Ordinary fields*, then, may bear no similarity at all to formal organizations. Notice that the schools of thought are rather more informal than formal, i.e., that formal membership is far less important than the ideas one is committed to and the standards one is willing to abide by.

In this way, I have tried to make the field notion apply to a far broader range of phenomena than Toulmin might wish. For instance, the relations between spouses or close friends or intimate associates comprise relational fields for which the background assumptions of arguments are features of the long-term ongoing interactions which make up the relationship. *Encounter fields* are created in single encounters by the definitions of situation made by strangers - they come to be and pass away as the interaction between the strangers does. *Issue fields* consist of shared orientations toward "ordinary" or "customary" arguments vis-a-vis some organizing paradigm or issue. As I said, schools of thought are one kind of issue field; pro and anti abortion movements are examples of a more ordinary kind.

These three senses of field obviously overlap one another in several complicated ways (e.g., an issue field might contain many relational or encounter fields; and any of these might be of a disciplinary or non-disciplinable sort). These overlaps show that the field notion is a way of conceptualizing *definitions of situation* - a way of setting certain orders of situational definitions apart from others, lumping certain activities together. This is important because it reflects the one indubitable fact that every field theory has to work with and account for, viz., that all human action is context embedded.

Notice that these senses of field do not automatically equate it with traditional sociological thinking about "groups." Some fields are groups, others are not – which means that the field notion is broader than the traditional group notion. Notice that the three claims to be taken up below bear precisely upon a need to clearly define the relation between, *inter alia*, individuals and groups and the relations between what we say of such sociological relations and the status of any individual in an argument field.

As a preliminary to understanding these complex relations, I introduced the idea of *normative fields* as the broadest classification of fields, i.e., embracing relational, encounter, and issue fields. I sloppily equated normative fields with *reference groups*; but the analysis to follow shows why this relation will have to be carefully specified. Strictly speaking, a normative field is an actor's grounds for defining himself vis-a-vis some broader group. By this I emphatically do not mean the sort of *Gemeinschaft-Gesellschaft* (primary versus large scale society) distinction that plagued early sociology. In fact, I construed each sense of field to be interdependent with the others, which leads to the prediction that demarcations between them will be fuzzy, evolutionary, never fixed, and adapted to situations. We will never have a taxonomy or hierarchy of fields that meets traditional scientific standards of lucidity because every person shifts perspectives rapidly, implicitly, and ambiguously. The phenomenon itself is fuzzy. I am taking the idea of definitions of situation to be the most important one, *not* the idea of groups.

I will not review my criticisms of Toulmin's views other than to take note of the conclusions drawn from them. First, fields are created and sustained by the ongoing defining activities of actors within them; they are not static entities to be equated with a history of ideas; indeed, the history of ideas is among the worst conceptual models for fields; people breath life into fields, they animate them, as they deal with situations. Second, a corollary really, fields are not reducible to their written artifacts; nor are they kept alive by these; the old sociological notion of "informal structures" of groups applies here; and as far as I can see, it is devastating for those who would equate fields with their documents; such equations may work best for very compact disciplines like atomic physics – but this merely proves that such disciplines cannot be conceptual models for understanding other kinds of fields.

Toulmin's foundational metaphor is jurisprudence; and, as is, it is misleading. Descriptively, it ignores discretion - making stare decisis out to be almost a caricature of decision-making. The most successful features of Toulmin's exposition of the metaphor (claims are made, arguments presented, decisions are reached) are tautologous and proportionately useless to argumentation scholars. A reformed version of the metaphor *can* undergird field theory if the model of a field is the *individual trial* (with all its discretionary inputs) rather than jurisprudence broadly construed as a professional field. The reformed analogy has a counterpart in the *ceteris paribus*. For once, we have a useful model of rule-use, viz., actors decide on their actions and then find rules to justify them - which is precisely what happens in trials according to the discretionary view. This is very different from Toulmin's aim, but it is the only reformation of the metaphor that promises success in undergirding field theory.

The upshot of these and other criticisms is that field theory must cohere with (i) the context-embeddedness of talk; (ii) the relations between definitions of situation and action; (iii) the fact that theory and practice are independent, i.e., they illuminate one another in such a way that fields cannot be equated with their histories of ideas; and (iv) the fact that fields exist by virtue of the *faith* (allegiance, trust, confidence) people place in their veridical and judgmental standards - so viewed, persuasion and justification are indistinguishable *for our purposes*. Toulmin thus poses the wrong question: field theory does not turn on "what is the source of authority of our concepts?" but on "why do people trust one standard versus another?"

Field theory is a way of thinking about social life. It assumes that social activities are comparison processes in which men check their thinking against the views of others. They do this because the world is a doubtful and perplexing place; its events are ambiguous and frightening; they seem chaotic. Chaos would freeze men in neurotic inaction unless they could objectify their thinking, i.e., test it in light of trusted standards. Fields are recurring practices by which men check their thinking. As we study them, we are studying how men build order as a social enterprise.

We do this by bracketing the grand ontological disputes. We do not, i.e., take sides. It is oversimple but nonetheless tractable to say that some people think the world is an orderly place and that it is our job to discover the order; others think the world is utter, irredeemable

chaos and that this stops man dead in his tracks vis-a-vis understanding his own nature; still others think that the world is broadly ordered but microcosmically chaotic and that this positions man, not in studied contemplation of systematicity or in heroic combat with chaos but in a middle of the two.

Field theory is a social enterprise proceeding on the assumption that these matters will not soon be settled. Extreme relativism is the worst case scenario; and field theory works best when we proceed as if it were true. This is *not* the same as taking sides in the broader ontic disputes. If relativity is the starting assumption, we proceed like this: whether or not the world is ordered, men order it; and this is per se interesting. Men *may* order events in a way that turns out to be the way the world is ordered, but we cannot know this and need not assume it.

Bracketing ontology, relativity is an indubitable fact – and this odd locution is not even paradoxical as a social claim. We proceed from workable assumptions when we think that the world is ordered because men order it and that they do so in importantly different ways. It may turn out that an ideally completed social science will show that men think as the world moves (just as Kant or any of the monists claimed). But a successful field theory is propadeutic to this success because it describes how men in fact objectify their thinking. It is just as plausible, of course, that field theory might turn out to be the whole ontological story. For our purposes, the things people feel and believe are as real as anything else. This could be denied by those who equate reality with physical properties, tangibleness, concreteness; but, for our purposes, of what good is such a distinction? It serves only to close doors, not open them. It exalts certain subject matters over others, but who cares?

We are on perfectly tenable grounds in ignoring all this. Fields are the ways men symbolically order their thinking, objectify their predictions, and make their activities orthodox. Even bracketing ontological matters, these are still nearly well-neigh insolubly complex. This is especially so for the ordinary fields. But they nonetheless demand our attention. Epistemically this is true because the disciplines are exotic special cases of ordinary life; sociologically this is true because ordinary life has profound consequences for every order of activity.

These claims may serve to describe the sort of theoretical framework I advocate. Since the particular questions we have posed cannot be answered sans assumptions, the foregoing may suffice as a background against which the three claims can be considered.

2. Requirements of the First Claim

I want to consider whether we can coherently and plausibly say that (i) *A is in field X* or that *A is a member of group X*. I proceed on the assumption that field theory is untenable if this proves impossible. I also assume that we need to think through the implications of (i) to have a clearer understanding of what a successful field theory will say. For instance, notice that the two renderings of (i) are interchangeable or similar expressions if and only if we implicitly assume that "field" is synonymous with "group." If there are differences between groups and fields, the phrases "in field X" and "a member of group X" cut rather differently. If the differences are clear enough, it may be easier to prove that A is a member of group X than to prove that A is in group X since two very different orders of phenomena are being described. So the importance of the present question is that it challenges the capacity of field theory to illuminate instances, i.e., our ability to say "*that* person is speaking thusly because he thinks he is doing thus and so; and he thinks this way because he is using field X to guide his defining activities." Field theory cannot plausibly or coherently countenance such claims unless it confidently plugs content into (i).

Claim (i) does not pose academic questions; it embodies the most basic questions field theory is supposed to answer. For instance, if a man makes a claim on our attention and belief and we take that claim to be interesting in some important way, then we typically ask two preliminary questions about this claim, viz., what does he mean by it and (secondarily) what does the claim per se (conventionally) mean? Field theory is used to answer both orders of questions. If we know that a speaker is *in* field X, we may know how he defines *this* situation. Moreover, if a speaker is *in this field*, we have some sense of the conventional alternatives he has chosen as meanings; we may explain, i.e., the dialectic between intention and convention if and only if we understand *this* man's choices vis-a-vis both. So, if we ask "what does he mean by n," we are actually asking whether he is *in* field X.

What justifies our assumption that any person can coherently or plausibly be said to be *in* a field? There are at least three alternative avenues for answering this question; but they are not equally coherent or plausible.

The sociological notion of ideal types is one answer to our query. Mannheim, e.g., concluded that individuals could participate only in fragments of a thought system; a total conception of *ideology* was thus needed to reconstruct the whole outlook of a group. This assumed that no individual could stand for a group, nor could some abstract sum of a group's individuals. So, the reasoning went, on first traces ideas to an organizing *weltanschauungen* and then treated individual instances as deductive instances of the ideal type.

Empirically, ideal type accounts worked best as research models where they were least clear. Their chief attraction was that they were broad and vague enough to countenance virtually any finding; and if one stretched things enough one could make virtually anyone out to be a part of some ideal type. But these research failings are only a preface to my claim here that ideal type theory cannot plausibly or coherently plug content into claim (i).

Notice first that type theory confounds the data of science with the warrants for its procedures. Mannheim got to the *type* because individuals did not fit his preconceptions of what a group was; he reformulated the group along type lines and then focused, as a self-fulfilling prophecy on those features of individuals that did fit the type. Put ungenerously, individuals are hard to generalize about so we shall lump them together in a way permitting generalizations; we shall check generalizations against individual findings that prove them. Mannheim thus confused his warrant with his indubitable fact. His "fact" was that no individual completely represented an *a priori* selected thought system. Several things might have been made of that fact, but what Mannheim made of it was that it was unimportant to his aim of saying what groups are. The aim of scientific inquiry thus became its data.

If it is true that individuals participate only in fragments of a thought system (and as far as I know, sociologists takes this to be uncontroversial), we can never categorically say that A is *in* field X. This is true at least if X is construed to be a static and more or less immutable *structure*. While ideal type theory has been elastic, I do not see how it can avoid some version of this assumption. So it cannot be said

that A is in X, only that *A is, in thus and so respects, but not others, in X*. But in what respects? Here, only a tautology can serve ideal types, viz., A is in X insofar as A has the characteristics of X. So viewed, the species might move from genus to genus when certain characteristics change in importance. This has the twin defects of being circular and of exhaustively stipulating that circumstanced action is not the main object of interest.

So if we take fields to be ideal types, we can always force it an instance into our broad categories; but we will possess no theoretic constructs for proving (i) the broader importance of our finding; (ii) the nature of our finding, what it means; and (iii) the relation of our finding to other important concepts. Hence ideal type accounts cannot plausibly or coherently plug content into claim (i). It is implausible because it makes individuals out to be deductive instances of what (one might say) seem to be Plato's first forms. It is incoherent because it is circular. Stated alternatively, type theory can *deductively* place a person in a field, but this is neither plausible nor coherent as a *social theory*.

Another way of answering the demand for justifying a claim that A is in X in Toulmin's appeal to logical types. This functions similarly to ideal type theory on the sociological side, but it is more intuitively attractive to argumentation theorists because it stipulates that a field is to be defined by virtue of the structural characteristics of the talk within them. Seen this way, psychology differs from sociology (if it does) by virtue of the types of claims being made. It is at once obvious that "logical types" can be variously construed and that the cogency of the present claim turns directly upon which choice we make.

Let us first try out the construction that goes like this: logical types are *substantive* characteristics of statements. This would mean that psychological statements are about psychological processes and sociological statements are about society. This construction seems *prima facie* plausible since Toulmin does insist on using disciplinary/professional labels to name his rational enterprises while not having dropped his early commitment to type theory. Consider also that "Harry is a British subject" and "Peterson is a Swede" can be seen to be *types* in the sense that they are about different things. We presumably are assuming some variant of a picture theory of language is valid, i.e., that "psychological," "sociological," and "speech communicational" statements differ in type because they picture different slices of reality.

But this is silly. "Harry said, I am feeling very unCatholic after talking to you" confounds all three "types" in a nontrivial way. It shows that logical type theory cannot square with two ideas that social theorists take for granted, viz., constructive alternativism (in one guise or another, any claim that all phenomena can be alternatively interpreted) and field theory (in one guise or another, any claims that knowledge communities define themselves by reference to - loosely speaking - some picture of their subject matter).

Notice that I am trying to make sense of type theory without using Russell's theory of descriptions or the reductionism in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*. Nor am I taking sides in any of the purely internal disputes among logicians about the status of type theories (e.g., versus set theory). I proceed this way because these logicians have not tied type conceptions to natural languages *in principle*. So I shall take it for granted that field theory shall have to be based upon views of natural languages and that we possess no theoretic resources for grounding the field idea in, say the ideal language of the *Principia Mathematica*.

Toulmin, in tying field theory to logical types, does not specify the version of type theory he has in mind. As I have elsewhere argued, his examples do not unambiguously point to any particular line within type theory. We do not know whether our model is to be Quine's *Mathematical Logic* or Ramsey's "New Foundations." These are nontrivial ambiguities when we seek defining characteristics of argument fields. And, as an exegetical argument, it also needs saying that any of the variants of type theory do not square with Toulmin's view of the rational enterprises; nor can they without positing a unified ideal language. This *may* be the program of the projected third volume of *Human Understanding*, i.e., some ideal language may be what Toulmin has in mind as the impartial standpoint of rationality. If so, it will not square with the vision of argumentation theorists working with the field concept; nor will it square with the professional air of steering a middle course between absolutism and relativism. That is, in principle, an ideal language asked to serve an impartial standpoint will function much like Carnap's "Language II." It will take some doing to make this fit into sociological conceptions of argument fields.

I doubt that this is Toulmin's program, if for no other reason than that it would resonate oddly with his powerful attacks on the "cult of systematicity." The logicians now grappling with type theory are certainly part of the cult; if type theory is not a logical or mathematical

matter, while it might admit less of the cult of the system, it would be unclear just what it was. It might be some account of syntactic and semantic *categories* in the natural languages. This in fact is a prediction that coheres with my criticisms of Toulmin elsewhere, viz., that he focuses excessively on the conventional structures of meaning to define fields. It is also consistent with my earlier claim that Toulmin makes no commitments to rhetorical and communication concepts, i.e., that his Darwinian metaphor, strictly speaking, does not require and does not use any cogent sense of "rhetoric as epistemic." Lacking this concept, Toulmin will presumably not move in a direction (say) akin to Burke's dialectical view of the "great molten mass" of meaning.

Since a syntactic and semantic type theory might go any number of ways, I shall not attempt to spell out objections here. The most modest claim to be made is that it is hard to see how such an account would square with the sociological and rhetorical groundings usually given to field theory. An argument I have made about rationality as an invariant applies here: syntactic and semantic invariants will work best the more abstract and content free they are; the warrant for warrants will not countenance or undermine any particular warrant (and thus will be as silent to circumstanced discourse as any of the absolutist schemes Toulmin has rejected); syntactic and semantic types are mostly likely to yield only certain connective principles that say, *inter alia*, that inferences ought to be warranted by warrants of a special type; this will make the warrant for warrants not unlike the concept of presumption (which I have taken to be successful universal arrived-at without recourse to syntax or meaning analyses). Syntactic and semantic type theory would work best as an ontological rather than procedural principle (on the assumption, one might think, that at some higher order of analysis, meaning and procedure are merged into some superordinate ontological principle).

This hardly scratches the surface of the matter, but I shall have to let it rest. We do not now possess a type theory that can successfully work with the sociological vision we have of field theory; and it remains to be seen whether such a scheme can be contrived. For now, type theory, even in the loosest sociological reading such as the one I started with, cannot coherently or plausibly countenance the claim that *A is in X*. Even a weak version of constructive alternativism demolishes this, viz., by virtue of the claim that any statement can be alternatively

seen as a psychological, a sociological, or some other claim *for reasons that have no relation to its syntax or semantic structure.*

The rejection of sociological and logical type theories opens another way of justifying any claim that *A is in X*. Failing in making the individual a deductive instance of an ideal type and in making the individual's utterances formal defining principles, we are left with the plausible view that whether *A is in X* depends strictly speaking upon how he intends toward his utterance, what he thinks he is doing, whether he thinks he is in X. This reasoning would work to refute Mannheim's claim that a group cannot be an abstracted sum of its individuals. Mannheim got this claim by way of a focus upon group members as bearers of an ideological thought system as a whole. While the present field theory can use ideology as an incidental organizing concept (granting, i.e., that ideology might be central to some fields while peripheral or irrelevant to others), it does not require it. It is just as plausible to see ideology as a special social-political variant of the more basic theme that fields are abstractions about recurring practices (in the Chicago School sense already spelled out).

This reasoning squares with the view (defended elsewhere) that objectivity is a subjective accomplishment and that entering a field is a process of objectifying. This makes the social comparison notion the root metaphor of field theory. It comprises the root process of socialization and cognitive development, and it follows *ex hypothesi* that it is central to explanations of how actors enter social groups. Fields are thus viewable as recurring patterns of comparison organized around (provisionally or blindly) trusted judgmental and veridical standards. One of our ways of knowing fields is to consider the foci and ranges of convenience their standards are thought to have, these being embodied in the uses actors make of them in situations.

Where do these arguments (provisionally granted) take us? *Inter alia* they yield a way of explaining why A chooses field X, not Y or Z for objectifying something. If *A is in X* implies the question of how he got there, we have a way of intelligibly answering it. *A is in X* not willy-nilly but because of constructive choices he has made, because being in X makes things intelligible. This tells us that of the two readings of (i), *A is in X* is a far broader claim than *A is a member of X*; "in" is a more complex and inelusive term than "member" and more precisely says what we mean. Membership is one sense of "in," but without knowing how a speaker intends toward an utterance we

cannot assess the importance of membership. Mannheim's error thus turned upon a confusion of formal groups and memberships with thought systems; unsurprisingly, he found no individuals who bore in toto the whole of a system. Toulmin similarly errs (for our purposes) in identifying fields with professional associations. These errors in different ways blur the boundaries between issue fields and focus upon their most superficial aspects, documents. The standard sociological notions of multi-valence - that everyone belongs to many groups - and informal structure - that social arrangements and practical routines are *interdependent* with formal structures - undermine the focus on written documents and broad thought systems. The multi-valence notion requires that we take the psychological field to be the most basic sense of the field notion (and see movement from field to field in terms of the constructive accomplishments of the actor). The informal structure notion requires that the unwritten rules and implicit background assumptions undergirding daily practices cannot be ignored. It is not that the formal structure is unimportant but that it is able to succeed (in any case) because of its interdependencies with informal social arrangements.

We can thus drop the second reading of (i) on the grounds that formal membership does not dependably illuminate discourse. *A is in X* is more precise; it says that *A is in X* because A takes a perspective so labeled. Notice two things about this. First, we say that A's getting into X is his own constructive accomplishment because our focus is on A not X. The earlier arguments presumptively prove that one cannot coherently focus on X without knowing what X is (without seeing how A and others use it to objectify their private interpretations). We risk immediate trouble proceeding any other way, e.g., the dispute about whether issue fields or Toulmin's disciplines are the best field model cannot be settled apart from this focus upon practices; we have no grounds for comparison. In this respect, Kuhn's claim that one can best know a field by looking at (and performing) its practices is plausible. We understand cost-benefit analysis by *doing* cost-benefit calculations rather than exclusively focusing upon its textbook proclamations.

Notice second that this cleans up an obvious confusion. We sometimes say "A is wrong; he is in Y not X," e.g., he says he is making an economic argument when in fact he is making a psychological one. But claims of this sort require that the critic be omniscient - and demonstrably so - as well as provably in control of the ideal unities

of the various subject matters (this being the strongest imaginable version of the type theories). Only these two assumptions combined can rescue locutions such as "A is *actually* saying N." *Fields* can make these judgments as purely internal matters because they are equipped to judge the competencies and excellences of their actors. But criticism is a field outside these fields – which must demonstrate its right to evaluate arguments on interfield bases. It is not at issue whether fields can judge what A ought to say – they take this right to be fundamental to their operations (especially the disciplines). It is in question, rather, whether critics can coherently make such claims.

In sum, we go far toward saying what a field is by specifying the conditions for saying that someone is in one – the best candidate being that *A is in X when he thinks he is*. This squares with the importance we have imputed to the psychological sense of "field." Field description thus turns upon descriptions of the recurring themes in definitions of situation, contexts, and purposes actors refer to when they are doing X.

3. Requirements of the Second Claim

I turn now to the sense that can be made of (ii) *A is arguing in (or from) field X*. To clarify the problems at hand, the differences between this claim and (i) merit elaboration. To start, it seems useful to emphasize the methodological nature of (ii). We typically say *A is arguing in X* to legitimize our use of field theory to tell us what A means. The assumption is that a field description is the enabling basis of inferences about particular claims. In effect, we assert that A means n because A is in X with the implied caveat that he would mean something else if in Y or Z. Claim (ii), then, arguably embodies the highest ambition we have for field work.

Claims (i) and (ii) are not circular because they are posed with different purposes in mind. They are interdependent issues, but we try to plug content into (ii) not specifically to understand X but to understand a particular utterance; (i) is thus a precondition of success with (ii), but the reverse does not obtain. To ask whether A argues in X presupposes that we know X which – for reasons already advanced – presumes that we know A (i.e., we ruled the alternative construction, saying that one could know A by knowing X on purely empirical grounds). Our fleshing out of (ii) may add to our understanding of X by giving

yet another example to mesh into the broader explanation; but the main task at hand is illuminating particular statements. The importance of this is that it proves that success with both (i) and (ii) is a minimum expectation of any field theory focusing upon social groups.

With these considerations in mind, let us think through the problems of plausibly and coherently saying that *A argues in X*. The methodological implications of this may seem innocuous; but this claim poses nearly insolvable problems for any but the strong relativistic reading of fields. Even with the strong reading, it is not entirely clear that we can coherently plug content into (ii). The problems are formidable.

It might be objected that this is a false problem because there are some straightforward cases, e.g., atomic physicists talking physics. But this presumes satisfaction with a narrow definition of social fields that rules ordinary fields out. These nondisciplinary fields produce instances we are likely to find interesting, and since the disciplines cannot (we have argued) serve as conceptual models for understanding ordinary fields (because they are built around different professional and epistemic purposes), the narrow view solves the problems of (ii) at too high a price.

Ordinary fields (as well as some of their disciplinary counterparts) are fuzzy, ill-defined perspectives; they are not immutable and fixed, nor are their groundrules always explicit. The problem is that we want to say clear and determinate things about them. The risk is that in doing so we change their character and obscure important aspects of their operation. The alternative risk is that if we respect their unclarity and implicitness too completely, we shall end up being unable to say anything at all about talk. Since the precondition of saying *A is in X* is being able to say that A thinks he is in X, and since success with (i) is a precondition of success with (ii), we shall have to try to coax plausible and coherent results from (ii) by virtue of our ability to say that A is depending upon X's standards - which makes research and criticism perspective-taking enterprises.

Consider a claim typical of ordinary speech, "abortion is unnatural." This claim is ambiguous in several important ways, and we cannot make sense of it without constructing a context for it. The main question is how field theory assists us in this undertaking. Since success

with (i) is a precondition of (ii), we must start by paralleling our exposition of (i).

We might, e.g., try to interpret the claim by asking who said it, paralleling Mannheim's view of social rules in a loose way. Thus, "abortion is unnatural" takes meaning from the role demands of the speaker, (say) a policeman, biologist, priest, or sociologist. Equating fields with professional divisions seems inevitably to issue in something of this sort. But we could never be sure that we proceeded correctly. The multivalence notion calls every step into doubt (the priest, e.g., might not be speaking as a Catholic but as a humanist). Perhaps the physician makes sociological claims as well as political ones because these are tied together (as a constructive attainment) into a coherent epistemological package centered upon "being a Catholic." Examples of this sort have led Cicourel and others to stress our conceptual inability to define what role-taking and role-enactment mean. The core assumption is that without knowing how a particular physician defines that role, one can infer little about the individual from the general label. Cicourel and the ethnomethodologists who follow him distinguish between interpretive procedures and norms, the difference being tied to the difference between consensus and social structure. This permits the inference that broad role labels are relatively useless apart from considerations of the interpretive procedures by which actors arrive at definitions of situations. While any particular analysis might reveal that a broad label is useful, another particular instance might just as plausibly prove the opposite.

To continue paralleling the previous discussion, logical types will not help us with "abortion is unnatural." The two main terms - which seem *prima facie* typological - permit a near infinity of interpretations; if we assume that the claim is a *situated* one, we are obliged to select not any interpretation, or the best one, but the one the speaker has in mind. "Unnatural" does not seem even to name a field at all: it seems to require that we ask from what standpoint the word makes sense. Obviously, a stricter sense of types yields absurdities. We could say that the claim is an ontological one (as opposed to value claims); but this would blur all the distinctions between fields which make ontological claims. Since "unnatural" could plausibly take meaning from many different frames of reference, interpreting the claim as ontological (versus everything else) would be tantamount to opting out of field analysis.

Failing in defining "abortion is unnatural" in terms of roles and logical types, we commonsensically turn to the circumstances of utterance. As with the first claim, we are on familiar turf in assuming that many different interpretations might be justified. Our theoretical framework directs us not to deterministic readings of situations but to the stricture that people act toward events on the basis of the meanings these events have for them. On this argument, Blumer and the interactionists urge that we not oppose "*situations v. interpretations*" but see them as being bound together in every actor's ongoing cognitive arrangements. I shall not rehash the familiar objections to deterministic readings of situations. One argument may suffice: if situations determine action and (thereby, meaning) we should consistently find interlocutors who disagree about (say) abortion but agree on the meaning of "unnatural." But this is demonstrably untrue of abortion arguments (and, indeed, of most ordinary arguments). We quite expect to find profound disagreements about "unnatural" and (as well) about the groundrules for deciding the things which fall within its focus of convenience. So, an exclusive focus upon structural situational features is unlikely to yield interesting claims about the meaning of claims.

The present theoretical framework directs our attention to the definition of situation on the grounds that all utterance is context-embedded and thus endowed with meaning by definitions of context. To ask what our claim means is thus to ask what a speaker intends to do about abortions and things "unnatural." Our analytic questions are (i) what hypotheses are being tested? (ii) what assessments have been made by the speaker or others' perspectives? and (iii) what accommodations has the speaker made to these imported points of view?

"Abortion is unnatural" can be studied as a purely conventional linguistic act. But it is just as plausible that everyone works with implicit theories of what is natural (in every respect similar to implicit theories of personality, argument, society, etc.). This squares with familiar claims that "nature" is a powerful metaphor because it is a "dead" (taken-literally) metaphor providing exceptionally ambiguous orientations to events. Thus, proceeding along conventional lines yields no insights into a particular meaning, i.e., does not tell us what *this* argument means.

The interpretive view frames the question differently, i.e., in terms of how the speaker makes sense of his own claim. This highlights the special merits of argumentation research based on interpretive

assumptions. My argument is that argument interactions are naturally occurring corollaries of research acts. It is rather as if we stand back and watch while Ss frame their hypotheses, select methodological apparatuses appropriate to them, and conduct their own research acts. Arguers are trying constructs on for size in a uniquely explicit way. They are playing out the implications of particular definitions of situation. Arguments are valuable research foci because more total information about private cognitive processes is routinely made explicit than is usual in other forms of social interaction - this owing largely to the inquisitorial nature of arguments. Arguments are experiments requiring more elaborate covers and detailed protocols; they have the unique characteristic of being open-ended and subject-controlled; the Ss are more or less left alone, not in a rigidly defined experimental context but in the process of living as they see it. Argument studies thus amount to the E saying, "design your own experiment and let me watch."

This is not a complete explanation, but it hints at the possibility that things will go easier for us when we study claims occurring in arguments. One obviously can proceed along participant observation lines, interviews, and even experiments. The merit of the focus on argument is that a claim like "abortion is unnatural" is usually followed by demands such as "what do you mean by unnatural?" This is tantamount to asking, "by what tests do you expect your claim to be judged?" This does not mean that every speaker who makes biological claims is willing to submit to the tests of biology (religious or political tests might be preferred); nor does it necessarily mean that a biological claim is invariably at risk of biological standards; it is the definition of the situation which determines this. The critical interest is not especially in whether a claim is wrong or right but in what it means. Thus, we say that A is arguing in X because he puts himself at risk to X's standards. While we might disdain A's choice of standards (for many reasons), the field notion clarifies our burden of proof in making objections. We recognize as well that A might lie about the standards he chooses. For instance, one organization now uses religious arguments to counter certain claims of the "moral majority" movement but admits that its central premises are humanistic rather than religious - religious claims thus being held hostage to secular standards.

This points to a difference between traditional movement studies and field studies. I am not using the *topoi* of a movement to define fields. *Topoi* symptomize the theoretic framework that gives meaning

to claims, and to a point the field scholar proceeds similarly to the movement scholar (e.g., one's first hint that A speaks in X might be that A uses X's *topoi*). But *topoi* are incomplete descriptions, (i) because conventional lines of argument are sometimes shared by many different fields, e.g., the *topoi* of science crosses many boundaries, and (ii) because conventional claims undergo subtle and not-so-subtle transformations across fields. Fields differ just because they lead to different situated uses of ideas; thus two fields might agree that science must be objective but disagree profoundly about what "objectivity" is. *Topoi* will not consistently allow us to point to X on the basis of A's statements. After all, any political statement may mean virtually anything depending upon the assumptions which prompt the speaker. A claim such as "government should not fund abortions" might be subjected to very different tests depending *inter alia* on which standards the speaker seems willing to risk. It is plausible to assume that many political claims are at risk only to the political standards in vogue (in the sense that a claim's truth is a function of its political effects). Alternatively, we might say that the political claim is tested against its success in building agreement in the audience. Neither case quite squares with traditional epistemic notions, though both are perfectly legitimate ways of looking at "truth conditions." They are *tests* people in fact use. So viewed they are worthy of our attention in themselves. Hence, topical systems are - on their own - ambiguous; we make best use of them by fleshing out a broader sociological context for them.

So having posed the problem in such a way that various alternative views cannot solve it, it remains to be seen that the present view can do any better. The problem is whether we can confidently say that A is arguing in (or from) X when he says "abortion is unnatural." We have so far seen that the best way of proceeding with this is to figure out which tests the speaker is willing to abide by, and one source of this appears to be the tests a speaker in practice employs when pressed.

The ordinary issue field we call the "anti-abortion" view uses (*inter alia*) two veridical standards endowing its *topoi* with meaning, viz., a realistic view of the "evidence of the senses" and authority beliefs, beliefs about which authorities to trust. The first often appears in claims such as "trust your eyes, look at the aborted fetus; it looks just like a human." Thus, a common strategy of the movement is the use of lurid photographs of aborted fetuses - these being used in speeches

as well as printed materials. My own research in naive evidence use has also revealed this practice. The judgment clearly implied was that photographs of aborted fetuses speak for themselves; only perversity could fail to "see" this evidence for what it is. The second standard often reappears in arguments linking abortion to murder (e.g., with the warrant of Papal pronouncements). The claim rarely involves a link to secular jurisprudence; the grounds for deciding what "murder" is reside not in secular law but in religious authority.

This does not prove that the anti-abortion movement is completely separate from all other social or political groups. To the contrary, our assumption is that boundaries between such movements will be fuzzy and imprecise. We thus expect that anti-abortion actors might draw no clear distinctions between their activities in that field and their activities in others. But despite this inevitable imprecision, we have identified a set of recurring argumentative themes which may serve as working approximations which give meaning to particular utterances.

So the precondition of coherently saying *A is arguing in (from) X* is the proof that A uses X's standards to check and buttress his claims. The research corollary is that fields will prove to have distinctive aspects - which directs our attention to the third claim.

4. Requirements of the Third Claim

To ask whether content can coherently be plugged into (iii) *X has n characteristics (and is distinguishable from Y or Z)* is to ask whether field descriptions are possible at all. It has become clear that success with claims (i) and (ii) are necessary but not sufficient conditions of a successful field account and that these claims presuppose success with claim (iii). Failing in (iii) we would be unable to refute the claim that field differences are in innocuous social happenstances.

At the outset we must confront an apparent paradox: the strong reading of field theory (strong relativism) has permitted success with (i) and (ii) but our empirical intuitions are that field boundaries will be fuzzy and imprecise. But too much fuzziness will undermine distinctions among fields to such an extent that the strong reading will prove untenable. We have intuitions, i.e., that fields are distinct in nontrivial ways (and thus that being in X is per se interesting), and that fields

share many substantive and procedural beliefs, practices, and traditions. If fields share such content to a sufficient degree, the strong reading that helped us succeed with (i) and (ii) will be bogus. Conversely, it is plausible to assume that the fuzzy boundaries that we in fact think obtain between fields must be respected.

If a critic says "Smith is making an economic argument," the choice of "economic" (as opposed to anything else) must prove important per se without unrealistic distinctions between fields being presupposed. Thus it will be insufficient to say that X has n characteristics without being able to mark X off from Y or Z. The main question is whether the fuzziness we have to respect will prove fatal to the strong reading necessary to (i) and (ii). One can distinguish among social practices in any number of ways depending on one's purposes. But our aims are empirical - which means that the distinctions field actors in fact draw are of central interest. Thus we must look at our chief field labels to see if they survive this problem.

Relational fields (e.g., relationships among spouses, colleagues, or friends) yield some clarity thanks to traditional sociological labels. We can - to make a parody of it - look at marriage certificates. We can spot other relationships by noting recurring interactions, and given the wit and time we intuitively should be able to point to particular relations and say "this is an identifiable social relationship because it has n characteristics, differing from other relationships in these substantive respects." It may be similar to other relationships as well, and our distinction does not presuppose that similarities across relationships be ignored. It is likely that spouses often argue recurrently about (say) child rearing; the specific arguments and the methods of objectifying claims will be unique, however. This is not to say that recurring themes in *all* ongoing child rearing arguments might not be found; but the meaning of any particular claim will nonetheless reside in particular fields. We end up saying, "*there* is Bob and Carol, who differ importantly from Ted and Alice," i.e., they intend differently toward their utterances in ways adapted to their special circumstances.

Roughly the same reasoning obtains with *encounter fields* (particular interactions). We need not assume that there are no commonalities across interactions in order to examine them on their own terms. While interactional structure seems to be invariant, the substance of claims is surely particular. Taking the notion of the definition of situation seriously, we must conclude that every encounter is in some respects

unique. Discourse analysis is one way of spotting recurring themes; field theory is another; both should prove to be compatible enterprises.

Issue fields (schools of thought, movements, etc.) are another matter. Consider, e.g., the symptoms we have ruled out: we cannot define issue fields by (a) the roles of the speaker, (b) the types of the speaker's modal terms, or (c) the structural features of situations defined apart from the interpretative processes of actors. We have also said that conventional linguistic acts (what ethnographers call "speech communities") will not serve our purposes; the speech community notion cuts differently than field distinctions do because linguistic conventions cross field boundaries.

It appears that the only way to plausibly and coherently define issue fields is to take the psychological sense of field to be foundational to the sociological sense of field. Since our aim is to speak clearly and determinately about things which are fuzzy and imprecise, we need to face up to the question of whether field theory will flounder on the idiosyncracies of individual speakers. But it does not follow logically or empirically that a surrender to idiosyncracy will in fact occur.

The choice of methodologies and techniques is dictated by the question being asked. If field theory turns upon a set of distinct but related questions, a repertoire of complementary methods will be needed. So far two distinct orders of questions vis-a-vis each kind of field have been identified. First, each sort of field is interesting in itself; for particular reasons we may want to know about this or that relation or encounter. Second, the outcomes of such studies contribute to higher level theoretical and empirical work which (loosely put) studies the effects of different organizational structures and practices (cognitive or social) upon different activities. This broader project subdivides almost without limit. We can (say) search for recurring themes in conceptual change across fields, interfield relationships - the importation of concepts as well as clear disputes, the relation of encounter and relational fields to issue field, and the relations between convention and orthodoxy and particular field conceptions of legitimacy. This list is not exhaustive but may serve to arrange our thinking about immediate tasks.

The first line of questioning is obviously foundational to the second. First, the higher order questions do not always turn upon logical niceties

or in principle arguments but upon the substantive evidence for claims. The claim that fields are substantive domains which pass muster on knowledge in importantly different ways (or, at least, which take different things to be knowledge) is an empirical claim which cannot be clearly understood without theoretically secure data. Second, success with the higher order questions presupposes useful empirical outcomes from the lower order ones. These lower order questions need not be settled (in the sense of an ideally completed science) for the higher order investigations to proceed; good working generalizations will do. A plausible assumption is that the two orders of questions are interdependent, the lower order being a precondition of the higher order while it in turn can reinforce and clarify our thinking about the lower order. To avoid misunderstanding, the distinction between lower and higher orders of questions is *not* that the latter is "philosophical" or "theoretical" (or some muddle of the two) while the former is empirical. Both orders of questions have their own philosophic, theoretical, and empirical concerns. The distinction stems from the question being asked.

Descriptively, both orders of question share the same root metaphor, viz., the construing person engaged in social comparison processes. Our commitment to constructivism allows us to see this as – most fundamentally – a communication process, an emergent, creative activity through which humans create, affirm, alter, and repair social reality. Since fields exist in and through communication activities, we shall want to say that they are themselves emergent, rooted in intersubjective interpretive processes. Fields are thus abstractions we make about particular practices (recurring themes we spot in them) consistent with these communicational views. Thus it is plausible to say that the psychological sense of field is the organizing notion, i.e., since the sociological fields are always interpretive accomplishments of the actors who enter them.

It is thus straightforward to say that any particular encounter or relationship is what it is because of the intersubjectively derived agreements of the actors. They communicate as they do because they see themselves doing one thing and not another, testing one hypothesis and not another. Since issue fields are merely aggregations of encounters and relations, programmatic research into encounters and relations should yield insights into the life processes of issue fields. Objectivity being a subjective accomplishment, issue fields must be social organizations centering upon shared (mutually agreeable) standards

that do one sort of job and not another. We may thus proceed on the assumption that the best way to understand how fields pass muster on knowledge is to observe their actors doing so; our holistic hypothesis is that these social processes do not differ in a mystical way from the ways humans generally try to objectify their thinking. Fields do accomplish things individuals cannot; they do this by providing collective security, communal traditions which can (for one reason or another) be trusted. Field accomplishments are thus constructive accomplishments - artifacts produced out of the ongoing interactions that animate fields.

There is nothing unattainable about the lower order questions. They pose problems of understanding how actors take the perspectives of others, how communication serves this enterprise, and how actors are socialized into fields. Strictly speaking, it is unremarkable within the constructivist tradition to speak of eliciting and describing the structure and content of a person's perspective and (thus) describing the groundrules by which objectivity is a subjective accomplishment. Thus, an issue field description might focus upon the recurring purposes, substantive foci, and veridical procedures which (any) field's actors use when they define their activities such that they are "in" the field.

Successful field studies thus require an arsenal of approaches by which we triangulate toward a field description. An obvious experimental condition would pose conceptual problems and note the recurring themes in S's strategies for dealing with them. Such experimental problems would be intuitively suggested by participant observations of fields - these observations themselves being grounded in the sorts of theoretical work being done here. Consistent with this apparatus would be the usual array of documentary research, interviewing, and theoretical analysis - a multifaceted approach which Foucault's "archaeology of knowledge" may be distorted to describe.

The higher order questions are also tractable, but they yield to different procedures, especially analysis and criticism (although participant observation may serve both). Criticism thus uses field descriptions in order to illuminate particular instances of discourse when it can employ an "as if" maxim of its own, i.e., when critics can justify proceeding as if their understandings of a field are sufficiently fleshed out and accurate to justify critical claims. Field theory (as well) describes the conditions of critical judgments - especially that criticism

is itself a field; its judgments of field actors are interfield arguments bearing the same burdens of proof attendant on anyone in a particular field who presumes to evaluate the work of someone in another field.

We have, then, appropriate and complementary procedures for dealing with the main questions posed by field theory – in principle and in practice. This does not prove that our interfield distinctions will clear enough to permit precise analysis while fuzzy enough to do justice to the empirical sociological facts; but the merit of the present view is that it identifies this apparent paradox as the crux of the matter. Field theory stands or falls on its capacity to survive this paradox.

5. Conclusions

One particular (sociological-rhetorical) version of field theory has perhaps been clarified. While many versions of field theory are feasible, my aim has been to specify the implications of taking the relativity between fields seriously – what I have called the "strong reading." This is to be understood in terms of the holistic framework suggested by constructivism and interactionism. Subjectivity is understood to be the organizing problematic of daily life; social comparison process are understood to be the means by which actors grapple with the limits of psychological fields. The main upshot of this is that actors enter fields, either because they are "domains of objectivity" (a la Foucault) or because they offer other social attractions. The second – deeper – sense of relativity thus arises when the differences between these communal traditions are considered.

Field theory is the drawing of distinctions among these traditions for particular critical or analytic purposes. It functions most basically as the study of conventions and orthodoxies and the pragmatic uses people make of them. Its foundational metaphor is the construing person engaged in role-taking and social comparison; its central aim is to understand the conditions of knowing and the character of things taken as knowledge by considering their fit into epistemic frameworks. These frameworks often overlap by virtue of using common methods and beliefs; othertimes they sharply differ.

I hope to have specified the most workable senses in which content can be plugged into field theory – and in doing so, explained field theory's explanatory power. If field theory is accepted on the strong

reading (given our special sociological and epistemological aims), content can coherently and plausibly be plugged into the three claims considered here. I take these claims to be natural outgrowths of epistemic aims. While other aims will inform other field theories, we need not to be too concerned about this. It is far too early to get bogged down in doctrinal squabbles.

Notes

I am indebted to Scott Jacobs and James Klumpp for helpful comments and criticisms.

1. See Stephen E. Toulmin, *Human Understanding* (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1972); *Knowing and Acting* (New York: Macmillan, 1976).
2. Charles Arthur Willard, "Argument Fields," J. Robert Cox and Charles Arthur Willard, eds., *Advances in Argumentation Theory and Research* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press); *Argumentation and the Social Grounds of Knowledge* (University, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, in press)

Chapter 24

Argument Fields

Robert C. Rowland

No concept in argumentation theory has been more disputed in recent years than the suggestion of Stephen Toulmin that fields of argument exist which, while sharing some characteristics with all argument, also possess distinctive characteristics of their own. Some scholars have praised Toulmin's analysis of the invariant and dependent aspects of argument fields¹ while other theorists have argued that the field of concept cannot be applied to ordinary language argument and is therefore of little value.² Even the meaning of the term argument field has been disputed. Some scholars treat an argument field as a definable subject matter. Other scholars identify argumentative form, decision-making forum, academic community, or some other factor as the defining characteristic of an argumentative field. In sum, the meaning and value of the concept argument field is seriously in question.

In this essay both the meaning and utility of "fields of argument" will be considered. In the first section, I will identify the various interpretations of argument field and suggest that none of them is completely satisfactory. The problem is that each of the definitions points to an essential characteristic of some argument fields, but no definition takes into account all of the essential characteristics of fields of argument. In the second section, I will argue that all of the important characteristics of field argument can be traced to a shared purpose which energizes the scholars studying a problem. I will then test the purpose centered view of argument fields by applying it into two fields: argument in the law and argument in newspaper criticism. Finally I will sketch the implication of a purpose centered view of argumentative fields for a theory of argumentation.

1. The Various Interpretations of Fields of Argument

One of the dominant interpretations of argument fields emphasizes the common sense judgment that arguments about different subjects must be judged in different ways. Thus, it is the subject matter which distinguishes between fields of argument. The interpretation of fields as defined by subject matter is quite common. For instance, in the second edition of *Decision By Debate*, Ehninger and Brockriede refer to argument fields as "subject matter field[s]."³ Toulmin seems to support such an interpretation at several places in *The Uses of Argument*. For example Toulmin argues:

The patterns of argument in geometrical optics, for instance – diagrams in which light rays are traced in their passage from object to image – are distinct from the patterns to be found in other fields: e.g., in a piece of historical speculation, a proof in the infinitesimal calculus, or the case for the plaintiff in a civil suit alleging negligence.⁴

Toulmin's analysis of five subject areas in *An Introduction to Reasoning* also lends credibility to the view that argument fields are subject matter categorizations.⁵

A definition of argument fields based on subject matter has some real advantages. Such a definition mirrors common usage by recognizing that arguments in different subject areas are often quite different. However, a definition of fields based exclusively on subject matter is inadequate. First, many disputes do not occur in a single subject area. Willard notes that a dispute over abortion involves medicine, politics, the law, ethics and so on.⁶ Second, a subject area may encompass several quite different types of argument. While Toulmin, Rieke, and Janik are undoubtedly correct when they characterize scientific argument in general as informal, precise, and cooperative (*Introduction*, ch. 14) some scientific disputes possess characteristics which are very different from the norm. Argument between proponents of two competing theories, which are vying for research money, might be formal, imprecise, and competitive. The argument would be formal because the arguers would be forced to follow the procedures established by the funding organization. The argument would be imprecise because the two theories had not yet been fully tested. It would be competitive because only one of the two sides could receive the grant money.

Subject matter is one important defining characteristic of fields of argument, but it is not the only important defining characteristic.

A second view suggests that the primary difference between fields of argument is the form of argument in different contexts. Toulmin supports this view in *The Places of Reason in Ethics* when he denies that the motive for an argument influences the character of the argument. Rather, argument fields are defined by form:

What makes Jenkin's scrawling an 'arithmetical computation' is the way in which he manipulates the symbols, not the purposes for which he does so; and what makes the writings of Bentham, Hobbes, Hegel and Marx 'philosophical' in our sense, is the logical characteristic of their statements, not the special purpose for which they make them.⁷

The Uses of Argument has also been interpreted as defining fields based on form. McKerrow argues that Toulmin's view of fields, in *The Uses of Argument*, is based on a linguistic theory of logical types.⁸

Up to a point, the interpretation of fields as defined by form makes a good deal of sense. It is quite clear that arguments in different contexts often possess very different form. However, argument fields cannot be usefully defined based on form alone. First, a single type of argument or evidence may be used in many contexts. Statistical arguments are used in sociology, psychology, astrophysics, the law and even aesthetics.⁹ Second, in many disciplines there is no single accepted form for argument. Scientists, for example, use several types of reasoning. At the grossest level scientists use inductive reasoning to collect data, analogical reasoning in order to develop theories, and deductive reasoning in order to derive consequences from a given theory. Nor can a revised theory of logical types solve the problem. Willard argues convincingly that type theory fails to adequately describe the important characteristics of argument fields.¹⁰ A definition of fields based on form alone is not adequate.

A third perspective views argument fields as sociological entities containing all the scholars in a discipline. Physics then is that field which physicists study. Law is studied by lawyers and so on. At one point in his recent analysis of fields Willard seems to embrace this position. Willard explains: "I see more value in defining ordinary language fields in terms of the ongoing activities of the actors within

it."¹¹ McKerrow also focuses upon communities of scholars in his analysis of rational enterprises as the successor concept to Toulmin's earlier work with argument fields.¹² Toulmin himself emphasizes the importance of academic community as a defining characteristic of argument fields in *Human Understanding*.¹³ At several points in that work he virtually equates academic disciplines with fields of argument (*HU*, pp. 226, 337, 365).

While a sociological or disciplinary approach to argument fields might enable the critic to describe the process by which arguments develop over time, it cannot completely explain the concept of argument fields itself. At one level, the division between disciplines is obvious (ethics and engineering are quite different) but at another level the distinction is completely arbitrary. Even in ethics and engineering there are specific issues which blur the distinction between the two disciplines. There are scholars in applied ethics who consider problems of ethical engineering. In this case it is uncertain whether the scholars involved are engineers, ethicists or both.

An additional problem with defining argument fields based only upon disciplinary membership is that students from a number of disciplines often study a single problem. Scholars in ethics, political science, criticism, philosophy, history, and mythology have studied the holocaust. Finally, the members of a single discipline may study several problems. Political scientists focus on public policy, political history, democratic theory, practical politics and so on. In sum, membership in a specific academic discipline is one important but not the only important defining characteristic of argument fields.

A fourth view of fields suggests that some types of argument fields can most profitably be equated with schools of thought. Willard distinguishes between highly organized fields such as atomic physics and diffuse ordinary language fields. In between those two extremes, he sees a group of middle level fields which are best defined by the schools of thought which dominate research in the area.¹⁴ From this perspective, Freudianism and behaviorism are both fields while psychology is a general subject area but not a discrete field. Willard explains:

The names for these schools [of thought] seem superior starting places for defining argument fields, viz., "positivism," or "behaviorism," or "relativism," or "phenomenology," and so on. There are, after all, "behaviorists" in several different

scholarly (academic) divisions; and behaviorists in psychology, political science, and sociology would seem to have more in common than, say, a behaviorist and a constructivist who were, by profession, psychologists.¹⁵

Willard's analysis of the influence of schools of thought on argument is quite similar to Thomas Kuhn's work on scientific paradigms. Kuhn argues that paradigms both define acceptable scientific research and provide the lens through which the scientific community views the world.¹⁶ As a result, the proponents of competing paradigms are often unable to effectively communicate with each other. The competing paradigms reveal such different realities that there is little common ground for argument.¹⁷ In the same way a school of thought might define the structure of an argumentative field and make it difficult for the adherents of one school of thought to communicate with the adherents of a competing school of thought.

While schools of thought exercise an undeniable influence upon argumentative fields, the field concept should not be thought of as merely a synonym for schools of thought or paradigms. First, there are many argumentative disputes which are resolved without the guidance of a dominant paradigm or school of thought. In ordinary language disputes involving politics or the arts there are few if any well developed paradigms. Of course, Willard did not intend to define ordinary language fields as derived from schools of thought. However, if the term field shifts meaning when applied to ordinary language, scientific, and the so called mid-range fields then much of the explanatory power of the term has been sacrificed. In addition, a shift in the meaning of the term, argument fields, when it is applied across a variety of argumentative disputes, creates a new problem for the argumentative critic. If the definition of the term "field" shifts when applied in different contexts, then the critic of argument must not only analyze a particular dispute, but also identify the type of field in which the dispute occurs.

A second reason not to equate mid-range fields with schools of thought is that the influence of schools of thought on argument has been overstated. I suggest that the arguments of behaviorists in political science, sociology, and psychology are quite alike not only because of their shared paradigm, but also because their subjects and purposes are quite similar. All three disciplines focus on explaining the socialization of human behavior. Toulmin emphasizes the influence

of disciplinary goals as a prior factor which helps explain the sharp disagreement between competing schools of thought (*HU*, p. 383). It would seem that schools of thought do not define all aspects of mid-range argument fields. Evidence confirming the view that schools of thought do not completely define argument fields is obvious in those cases where a paradigm is applied to very different subject areas. For example, Marxist literary criticism and Marxist economics, while similar ideologically, are quite different in other ways. Marxist literary criticism shares a subject matter, various methodologies, and theoretical concepts with literary criticism in general, while it shares only a political ideology with Marxism in general.¹⁸ In addition, the proponents of a single paradigm may not completely agree about how a single subject area should be described. While both Willard and Burleson apply constructivism to argumentation theory, their conclusions are somewhat different.¹⁹

A third problem with the position that mid-range fields are best defined by schools of thought is that the difficulty of communication between schools of thought has been overemphasized. While a strong adherent to a given paradigm might not be able to understand the arguments of opposing schools of thought, the undecided element in the scientific community should be able to first listen to the arguments of both sides and then choose the superior paradigm. Even Kuhn argues that paradigm shift occurs through a reasoned persuasive process in which the paradigm which best meets the goals of the discipline is chosen.²⁰ Popper compares the process of comparing paradigms to an act of translation.²¹ In sum, schools of thought influence argument in some fields, but they are not the single or even primary defining characteristic of fields of argument.

Up to this point, I have argued that fields of argument cannot be adequately defined by reference to subject matter, academic discipline, argumentative form, or world view. Other possible descriptions of argumentative fields suffer from similar problems. McKerrow suggests that argument occurs in three main contexts (social, philosophical, and personal) which might be treated as meta-fields.²² While McKerrow's work is insightful it cannot, nor was it intended to, serve as a complete definition of argument fields. Many arguments do not clearly fit into any one of McKerrow's three main contexts. For example, scientific argument does not fit into the social context, because, unlike social argument, scientific argument is not audience oriented.²³ While scientific arguments are validated through consensual

procedures that process is dependent upon empirical research and strict standards for evidence which are lacking in the political evaluation of social truths. Nor can scientific argument be categorized with philosophy. Philosophers, according to McKerrow, argue about abstractions and do not depend upon experiential data.²⁴ Finally, scientific argument obviously does not occur in the personal community. Not only are some types of argument excluded from McKerrow's classification scheme, but a variety of quite different types of argument may be found in each of the three argument communities. The arguments of Lyndon Johnson on the Vietnam war, Jerry Falwell on the SALT treaty, and the National Coalition to Ban Handguns on handgun control are all addressed to the social community, but there are substantial differences between the three positions. Lyndon Johnson used the Presidency to rally patriotic support for an unpopular war. Jerry Falwell speaks largely to the true believer. The N.C.B.H. confronts the awesome power of the gun lobby and faces the difficult problem of transforming general support for gun control into a national movement to restrict access to handguns. The three contexts for argument, identified by McKerrow, clearly influence argument but they cannot be thought of as a complete theory of argument fields.

Each of the proposed definitions of argument fields has been rejected based on examples which denied the distinction drawn by the definition. It is also important to recognize that none of the individual definitions of argument fields can be accepted, because all of the definitions contain a germ of truth, which should not be ignored. Subject area, disciplinary membership, argument form, worldview, criteria for relevance²⁵ and so on are all important defining characteristics of some fields of argument. An adequate definition of argument fields should take into account all of these characteristics. Therefore, an argument field, like a rhetorical genre, can best be understood as a constellation of substantive, membership, formal, and other characteristics. No reductive definition based on only a single or group of formal or substantive characteristics can adequately define the complexities of argument fields.

It would seem that the critic of argument faces a very difficult task. The argumentative critic must build a definition of fields of argument which takes into account substance, form, forum for evaluation, degree of precision, and a host of other characteristics which are important to some but not all argumentative fields. In addition, the critic must gain an intimate knowledge of the field in question in order to pick

out the specific characteristics which are important to that field. Fortunately, a simpler method for argument criticism is available. The critic of argument can identify the crucial defining characteristics of a given field by first identifying the purpose shared by members of the field and then tracing the influence of that shared purpose on the argumentative characteristics of the field.

2. Fields and Shared Purpose

The defining characteristics of a given argument field did not randomly coalesce together. Rather, the crucial defining characteristics of each field develop from the shared purpose of students confronting a problem. The actors who share that purpose choose argument types, forums for evaluation, subject areas, criteria for relevance and so on which they believe will take them closer to their ultimate goals or purposes. For example, scientists use certain procedures for evaluating argument because they believe that those procedures will reveal scientific truths and otherwise fulfill the purposes of the scientific community. The same is true of other fields. Therefore, scholars who share the same purpose should be thought of as operating in the same field, even if they belong to different professional organizations and study different subjects.

Although Toulmin does not focus upon the importance of purpose in *The Uses of Argument* and actually denies that purpose is a defining characteristic of argument fields in *The Place of Reason in Ethics*, he does pay a great deal of attention to the influence of purpose upon argument in *An Introduction to Reasoning and Human Understanding*.²⁶ In *An Introduction to Reasoning*, he identifies the goals of a field as one of the four crucial characteristics which distinguish among fields of argument. Toulmin notes "the modes of practical reasoning we expect to find in any particular field - in natural science or art criticism, in ethical discussion or elsewhere - will once again reflect the general purposes and practical demands of the enterprise under consideration" (*Introduction*, p. 200).

More importantly, Toulmin's analysis of the process by which concepts evolve, in *Human Understanding*, illuminates the role which purpose plays in shaping argument. Toulmin argues that academic disciplines cannot be defined adequately by reference to subject matter or membership in a professional organization. Rather, a discipline is defined

and distinguished from other disciplines by the goals which its members share. Toulmin explains: "The crucial element in a collective discipline (we have argued) is the recognition of a sufficiently agreed goal or ideal in terms of which common outstanding problems can be identified" (*HU*, p. 364). As long as the members of the discipline retain a shared goal, the discipline survives. Here a shared goal is not merely one characteristic of a particular discipline. It is the shared goal which brings the discipline into existence and holds it together.

The shared disciplinary goal not only brings the discipline into existence and ties it together, but also influences all facets of its intellectual development. In fact Toulmin, at one point, refers to the goals of a discipline as having "determined its [the discipline's] specific methods and structures" (*HU*, p. 156). Toulmin goes on to argue that scientific communities are defined by three factors: current explanatory goals, the available explanatory concepts, and accumulated scientific experience (*HU*, p. 175). These three factors are organized hierarchically with the disciplinary goals at the top of the hierarchy. The disciplinary goals determine the types of explanatory concepts used by the discipline. Put differently, the members of the discipline use those concepts which they believe will best fulfill the goals of the discipline. In the same way, specific procedures, technologies, and methodologies are used because it is believed that those procedures, technologies and methodologies best guarantee that the disciplinary concepts will successfully fulfill the explanatory goals of the discipline. Thus, disciplinary goals place intellectual demands upon the scholars who share those goals. Those intellectual demands interact with the problem facing the discipline to produce the intellectual characteristics of the discipline.

Toulmin also argues that disciplines reject old explanatory systems and choose new ones based upon criteria drawn from the shared goal of the discipline. For example, astronomers continue to use a specific methodology as long as use of that methodology carries the discipline closer to its goals (see *HU*, p. 130). However, as soon as a methodology fails to carry the discipline forward or a method better suited to meeting the disciplinary goal is developed, the old method is rejected. In Toulmin's view the intellectual content of a discipline develops through an evolutionary process which brings the discipline ever closer to its ultimate goals. As Toulmin explains, "concepts hold their places in a science only by continuously re-confirming their worth..." (*HU*, p. 177).

Toulmin's work on the evolution of concepts in science can be applied, with slight modifications, to fields of argument. I suggest that fields of argument are born when a group of arguers shares a purpose in confronting a problem. The problem may be as broad as keeping the social order intact, or as specific as explaining the failure of an individual scientific experiment. There must, however, be some felt difficulty, some reason to build arguments, which energizes the group. The shared purpose (which also may be very broad or very specific) then interacts with the specific problem facing the group to produce an argument field. The members of the field study subjects which they believe are important to their ultimate purpose. They base their criteria and forums for evaluating argument on their goals. In other words, all essential aspects of the argumentative field develop from the shared purpose of the arguers.

Argument fields develop through an evolutionary process much like that described by Toulmin in *Human Understanding*. The members of a field retain those concepts, argumentative forums, and argument forms which aid them in attaining their purpose. Those forms and forums which do not carry them closer to their purposes are rejected. As a result, the field evolves over time. John Dewey's description of the development of logic into science illustrates in general terms the evolutionary process which occurs in all argumentative fields. Dewey explains:

Men first employ certain ways of investigating, and of collecting, recording, and using data in reaching conclusions, in making decisions; they draw inferences and make their checks and tests in various ways. These different ways constitute the empirical raw materials of logical theory. The latter thus comes into existence without any conscious thought of logic, just as forms of speech take place without conscious reference to the rules of syntax or of rhetorical propriety. But it is gradually learned that some methods which are used work better than others. Some yield conclusions that do not stand the test of further situations; they produce conflicts and confusion; decisions dependent upon them have to be retraced or revised. Other methods are found to yield conclusions which are available in subsequent inquiries as well as confirmed by them. There first occurs a kind of natural selection of the methods which afford the better type of conclusion, better for subsequent usage, just as happens in the development of

rules for conducting any art. Afterwards the methods are themselves studied critically. Successful ones are not only selected and collated, but the causes of their operations are discovered. Thus logical theory becomes scientific.²⁷

Arguers in the same field begin with a shared purpose in confronting a problem. They want to explain the universe, build a useful system of criticism, invent a better transistor, build an equitable social order, or learn how to make better violins. That purpose constrains the kinds and substance of the arguments which develop in the field. Over time those arguments which are best suited to the purpose of the field survive, while those arguments which are not suited to that purpose are rejected.

At this point it might be argued that, while purpose is one important defining characteristic of fields of argument, it is not the only defining characteristic. For example, Toulmin notes the importance of forums for evaluation and subject matter for defining argument fields. Here, it is important to understand that I am not denying the importance of subject matter, disciplinary membership or any number of other factors as defining characteristics of fields of argument. Rather, there are many important defining characteristics of argument fields, but those characteristics can best be understood and identified when it is recognized that they all flow from the shared purpose with which the members of the field confront a problem.

The most obvious objection to the view that fields of argument are unified around a shared purpose is that shared purposes exist only in relation to particular problems and since all problems have subject areas, subject matter must be included along with shared purpose as essential to defining fields of argument. This view is mistaken. While argument fields develop in response to problems and problems occur in particular subject areas, the subject matter of the original problem does not necessarily define the subject matter of the field which eventually develops. For instance, the problem which faced alchemists was to develop a method to control the transformation of natural elements. Their purpose was to develop an effective and simple method to control such transformations. In order to develop such a method, the alchemists sought to understand the reasons why chemicals react in particular ways. The subject matter of the original problem might best be considered a branch of magic. The field of argument which developed from that branch of magic was chemistry.

The purposes of the alchemists led them to try and explain chemical phenomena in order to eventually control it. Those purposes led them away from magic to the subject matter and method of modern chemistry.²⁸

Chaim Perelman's work with ethics and the law illustrates the same point. Perelman's goal was to explain why some reasons are better than others in order to develop a general theory of rational ethics. The original problem was in the subject area of ethics. However, Perelman's purpose led him away from ethical theory to the philosophy of law and classical rhetorical theory.²⁹ Again it was Perelman's purpose, not the subject matter of the original problem which determined the subject of the argumentative field which developed. Toulmin's analysis of conceptual evolution in *Human Understanding* fits into the same pattern. Toulmin wanted to produce a theory of conceptual change which would skirt the twin problems of formalism and subjectivism. The original problem occurred in logic and the philosophy of science, but Toulmin's purposes led him to focus upon the philosophy of law and evolutionary theory. While fields develop in relation to a specific problem, it is shared purpose and not the subject of the original problem which determines the subject matter that later comes to define the field.

A purpose oriented view of argument fields also explains other essential characteristics of fields of argument. It is obvious that membership in a given field can be traced to shared purpose. Those individuals who share a purpose are members of the same field. Thus sociologists, psychologists, and political scientists who share a similar goal operate in the same field, even if they belong to different academic organizations. By contrast, two psychologists who belong to the same disciplinary organization, but do not share similar purposes in explaining human behavior should not be viewed as belonging to the same field. It should be remembered that Toulmin explains the existence of competing schools of thought in psychology with reference to their different explanatory goals.

The purpose of a field also explains the forum and criteria for evaluating arguments which develop in the area. Here, the distinction, drawn by Toulmin in *An Introduction to Reasoning*, between legal and psychiatric decisions about insanity is quite useful (*Introduction*, pp. 199-200). Toulmin argues that different arguments are appropriate for choosing the proper treatment regimen for a psychiatric patient

and for determining whether that same patient should be stripped of certain rights. In the psychiatric field informal cooperative procedures are used because the goal is to identify the most effective treatment for the patient. In the law, formal competitive procedures are used because the goal of the field is to protect the rights of the accused. Note that the subject matter is the same in both instances, but the different purposes of the two activities determine the criteria for evaluating arguments, the modes of resolving arguments, and the criteria for determining the relevance of arguments.

Shared purpose also influences the degree of formality found in various argumentative fields. For instance, while most argument in science is decided informally by the scientific community as a whole, scientific questions which are considered by Congressional committees will be decided through the formal procedures of the political system. Given the concern of fundamentalists over the teaching of creationism, it is easy to imagine a situation in which a Congressional committee would be required to first hear testimony and later vote on whether current evolutionary theory is supported by adequate scientific evidence to be part of the required curriculum in the public schools. Those fundamentalists who today fight for laws requiring the schools to teach creationism are attempting to use the formal competitive procedures of the political system to evaluate a question of scientific fact. Again it is the purpose shared by the arguers in the area which influences the structure of the field which develops. The purpose of the fundamentalists is not to discover the laws of nature, but is to require the teaching of a specific theory. This essentially political purpose brings the political system into play.

Finally, purpose influences the degree of precision which typifies a field. At first, the suggestion that purpose influences measurement accuracy seems ludicrous. After all, much more precise predictions are possible in physics than in literary criticism and that difference in accuracy would seem to reflect an essential difference between the two subject areas. However, even in such contrasting areas as literary criticism and physics disciplinary purpose plays a major role in determining the degree of precision found in the field. Initially, it is important to note that, while physics and literary criticism concern very different subjects, one activity is not by its nature more precise than the other. The best that a physicist can do is to describe the behavior of the fundamental particles which make up the universe. The physicist cannot sub-divide basic atomic particles. By the same

token, the literary critic is concerned with the essential symbolic particles which make up the literary universe. The critic cannot break down basic symbolic units any more than the physicist can break down atomic particles. Thus a physicist who describes the movement and nature of basic atomic particles and a literary critic who describes the characteristics of the individual symbols which make up a novel are operating on essentially the same level of specificity.

It must be admitted that literacy critics currently lack the tools to precisely define the symbolic structure of literature, but that does not mean that the discipline is inherently less accurate than physics. In fact, recent advances in computer technology have made it possible for critics to make very precise measurements of syntax and grammar. Again, both the critic and the physicist are constrained by the smallest particle or concept available for measurement.

A more fundamental objection to the view that purpose influences measurement accuracy is the argument that precise measurement is essential to fields such as physics, but useless in other fields such as literary criticism. The critic is interested in identifying a constellation of meanings in order to enrich the audience's understanding and accurately evaluate a work. Such goals are not generally fulfilled by precise computer analyses of syntax or grammar. I agree absolutely. A computer analysis of the grammatical structure of a work of literature is likely to be a sterile document. However, the difference in the measurement precision typifying literary criticism and physics can now be traced to the different purposes of the two fields and not to subject matter. The critic avoids the computer program on grammar or syntax because it does not fit the purpose of explaining the texture of a literary work. The physicist uses precise measurement methods because qualitative judgments are never at issue in physics. There are no high or low quality electrons.

The point is not that all disciplinary purposes work equally well in all subject areas. Physicists who aim at evaluating the quality of stars will achieve little. The purpose appropriate for a given community is initially determined by community attitudes toward whatever problem they face. That shared purpose of solving a problem then defines the field which develops. At the same time, the purpose of the field evolves as the needs and problems of the community change. Toulmin argues that a community will stick with a specific purpose (and therefore a specific field) as long as the process of fulfilling that

purpose answers the basic problem which led to the creation of a field. The field of physics will require precise measurement as long as the general purpose of physics is to explain physical phenomena. If a problem arises which demands aesthetic evaluation of physical phenomena then physicists will change their purpose and the degree of precision required in the field will change accordingly.

In sum, the essential characteristics of any field of argument develop from the shared purpose of a community facing a problem. Purpose influences the criteria with which arguments are evaluated in a field. The shared purpose of atomic physicists produces very precise standards for evaluating arguments. Purpose also influences argument form. Arguers use those types of arguments which they believe will fulfill their purpose. Perry argues that the difference in form between inductive and deductive reasoning can be traced to the different functions which the two modes of reasoning serve.³⁰ Purpose also influences the formality of argument. Extremely important social issues, especially issues on which only one side can win, are likely to be decided through formal competitive procedures. Less important issues or issues where there may be more than one right answer (the meaning of a novel) are likely to be resolved through informal cooperative procedures. Shared purpose may also influence the schools of thought which develop in an area. If a school of thought does not carry an academic community studying a field closer to the goals of the community, then that community will likely reject the school of thought. Finally, purpose influences the degree of precision which arguments in a field must meet to be accepted as valid.

While the defining characteristics of argumentative fields flow from shared purpose, fields develop in different ways at different speeds. All fields develop through an evolutionary process, but the speed and exact direction of that process is influenced by random factors as well as purpose. In fact, there is no guarantee that the evolutionary process will always move forward. Students in a field may choose forums or argumentative types which are ill adapted to the purposes of the field. There is also no guarantee that the purposes which energize a field will be ethical or the most efficient purposes for the community. H.L.A. Hart cites the Nazi court system as an example of an argumentative forum which was well adapted to meeting the goals of the field (in this case the goal was crushing all opposition to Hitler), but that goal was clearly unethical.³¹

It is also important to recognize that it is not always possible to precisely define the argumentative characteristics of a given field. Fields which serve specific purposes may be defined in very precise terms, while fields which serve more general purposes may be defined in only the loosest terms. The suggestion that the *specificity* of purpose in a field determines the type of evaluative standards found in the field helps explain Toulmin's discussion of disciplinedness. In *Human Understanding*, Toulmin distinguishes between four levels of disciplinedness. Compact disciplines such as atomic physics, biochemistry, and some of the well developed court systems (*HU*, pp. 364-380) are unified around a single well defined explanatory goal (*HU*, pp. 359-360) which makes relatively rapid disciplinary progress possible. At a somewhat less developed level are diffuse disciplines which have not yet limited themselves to a single explanatory ideal (*HU*, pp. 379-380). At an even lower level of development are the "would be" disciplines which lack agreement over fundamental concepts and possess no agreed upon criteria for evaluating theories (*HU*, pp. 380-383). Finally Toulmin suggests that activities which possess multiple goals, personal goals, or concrete goals are inherently non-disciplinable (*HU*, pp. 395-411) and can never achieve the consistent progress possible in the compact disciplines.

While Toulmin's analysis of the relation between purpose, disciplinedness and consistent progress is insightful, the suggestion that progress is not possible in non-disciplinable fields is problematic. Toulmin is quite correct that progress occurs most quickly when a field possesses a single goal. However, there is no necessary reason that progress cannot occur in non-disciplinable or ordinary language fields.³² It should be remembered that Toulmin's criterion for identifying progress is consensual validation by the membership of the discipline. Progress is what the discipline says is progress. From this perspective, it is clear that progress does occur in ordinary language fields. For example, the U.S. Constitution established a system of resolving political disputes which was consensually validated by the citizenry as superior to the Articles of Confederation. It is fair to argue that significant progress occurred in political argument when the Constitution was adopted. This political progress is directly analogous to the progress which occurs in the physical sciences when a new methodology or theory is embraced.

The important implication to be drawn from the analysis of the relation between purpose, disciplinedness, and progress is that the distinction

between ordinary language and specialized language fields of argument is not very important. The crucial distinction is between specific and general purposes. It is true that argument in fields which serve specific purposes is often carried out in specialized languages. However, the essential characteristics of argumentative fields are not derived from the type of language used in the field, but from the shared purpose which unifies actors in the area.

Although Toulmin's analysis of the field invariant and dependent aspects of argument has been praised for noting the substantial differences between arguments in different contexts, a number of theorists have argued that the concept can be applied usefully to a very limited number of argumentative situations.³³ While admitting that the field concept works relatively well when applied to compact academic disciplines such as atomic physics they argue that most important argument does not occur in such a restricted framework. Instead, Willard argues that ordinary discourse should be viewed as the exemplar of argument. It is not the discussion of physicists about atomic physics which typifies argument, but the discussion of farmers, businessmen, and school teachers, about the siting of atomic power plants that best exemplifies argument.³⁴ Willard's main point is that a theory of fields ought to be applicable to ordinary language argument as well as to argument in specialized disciplines.

Willard identifies a number of important differences between ordinary language and argument within specialized disciplines. Argument in a compact discipline such as atomic physics must meet precise standards in order to be accepted. Such specific standards are missing in ordinary discourse.³⁵ In addition, argument in compact disciplines usually concerns a very limited subject matter. By contrast, ordinary language argument centers around problems such as abortion which cross academic disciplines. Willard then extends his position, that the field concept has limited value, with a discussion of legal argument. Here, Willard argues that even when applied to a compact discipline such as the law (*HU*, p. 394) the field concept reveals little of importance about arguments in the area. Willard begins his discussion of the law by arguing that the legal field does not possess the single explanatory goal which is typical of compact scientific disciplines such as atomic physics. Rather, torts, criminal law, and other specific types of legal disputes are decided in specific branches of the legal system which possess their own rules of evidence and procedure.³⁶ Willard also argues that the dominant characteristic of the real judicial system is

discretion,³⁷ not the idealized rules identified by Toulmin and others. He concludes his analysis of the importance of legal discretion by arguing that at best an analysis of the field of legal argument can explain the form, but not the content of legal argumentation.³⁸ Finally, Willard attacks Toulmin for attempting to de-psychologize argument. In Willard's view psychological factors can be removed from a field only by tearing the very core from the field. Based upon these arguments, Willard concludes that, if the field concept is to be applied usefully to the law, individual trials must be treated as fields of argument.³⁹ For all practical purposes, then, there is no legal field. His final conclusion is that such a system is not valuable, "the field concept is useless."⁴⁰

The utility of describing compact scientific disciplines as fields is not seriously in question. The key question is whether the field concept can be usefully applied to ordinary language fields as well as fields such as the law which cannot be defined as precisely as compact scientific disciplines. In order to test the applicability of the purpose centered view of fields, the next section of this essay will briefly consider the law and newspaper criticism as fields of argument.

3. The Fields of the Law and Newspaper Criticism

The legal field encompasses a variety of case types, procedures, and argumentative forms, but the essential nature of all branches of the law can be traced to the shared purpose with which members of the legal field address problems. In the brief description which follows, I will identify the general purpose of legal argument and the argumentative forms which flow from that purpose, as well as noting that specialized branches of the law are designed to meet specialized legal purposes. While the analysis, which follows, is brief and necessarily preliminary it does indicate the influence of purpose upon legal argument.

The legal field is organized around the general purpose of preventing harmful social conflict. The law is aimed at preventing some types of social conflict altogether, channelling other disputes in order to change society for the better, and providing methods of redress for oppressed individuals. Note that the law is not merely a means of social control. The goal of the law (at least in our culture) is to minimize harmful social conflict. Thus, disputes must be resolved justly, to

prevent social backlash. This view of the purpose of the law is quite common. In *Introduction to Law and the Legal Process* Cataldo, Kempin, Stockton, and Weber emphasize that all aspects of the law serve the general purpose of minimizing conflict. They write:

they [all people involved in the law] are trying to see that society in general gets along with a minimum of conflict. They are advising people how to avoid conflicts with each other and with the government. They are attempting to settle arguments that have arisen informally or formally through court action. They are attempting to discourage conduct that is antisocial.⁴¹

In addition, lawyers have come to believe that a number of subsidiary purposes such as efficiency and speedy justice must be fulfilled if the general purpose of minimizing harmful social conflict is to be served.

At this point, it should be clear that the law is not a well defined homogenous field. There are any number of specific sub-fields in the law which are aimed at preventing or controlling some type of social conflict. Before considering the influence of purpose on the development of those sub-fields, it is important to consider the common characteristics of all branches of the law. There are three main characteristics of legal argument in general which are derived from the overall purpose of the law. First, legal reasoning is analogical. In his classic 1949 book, *An Introduction to Legal Reasoning*, Edward Levi explains that good legal rules are never perfectly clear: "In an important sense legal rules are never clear, and, if a rule had to be clear before it could be imposed, society would be impossible."⁴² The problem then is to apply inherently ambiguous rules so that the legal system can meet its goal. Levi argues that this problem dominates the law:

The problem for the law is: When will it be just to treat different cases as though they were the same? A working legal system must therefore be willing to pick out key similarities and to reason from them to the justice of applying a common classification. The experience of some facts in common brings into play the general rule.⁴³

The legal system answers this problem through reasoning by analogy (what Levi calls reasoning by example). Levi explains the process of legal argument:

The basic pattern of legal reasoning is reasoning by example. It is a three step process described by the doctrine of precedent in which a proposition descriptive of the first case is made into a rule of law and then applied to a next similar situation. The steps are these: similarity is seen between cases; next the rule of law inherent in the first case is announced; then the rule of law is made applicable to the second case.⁴⁴

In Levi's view the essential step in legal argument is the finding of similarity or difference between two cases.

Although Levi focuses directly on appellate decision making his analysis is applicable to all aspects of legal argument. Trial judges decide which rules to apply based on analogies drawn with earlier cases. It is important to remember that the rules or facts applicable to a specific case are rarely absolutely clear.

The defendant could be convicted of first or second degree murder or even manslaughter. The judge must draw an analogy between the defendants' behavior and the specific rule in order to make the appropriate decision.

A form of the analogical method can even be seen in the discretionary actions of prosecuting attorneys and policemen. The prosecuting attorney decides to plea bargain a particular case based on past experience with similar cases. In essence the prosecuting attorney draws an analogy between the successful application of plea bargaining in past cases and the use of it in a current case. This application of the analogical method to plea bargaining is vastly superior to the use of simple legal rules. Obviously, a prosecuting attorney who either plea bargained every case or refused to plea bargain at all would create problems for the system. In the first instance, the prosecuting attorney might allow vicious criminals to serve relatively light sentences, while in the second instance the prosecuting attorney might create intolerable legal delay. The effective prosecuting attorney uses general rules to guide his or her plea bargaining, but adapts those rules to the specific cases at issue.

The analogical structure of legal argument can be traced to the general purposes of the law. If the law is to control social conflict then consistent standards must be applied across a class of disputes. Inconsistent decisions create the perception of unfairness and produce conflict. While consistency is important to containing conflict, flexibility is also important. When legal rules are applied to situations, to which they are not applicable, conflict is inevitable. In addition, the legal system must adapt to changing circumstances if social conflict is to be controlled. The legal system must be both flexible and consistent in order to achieve its purpose.

The analogical structure of the law is well suited to fulfilling its goals. The analogical method described by Levi provides flexibility by allowing legal rules to be adapted to new situations, but it also provides certainty since past rulings are used to generate future rulings. This form is well adapted to the needs of the law.

The second general characteristic of legal argument is that it is decided in an adversary forum by an impartial judge. Despite significant differences in rules and procedures used in the various branches of the law, all legal questions are decided through a competitive process. Even plea bargaining is tied directly to the adversary process, since defendants may always choose to go to trial. Levi is instructive on the importance of the adversary process to the legal system:

What does the law forum require? It requires the presentation of competing examples. The forum protects the parties and the community by making sure that the competing analogies are before the court. The rule which will be created arises out of a process in which if different things are treated as similar, at least the differences have been urged. In this sense the parties as well as the court participate in the law making.⁴⁶

It is not necessary that legal argument be evaluated through competitive procedures. A state tribunal could be established to research and decide cases without benefit of adversary procedures. As Levi indicates, the legal system uses competitive procedures because the members of the legal field believe that conflict between advocates best guarantees that the truth will be discovered and social conflict controlled.

The final general characteristic of legal argument is that all legal doctrines, procedures, and forums are evaluated based on how suc-

cessfully they fulfill the ultimate legal purpose of controlling harmful social conflict. If a procedure, a forum, or a rule of evidence helps minimize conflict then it is retained; otherwise it is rejected. This process by which legal arguments are accepted or rejected based on how well they serve the purposes of the field can be seen operating at both the micro and the macro level. At the micro level, the purpose unifying actors in the legal field is the energizing force behind *stare decisis* as a method of conceptual change. For example Cataldo et al. argue that rules in the law change in order to meet social needs, "The rules are a means, not an end, and are constantly being evaluated in the light of changing circumstances and conditions."⁴⁷ This view is quite common. In his dissertation on legal argument Walter Ulrich notes that many important philosophers of the law agree that *stare decisis*, as a method of conceptual change, is justified by the purposes of the system.⁴⁸ Standards for evaluating legal rules and doctrines come from the purpose of the law.

At the macro level, the purposes of the law explain the gradual development of the legal system itself. The view that the law has evolved over centuries toward procedures and forums which are better adapted to justly resolving social conflict is quite common. The American Bar Association Project on Standards for Criminal Justice comments on the development of the legal system:

The adversary system which is central to our administration of criminal justice is not the result of abstract thinking about the best means to determine disputed questions of law and fact. It is the result, rather, of the slow evolution from trial by combat or by champions to a less violent form of testing argument and evidence.⁴⁹

In summary, the members of the legal field choose procedures and doctrines which they believe take them closer to their ultimate purpose of containing harmful social conflict. This evolutionary movement is not infallible. Regressions toward unjust procedures and rules are inevitable, but the general movement is always toward procedures and doctrines which the membership of the field believes to be better adapted to fulfilling the needs of the law. This account of legal evolution adds support to the view that consistent progress is possible outside compact scientific disciplines. Willard's analysis of the law makes it clear that the law does not possess the single precisely defined goal, typical of compact disciplines such as atomic physics. Despite

this lack of a single precisely defined goal, the historical evidence indicates that consistent progress has been the rule in the law for centuries.

While the three commonalities shared by all sub-fields in the law are quite important, the specific purpose of each legal sub-field also creates argumentative characteristics which apply to that sub-field alone. For instance, H.L.A. Hart argues that the form of the criminal and civil law is fundamentally different due to the contrasting purposes which they serve. Hart explains:

Some laws require men to act in certain ways or to abstain from acting whether they wish to or not. The criminal law consists largely of rules of this sort: like commands they are simply 'obeyed' or 'disobeyed'. But other legal rules are presented to society in quite different ways and have quite different functions. They provide facilities more or less elaborate for individuals to create structures of rights and duties for the conduct of life within the coercive framework of the law. Such are the rules enabling individuals to make contracts, wills, trusts, and generally to mould their legal relations with each other.⁵⁰

The specific purposes of the various types of law also influence the criteria used to evaluate each type of case. In criminal cases, strict rules of evidence and procedure, designed to protect the rights of the innocent, are used. The rights of the defendant are given precedence even if delay or the occasional acquittal of guilty parties results. By contrast, juvenile court cases and civil commitment proceedings, until quite recently, have been decided through informal proceedings. The courts viewed the purpose of commitment and juvenile proceedings as, not to protect the rights of the innocent, but to guarantee that people in need of help received that help. The purposes of the juvenile courts and the civil commitment proceedings encouraged judges to relax formal standards and rely heavily upon the experts to diagnose the best treatment or rehabilitation for the patient or juvenile. Recently, however, the rules regulating civil commitment and juvenile court proceedings have been tightened, largely because many in the legal field came to the conclusion that informal court processes and almost total reliance upon expert opinion were not appropriate procedures for cases as important as commitment and juvenile proceedings.⁵¹ The essential role of purpose in shaping argumentation in the law

is obvious in the rules regulating commitment and juvenile justice. When the goal was treatment or rehabilitation, the courts used informal procedures and based their decisions largely on expert testimony. However, when the legal community became convinced that the results of juvenile court and civil commitment cases were nearly as serious as the results in a criminal trial, the standards for evaluating each subfield shifted toward greater formality and more protection for the rights of the accused.

Finally, an analysis of the purpose of the law helps to explain the subject matter of the law. The subject matter appropriate for specific types of cases in the law is defined by rules of evidence. These rules regulating evidence are tied directly to the purposes of the law. H.L.A. Hart notes that the exclusionary rule produces "results which may seem paradoxical," but which "are justifiable in terms of the many different social needs which courts must satisfy in adjudicating cases."⁵² For example, lie detector tests are banned as evidence in most cases, not because they could not provide some useful information, but because the members of the field believe that their use is inconsistent with the overriding purposes of the legal system.

The foregoing description of the influence of shared purpose on legal argument has implicitly refuted most of Willard's objections to the value of defining the law as a field. First, all legal argument shares similarities in decision making forum, argument form, and evaluative process which are derived from the general purposes of the law. Second, while discretion is part of the legal system, that discretion is limited and can be traced to the purposes of the system. Judges have limited discretion to apply legal rules in new ways in order to provide a flexible legal system. Prosecutors plea bargain with defendants in order to solve the court overcrowding problem. Thus, discretion is essential to the functioning of the system. Third, while the various sub-fields in the law, possess their own subject matter and specific rules, the argumentative characteristics of the various sub-fields can be traced to the specific purposes which those sub-fields serve. The restrictive rules and procedures of the criminal law are derived from our society's assumption that it is much worse to convict an innocent man than to release a guilty man. The stringent *certiorari* standards of the Supreme Court are derived from the need for review of crucial cases.⁵³ Finally, because shared purpose is the energizing force behind legal rules of evidence, an analysis of the purposes of the legal field can explain the content as well as the form of the law.

The remaining question about the utility of a purpose centered view of fields for describing the law is whether such a perspective can adequately account for the psychological factors present in each trial. In order to test this question, I have focused upon the work of the legal realist, Jerome Frank. In his 1949 book, *Courts on Trial*, Frank emphasizes psychological and non-discursive factors in legal reasoning⁵⁴ and argues that no appellate court can ever fully understand the workings of a trial judge's mind (p. 23). Frank's analysis of the psychological factors involved in the law bears a striking resemblance to Willard's analysis of the importance of psychological factors in ordinary language argument. In fact, Frank's book provides a perfect opportunity for evaluating the utility of the purpose oriented view of fields. If purpose is at the center of Frank's analysis of the legal system, then that would serve as powerful evidence supporting the value of a description of argument fields based on shared purpose.

Surprisingly, while Frank's description of the legal field is quite different from traditional views, it is still tied directly to the purposes of the law. Initially, Frank describes the development of law from general conflict to blood feud, to primitive systems of trials, and finally to the modern adversary system (pp. 5-6). By describing the evolution of law from primitive ritual combat to modern procedure, Frank implicitly embraces a purpose oriented view of legal argument. According to Frank, the law has developed over time in order to better fulfill its primary function of preventing "social disruption" (p.7).

Nor does Frank's treatment of psychological factors in the law mean that it is impossible to describe a coherent legal field. First, Frank notes that social norms limit the need for an in depth psychological analysis of each case (pp. 179-180). Second, Frank implicitly admits that judges are bound by legal rules when he bemoans the power of precedent (p.270). Later he explicitly notes the controlling force of *stare decisis* (pp. 285-286).

Moreover, while both Willard and Frank emphasize the psychological factors inherent in legal argument, they do so from very different perspectives. Willard believes that non-discursive symbols are at the heart of the argument and that it is foolish to attempt to depychologize argument. By contrast, Frank is interested in depychologizing legal argument in order that legal issues might be evaluated more rationally. Frank suggests that a rule which required judges to justify their decisions in propositional form through written opinions would dis-

courage biased or irrational decisions (pp. 183–184). He even cites approvingly the comment of F.C.S. Schiller that putting an argument in syllogistic form reveals the weaknesses in that argument (pp. 184–185). Frank believes that psychological factors are important in legal argument, but that judges should do everything possible to control those psychological factors in order to increase the rationality of the law.

Frank should be interpreted as a legal reformer who calls for changes in the legal system in order to better achieve the purposes of the law. For example, Frank argues that the purposes which the civil law serves would in many instances be better served through arbitration (p.377). In addition, Frank argues that juries no longer serve any useful legal purpose and should be eliminated (pp. 108–145). Finally, Frank calls for the establishment of special state run investigate bodies to dig out evidence which might be missed by the adversary process (p. 98).

Jerome Frank's legal realism is built around a view of law as shaped by purpose. It is clear that the picture of legal argument drawn by Frank and other legal realists is quite different from the traditional view of legal argument. Frank believes that the law is not currently very well adapted to meeting the needs of the legal system and that reform is necessary, but it is still shared purpose which is at the center of his view of legal argument.

The foregoing analysis of legal argument is only a first step toward a complete description of how the shared purpose of the legal field influences legal argument. However this brief description of the field of the law does indicate that the application of a purpose centered view of fields to the law has the potential to illuminate legal argument.

The second field, to be briefly considered, – newspaper criticism – is important for testing the value of a purpose orientated view of fields because argument about newspaper stories occurs in ordinary language. Most criticism of newspaper stories probably occurs in a field like the relatively informal, imprecise, and cooperative field of film criticism, described by Toulmin in *An Introduction to Reasoning* (p. 196). These argumentative characteristics can be traced to the general purposes which argument about newspaper stories serves. People argue about newspaper stories in order to better understand those stories and evaluate their quality. They argue about what Carl

Rowan meant in a column or attack George Will's reasoning, or praise a movie reviewed by Gene Siskel.

While most newspaper criticism serves the general purposes which have been identified, internal newspaper criticism and argument in order to select the Pulitzer prizes serves much more important purposes. In the aftermath of the Janet Cooke Pulitzer prize scandal the importance of these two types of newspaper criticism is undeniable.

Internal newspaper criticism is aimed at guaranteeing that the best stories appear in the newspaper. For a newspaper, the "best stories" are those which fulfill the twin goals of selling papers and informing the people about the important news. As a result, newspaper editors search for news stories which are interesting as well as important and try to weed out those stories which could harm the credibility of the newspaper. Neither the general goal of informing the people nor the general goal of selling papers is fulfilled if a fabrication slips through the review process. Therefore, newspapers have every incentive to set up a stringent internal review process in order to weed out dull or inaccurate stories. In fact, the *Washington Post* has such a tough internal review system. In the complex review process used by the *Post*, several editors were responsible for checking out the details of Cooke's story about an eight year old heroin addict. In addition, because only a certain number of stories can appear on the front page, internal newspaper criticism at the *Post* was essentially a competitive process. Newspaper staff members were expected to voice any doubts about a story to their superiors. Finally, relatively strict evaluative criteria were applied to stories to protect the credibility of the newspaper. In particular, the *Washington Post* routinely demanded that the key facts of a story be confirmed by a number of sources before the story was printed.⁵⁵

The key question which the Cooke case raises is how, given the stringent standards for evaluating argument used by the *Post*, did the fabrication get printed. The report of the *Post*'s ombudsman, Bill Green, suggests that the strict procedures of the *Post* failed to prevent the fabrication because the evaluative procedures were compromised in order to meet purposes other than the stringent evaluation of newspaper stories. Green suggests that several members of the *Post*'s editorial staff suspected Cooke's story but failed to ask tough questions, because they did not want to show a lack of trust in Cooke or compromise her sources.⁵⁶ Thus the tough evaluative process was

modified to meet the purpose of maintaining friendly relations with reporters and protecting anonymous sources. In addition, Green suggests that the *Post* may have failed to check Cooke's story as completely as possible, because of the paper's concern for winning prizes. Green's analysis of the Janet Cooke affair makes it clear that the *Post*'s general method of story evaluation was well adapted to stringently reviewing newspaper stories. However, in the Janet Cooke case, the editorial staff of the *Post* modified their evaluative system in order to better achieve secondary goals of the review process and consequently allowed the fabrication to occur.

The Cooke scandal is also interesting for what it reveals about the argumentative process used in selecting Pulitzer prizes. Given the importance of the award, formal competitive procedures, complete with strict evaluative standards, would seem to be logically required. Press analysis of the method used for picking the prizes suggests that up to a point the method is well adapted to its purposes. Experts from the press serve on juries to evaluate stories nominated in the various newspaper categories of the Pulitzer prize competition. However, the Pulitzer board routinely ignores the recommendations of the expert juries which have intensively scrutinized the stories and newspapers that are up for awards.⁵⁸ In the Cooke case, the Pulitzer feature jury (the category in which Cooke won the award) never even saw Cooke's story. The Pulitzer board decided on their own to award her the prize in a category, for which she had not been nominated. Several members of the feature jury later claimed that they would have expressed doubts about the story had they been given the opportunity to review it.⁵⁹ In addition, the Pulitzer board has been criticized for consistently awarding its prizes to the mainstream of the American press.⁶⁰ Thus papers like the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* continually win prizes while other journals which produce stories of equal quality, but lack the prestige of the *Times* or the *Post* are ignored.

If this brief description of the Pulitzer prize selection process is accurate then it is relatively easy to explain the Janet Cooke fiasco. The Pulitzer juries serve the purpose of picking the best story in a given category. Experts jurors carefully scrutinize the nominated works and choose that work which they believe meets whatever artistic standards are most appropriate. However, the governing board of the Pulitzer prizes is concerned not only with identifying the best story or newspaper in a particular category, but also with rewarding a certain kind of newspaper. As a result, the board, often ignores the expert guidance

of the juries and shifts the award to the newspapers which it believes to be more deserving. Thus, the secondary purpose of rewarding mainstream newspapers leads to argumentative judgments at variance with the primary purpose of picking the best story.

The brief description of the field of newspaper criticism indicates that the purpose oriented view of fields can be applied usefully to ordinary language argument. While, newspaper criticism has not been described in any detail, it is clear that the shared purpose of actors in the area helps explain the argumentative characteristics of the field.

4. Implications of a Purpose Oriented View of Argument Fields

A purpose centered view of argument fields has important implications for a theory of argument. First, the essential characteristics of any argumentative field can best be described by identifying the purpose which members of the field share. After identifying that shared purpose, it should be relatively simple to discover the other essential characteristics of the field. The purpose centered view of fields also allows the critic to draw fairly sharp boundaries between fields. While legal decision making about insanity and psychiatric decision making about mental health share a subject area and many psychiatrists and lawyers operate in both areas, it is quite clear that they are separate fields. The goal of legal decisionmaking about insanity is to balance the right of the individual to liberty and the right of society to protection from the insane. The goal of the psychiatric field is to treat the patient as effectively as possible.

The second important implication of the purpose centered view of fields is that ordinary language argument and argument in specialized languages are not functionally very different. The key variable is not the type of language in which the argument occurs, but the specificity of the purpose which energizes the particular field. Specific purposes produce fields with specific evaluative criteria and very predictable argumentative characteristics. Fields which serve more general purposes can only be described in general terms.

A third implication of the purpose centered view of fields is that argument in different disciplines or argument which concerns vastly different subject areas may possess important similarities if the purposes of the argument in the two cases are similar. If two fields share a

general purpose but apply that purpose to different objects they might be thought of as sister fields. Thus it may be that behaviorism in psychology, sociology, and political science are quite similar not only because they share a disciplinary paradigm, but also because they share a purpose which is logically prior to the paradigm. I suggest that it is the shared purpose of developing explanations in the social science that meet the same stringent standards used in the physical sciences which undergirds the various behavioristic theories.⁶¹

A fourth implication of the purpose centered view of fields is that argumentative disputes which cross fields will be very difficult to resolve. Willard's example of the ordinary language field of abortion illustrates the point. If fields of argument are energized by a shared purpose then there are at least three different fields of argument involved in the abortion problem. First, there is a field defined by the shared purpose of resolving the dispute in order to benefit society as a whole. Second, there is a field defined by the purpose shared by fundamentalists who wish to fight abortion at all costs. Finally, there is a field defined by the purpose shared by committed feminists who wish to support abortion laws at all costs. Despite the harsh feelings which argument about abortion inevitably produces, it would be possible for those arguers who share the general goal of solving the abortion problem in order to benefit society to come to some agreement about abortion. By contrast no such agreement is possible between the committed proponents and opponents of abortion. The point is that when a problem is considered by representatives of fields which serve inconsistent purposes the dispute will be difficult to resolve. Without agreement on general purposes there is no common ground upon which to resolve the dispute.

Fifth, a view of fields as defined by purpose elucidates the concepts of field dependence and field invariance. If Toulmin is right that the general function of argument is justificatory, then field invariant standards which apply to all argument flow from the purposes of that justificatory process. Toulmin's recent analysis of fallacies (*Introduction*, Ch. 11) can be interpreted as an attempt to develop invariant standards for evaluating argument across all fields. A purpose oriented view of argument fields also suggests that the evolutionary model of conceptual change, described in *Human Understanding*, is applicable to all fields of argument. All arguments are evaluated based on purposes they fulfill. Those arguments which fulfill the

shared purposes unifying a group of scholars are accepted while those arguments which fail to fulfill their purposes are rejected.

A purpose centered view of fields also suggests that various levels of field invariance exist within argument fields. Here, it is important to recall that argument fields exist at different levels of specificity depending upon their purpose. Atomic physics serves the same general purpose as physics, which serves the yet more general purpose of the physical sciences which serves the still more general purpose of science as a whole. However, atomic physics is also a specific field with specific purposes which produce specific argumentative characteristics. As a result, atomic physics shares the general characteristics of all arguments in science. (It shares the same general purpose as all scientific argument.) On a more specific level, atomic physics shares the general characteristics of both the physical sciences in general and physics in particular. At the same time atomic physics serves purposes of its own and therefore possesses specific argumentative characteristics designed to meet those specific purposes. It would seem that field invariant standards drawn from the purpose shared by a group of disciplines exist at every level where disciplines share a general purpose. By contrast the field dependent aspects of each argumentative field flow from the specific purposes which argument in one area fulfills that argument in other areas does not fulfill.

Finally, the view that fields are defined by the shared purpose of actors in an area suggests that the most basic criticism of any field attacks the purpose which created and energized the field. Here the distinction is between the purpose which in fact unifies a field and the purpose which should unify the field. In many instances the purposes which the actors in an area share may not be the purposes which they should share. Since fields develop through a value free evolutionary process there is no guarantee that the purposes of any field will be ethical. The critic of argument should recognize that, while field dependent standards derived from the purposes of a given field provide a relatively reliable and simple method of evaluating the quality of arguments in the area, those standards are only as valuable as the purposes which led to their creation. If a field serves an immoral purpose then the evaluative standards which develop in the field are also likely to be immoral. The critic of argument can strike at the problem by scrutinizing not only the current standards used for evaluating arguments, but also by considering what the evaluative standards should be. Jerome Frank's bitter criticism of the legal system

is one example of argument criticism aimed at improving the evaluative standards and purposes which define a field.

The view that the important characteristics of argument fields are derived from purposes shared by those who confront a problem is quite useful for the critic of argument. The purpose oriented view of fields allows the critic to identify both the boundaries between the fields and various levels of field invariance and dependence within the fields. It also helps the critic of argument explain why some sorts of disputes are essentially unresolvable and why some fields can be described in only general terms. Finally the purpose oriented perspective is valuable because it does not define fields of argument based on a single characteristic of form or substance, but instead recognizes that fields of argument are composed of a variety of characteristics, all derived from the shared purpose of arguers in the area.

Notes

1. See for instance, Dale Hample, "The Toulmin Model and the Syllogism," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (Summer 1977), pp. 8-9.
2. See Charles Arthur Willard, "Some Questions About Toulmin's View of Argument Fields," in *Proceedings of the Summer Conference of Argumentation*, (S.C.A., January 1, 1980), pp. 348-400. Ray McKerrow also argues that the field concept is not applicable to ordinary language argument. See "On Fields and Rational Enterprises: A Reply to Willard," in *Proceedings*, pp. 401-413.
3. Douglas Ehninger and Wayne Brockriede, *Decision by Debate*, 2nd edition (New York: Harper and Row, 1978), p. 92.
4. Stephen Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), p. 256.
5. See Stephen Toulmin, Richard Rieke, and Allan Janik, *An Introduction to Reasoning* (New York: MacMillan, 1979), Ch. 13-17. All further references to this work will be made in the text and cited as *Introduction*.

6. See Willard, "Some Questions," p. 379.
7. Stephen Toulmin, *The Place of Reason in Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 199.
8. McKerrow, "On Fields," p. 402.
9. Willard makes a similar point. See Willard, "Some Questions," p. 356.
10. See Charles Arthur Willard, "Argument Fields and Theories of Logical Types," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 17 (Winter 1981):129-145
11. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 353.
12. See McKerrow, "On Fields," p. 408.
13. Stephen Toulmin, *Human Understanding* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972). All further references to this work will be made in the text and cited as *HU*.
14. Willard, "Some Questions," pp. 359, 378.
15. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 378.
16. See Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 109.
17. Kuhn, pp. 109-110.
18. See for example Peter Demetz, "Transformations of Recent Marxist Criticism: Hans Mayer, Ernst Fischer, Lucien Goldman," in *The Frontiers of Literary Criticism*, ed. David H. Malone (Los Angeles: Hemessey, 1974), pp. 75-92.
19. See Brant Burleson, "The Place of Non-Discursive Symbolism, Formal Characterizations, and Hermeneutics in Argument Analysis and Criticism," *Journal of the American Forensic Association* 16 (Spring 1980), pp. 222-231; Charles Willard, "Propositional Argument is to Argument What Talking About Passion is To Passion," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 16 (Summer 1979), pp. 21-28.

20. Kuhn, pp. 202-204.
21. Karl Popper, "Normal Science and Its Dangers," in *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, ed. Imre Lakatos and A. Musgrave (London: Cambridge U. Press, 1970), p. 56.
22. See Ray McKerrow, "Argument Communities: A Quest for Distinctions," in *Proceedings*, pp. 214-227.
23. McKerrow, "Argument Communities," p. 215.
24. McKerrow, "Argument Communities," p. 226.
25. See Walter Ulrich, "The Implications of Legal Reasoning for a System of Argumentation," Diss. Kansas University, 1980, pp. 125-132.
26. See Robert Rowland, "Toulmin and Fields: From Form to Function," paper presented at the S.C.A. Doctoral Honors Seminar on Argumentation, Bowling Green, Ohio, May 1981.
27. John Dewey, "Logical Method and the Law," *Cornell L.Q.*, 10 (1924), pp. 19-20.
28. See John Read, "Alchemy," in *The Harper Encyclopedia of Science*, ed. James R. Newman (New York: Harper, 1967), p. 32.
29. See Chaim Perelman, "The New Rhetoric: A Theory of Practical Reasoning," in *The Rhetoric of Western Thought*, ed. James L. Golden, Goodwin F. Berquist, and William Coleman (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 1976), pp. 186-187.
30. See Thomas D. Perry, "Judicial Method and the Concept of Reasoning," *Ethics*, 80 (October 1969), pp. 10-11.
31. H.L.A. Hart, "Positivism and the Separation of Law and Morals," in *The Philosophy of Law*, ed. R.M. Dworkin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), pp. 30-34.
32. See Willard, "Some Questions," p. 351.
33. See Willard, "Some Questions," pp. 348-349; McKerrow, "On Fields," p. 408.

34. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 379.
35. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 353.
36. Willard, "Some Questions," pp. 366-371.
37. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 367.
38. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 368.
39. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 373.
40. Willard, "Some Questions," p. 383.
41. Bernard Cataldo, Frederick G. Kempin Jr., John M. Stockton, and Charles Weber, *Introduction To Law and the Legal Process*, 2nd edition (New York: John Wiley, 1973), p. 1. Other scholars defend similar views. See Edward Levi, *An Introduction To Legal Reasoning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949), p. 104; H.L.A. Hart, "Philosophy of Law, Problems of," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: MacMillan, 1967), pp. 272, 274.
42. Levi, p. 1.
43. Levi, p. 3.
44. Levi, pp. 1-2.
45. See Perry, pp. 10-11, 13.
46. Levi, p. 5.
47. Cataldo et al, p. 1.
48. Ulrich, p. 123.
49. A.B.A. Project on Standards for Criminal Justice, *The Prosecution Function and the Defence Function* (New York: Institute of Judicial Administration, 1971), p.2.
50. Hart, "Positivism," p. 20.

51. See Bruce J. Ennis, "Judicial Involvement in the Public Practice of Psychiatry in *Law and the Mental Health Profession at the Interface*, ed. Walter Barton and Charlotte Sanborn (New York: International University Press, 1978), pp. 5-9; Paul Isenstadt and Rosemary Sarri, "The Juvenile Court: Legal Context and Policy Issues," in *Brought to Justice: Juveniles, The Courts and the Law*, ed. Rosemary Sarri and Yeheskel Hasenfeld (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Institute of Legal Education, 1976), pp. 2-5. Also see *In re Gault*, 387 U.S. I (1967).
52. See Hart, "Philosophy of Law, Problems of," p. 272.
53. See Steven W. Earp, "Sovereign Immunity in the Supreme Court," *Virginia Journal of International Law* 16 (1976), pp. 909-912.
54. See Jerome Frank, *Courts on Trial* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949), pp. 172-173. All further references to this work will be made in the text.
55. See Ellie McGrath, "A Fraud in the Pulitzers," *Time*, 27 April 1981, p. 52; Bill Green, "Janet's World," *Washington Post*, 19 April 1981, pp. A1, A12-A15.
56. Green, p. A15.
57. Green, p. A15.
58. See "Tarnished Prize," *The Nation*, 2 May 1981, pp. 515-516.
59. See L. Grossberger, "The Pulitzer Prize Hoax," *Newsweek*, 27 April 1981, p. 63.
60. See "Tarnished Prize," pp. 515-516.
61. See Arnold S. Kaufman, "Behaviorism," in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, pp. 268-273.

V

**THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE OF
ARGUMENT**

Introduction: Individual and Social Viewpoints on Argument

The papers in this section address or illustrate a fundamental choice in a researcher's perspective on argumentation: whether to focus on the individual arguer, or on the social realities which constrain him/her. As a simplified example, consider a situation in which someone tries to get you to make a promise (say, to room with him/her next semester), and you don't want to do it. What arguments can you make to justify your refusing to promise, while still permitting you to seem reasonable, of good character, and so forth?

A social level analysis might well begin with the notion of "promise." Promise is a speech act, and according to Searle (1969, Ch. 3), a competently executed promise must satisfy certain requirements, called "felicity conditions." Here is a simplified list of Searle's felicity conditions for promising: (a) the two speakers must be mutually intelligible; (b) the promiser expresses a proposition that indicates that s/he will do some future act; (c) the hearer would prefer that the speaker do that future act, and the speaker understands this; (d) the speaker would not obviously do that future act otherwise; (e) the speaker really does intend to do the future act s/he mentions, and also intends that expressing the proposition will bind him/her to do it; and (f) the speaker intends the hearer to understand all this. Now in our example, you are in the position of the speaker, and a promise is expected of you. Refusing to promise is easy – you can speak unintelligibly, simply not express a promise, lie, and so forth – but these options might have undesirable effects on your self image or relationship with the other. You do have choices, however. Perhaps you would wish to focus on felicity condition (c), and explain that you are an awful roommate, so that your refusal to promise will seem to be in the other's best interests. But the point of the social analysis is that anything you say or don't say in order to refuse must relate to one of the promise conditions in order to be understood as a refusal by the other person.

Notice several things about this social level of analysis. First, the analytic frame has little to do with the specific individuals: it is pre-given, and derives from the social definition of "promise." These conditions are not created by the two people in our example. They

are constraints on all promises ever contemplated. (And if you've ever studied speech act theory, you'll know that there are many speech acts, each with its own set of felicity conditions.) Second, the analytic framework specifies the possibilities, but gives us no clues as to which general line of argument is most likely. You do have options, and will have to make a choice, but your invention decision apparently depends on more than just the felicity conditions.

An individual level analysis of the same example would look quite a bit different. It might begin with the felicity conditions and focus on the reasons for your deciding to say that you would be an awful roommate. If this were the researcher's method, we would be able to see a clear and constructive example of how social and individual viewpoints can be combined. However, individual level analyses more typically begin with some cognitive or personality feature of the individual. Thus, one researcher might explore how verbally aggressive you are, in order to predict the chance that you will crudely insult the other person (see Infante, 1988). Another (O'Keefe & Shepherd, 1987) might assess your sophistication about people in order to predict whether you will be able to achieve your practical goal (refusing to promise) simultaneously with your interpersonal goals (maintaining face for yourself and the other).

More examples of individual level variables could be given, of course, but perhaps the contrast is already clear. The individual-oriented scholar makes predictions based on characteristics of the arguer, while the socially-oriented researcher focuses on the essential nature of the utterance types. We know of no good reason why these perspectives cannot be combined in a research program, but the practical reality is that most researchers tend toward one extreme or the other.

The first paper in this section is Jackson's, and she describes the social versus individual choice in much more detail. Her essay was originally presented as a reaction to several other papers presented at the same time (Sillars & Pike, 1983; Burleson, 1983; Kline & Woloschuk, 1983). She found all three to be individually-oriented, and chose to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of individual and social research orientations. Though most of Jackson's own work is clearly in the social camp (see Ch. 34), she has done some individual-level analyses (e.g., Jackson, 1982), and this may have helped her to be even-handed in her assessments. She does exhibit a preference for the social orientation, but is careful to emphasize that the issue is one of perspective, not correctness: "One may reasonably choose to study communication either from a primarily social-level perspective

or from a primarily individual-level perspective, so long as both individuality and sociality are somehow acknowledged."

McKerrow's essay journeys through three different argument communities (i.e., settings and audiences): the social, the philosophical, and the personal. The social community has substantive ideologies, which the arguer must address. McKerrow's example deals with the Cold War, and how rhetors are obliged to deal with the American public's understanding of America. This kind of collective consciousness is like felicity conditions in that it is pre-given; it is unlike them in that it is substantive rather than structural. Still, we have again the idea that arguers are powerfully constrained by the social understandings which surround them. The second community, the philosophical one, demands arguments that are fully candid, and not supported beyond the point of refutation. McKerrow's discussion of philosophical argument is consistent with what Wenzel says about argument as procedure (Ch. 7), and has some similarities to Ehninger's discussion of the "restrained partisan" as well (Ch. 8). McKerrow's final community entertains fully personal arguments. By this he means several important things. The standards for good arguments are set by the two arguers, not by any external community. Consequently, argument in the personal community exposes (and thus risks) self to a far greater degree than in any other setting. McKerrow's concern with personhood in this community is strongly reminiscent of what Brockriede (Ch. 4) and Ehninger (Ch. 8.) have said earlier in this volume.

The last two papers in this section clearly evince the individual orientation to argumentation, but have a less philosophical orientation than McKerrow's treatment of the personal community. Benoit shows the relation between source credibility and argumentation by focusing on the receiver's cognitive processes. High credibility sources reduce the receiver's motivation to counterargue mentally. In other words, you will have more critical thoughts while listening to a low credibility persuader than to a high credibility one. Your private thoughts – what Hamble calls argument₀ (Ch. 6) – powerfully mediate your reaction to a message. Thus Benoit shows that credibility's effects are due to the mental arguments individuals create for themselves during the persuasive message.

Burleson's paper is one of the few quantitative studies we have reprinted here, and is also one of the few dealing with children. By studying children of different ages, he is able to show that people's arguing ability becomes more sophisticated as they grow older (which, frankly, is not very informative), and that they get more sophisticated in specific ways (which is informative). In particular, children from

grades two through eight are increasingly attentive to other, to situation, and to specific social expectations in a particular situation, as they age. Burleson shows how individual development is reflected in more finely sharpened arguing skills, and in particular, how children are able to be more adaptive, effective, and pointed in their arguments as they grow older.

The choice of an individual or social starting point for research is an important question, not because one is right and the other wrong, but because each beginning implicitly maps most of the natural routes a scholar can take. Individually oriented work is immediately and naturally drawn to question how cognitive processes, personality, and individual development affect a person's arguments. The social vantage point, on the other hand, offers a view of the person constrained by linguistic requirements and community predispositions. Scholars working in one or the other perspective find different explanatory resources at hand, and so tend to offer different accounts of the same phenomena. One set of explanations might strike you as more appropriate in a given instance, but both sets are certainly important and relevant in general.

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Chapter 25

The Arguer in Interpersonal Argument: Pros and Cons of Individual-Level Analysis

Sally Jackson

Over the past five years, a new research area has emerged from the overlap between argumentation theory and interpersonal communication theory. Although it is a relatively narrow sub-speciality, theories developing within this area show a level of diversity equal to the diversity within communication theory generally. Interpersonal argument theorists disagree among themselves on all sorts of philosophical and methodological issues. I wish to discuss only one such issue, the issue of whether analysis of interpersonal argument is more profitably conducted at the individual level of analysis or at the social level of analysis.

All communication theorists must take sides on this issue, implicitly or explicitly, for all must somehow come to terms with both the individual and the social *in* communication. In analyzing meaning, for example, neither the radical position that meaning is entirely a matter of individual interpretation nor the radical position that meaning is entirely a matter of convention has been found satisfactory. The former fails to come to terms with the fact of understanding, the latter with the fact of misunderstanding. Likewise, the concept of rationality defies either radical individualist(subjectivist) or radical socialist(objectivist) analysis, the former failing to come to terms with the existence of public standards for proof and the latter failing to come to terms with the relativity of proof to the beliefs of speaker and hearer. Communication, by its nature, involves individuals trying to coordinate their individual beliefs and behaviors with others, so that it must involve both individual-level and social-level processes. Any adequate theory will speak to the relationship between the individual and the social, but as to the specific nature of this relationship, any number of plausible positions may be taken.

Within argumentation theory, we may cast this issue either in terms of our central interest (arguers versus abstract argumentative structures) or in terms of the substantive relationship assumed to hold between the individual and the social (individual processes as primary structures from which social structures derive versus individual processes as constrained by a self-organized social structure). Either way, the issue allows us to define two gross groupings of positions within interpersonal argument which, despite other differences, hold similar views on the relationship between the arguer and argument.

Gross grouping 1 is defined by an approach to argument as a social institution or rule system which is not reducible to properties of individual users of the system. This group includes most descriptive analyses of natural conversation (e.g., Benoit, 1981; Hawes, 1981; Jackson & Jacobs, 1982; O'Keefe & Benoit, 1982; Trapp, 1982). These approaches try to lay out what might be thought of as social constraints on individual behavior. For example, Jacobs and Jackson (1981) see the goal of argumentation theory as a "technical description of the tacit knowledge which enables any natural language user to recognize and produce the patterns displayed by collected instances of argument." The system is self-organized, and individuals must operate within it in order to communicate.

Gross grouping 2 is characterized by an interest in the arguer. Structure and patterning at the social level are seen as derivative from the characteristics of individuals. In this group, I place most analyses based on individuality or individual differences, including analyses of cognitive structure (e.g., Hamble, 1981), analyses of individual or subjective interpretation (e.g., Willard, 1978, 1983), analyses of individual variations in style or skill (e.g., Infante, 1978; Reinard & Crawford, 1983; Sillars & Pike, 1983), and analyses of developmental changes in arguers and their arguments (e.g., Burleson, 1981, 1983; Elliott, 1981; Kline, 1983). Obviously, these individualist positions diverge on any number of theoretical and methodological issues, but the common theme in all is treatment of individual characteristics as primary and social patterning as a product of patterning at the individual level. Hamble (1981), for example, views argument "as something that happens within a person, not within a message," so that arguing "refers only to the way beliefs are processed within an individual's cognitive system." Willard (1983) comments explicitly on the relationship between the individual and the social, arguing that the "social grounds of knowledge" are to be found only in individuals' way of knowing.

Reinard and Crawford (1983) describe face-to-face argument as being structured by arguers' stable individual preferences for four basic strategic modes. Whether analysis of individual differences focuses on cognitive processes (as with Hample or Willard) or on behavioral characteristics (as with Reinard & Crawford), structure at the social or interactional level is seen as a product of co-operating individual systems.

The difference between these two groups of analyses is not so much *what* each chooses to study as *how* each looks at the phenomena chosen for study. Confronted with "the same" set of phenomena to explain, the individual-level analyst and the social-level analyst choose quite different points of entry. Consider a concept like the universal audience (Perelman & Olbrecht-Tyteca, 1969). Something like the concept of the universal audience is likely to figure in either an individual-level or a social-level analysis of argument, representing the public accountability of reasons one person offers for another to do or believe something. However, individual-level and social-level interpretations of the universal audience are likely to differ sharply, especially in the sort of *content* they attribute to the universal audience. An individualist position might take the universal audience to be a body of substantive belief shared by all persons, so that the perspective of the universal audience consists of the overlap in many individual belief systems. A socialist position, by contrast, would analyze the universal audience as a set of principles or structures which are shared, not in the sense that each individual arrives separately at some core of commonly held beliefs, but in the sense that individuals agree to operate within a set of constraints that, individually, would have no function. Within my own discourse analytic perspective (Jacobs & Jackson, 1982), the universal audience is considered to be a set of discourse rules which provide individual arguers the resources necessary to raise, and possibly resolve, disagreements, so that its content would contain knowledge about when and how to challenge others' utterances, but not substantive beliefs about the subject matter discussed. Where the individualist might note that there will never be complete overlap in belief systems among individuals, the socialist would focus instead on the fact that language provides the means by which an argument can be extended indefinitely, limited only by communicators' assessments of how much effort coming to agreement is worth.

One may reasonably choose to study communication either from a primarily social-level perspective or from a primarily individual-level

perspective, so long as both individuality and sociality are somehow acknowledged. The choice one makes between primary emphasis on the individual and primary emphasis on the social obviously involves some gains in explanatory power and some losses. In responding to papers on individuality in argument and reasoning, I will confine my remarks to the costs and benefits of individual-level analysis.

The primary advantage I see in an individual-level analysis of argument is that it offers the best immediate prospects for practical application. At the present stage of theoretical development, individual-level approaches offer more promise than social-level approaches for producing *better* arguers. Social-level analyses of argument do not lend themselves well to pedagogical innovation or other practical application, since they often aim only to provide description of what communicators already tacitly know. Individual-level approaches take for granted basic shared structures and try to identify variations among individuals in style or skill. To the extent that these variations are related to the *quality* of argument, they offer obvious avenues for *helping* identifiable classes of people (poor arguers).

Individual-level approaches are uniquely able to generate and use concepts like style and skill. These concepts imply individuality. Argument style is clearly not a system-level construct. Different argument styles are not like different languages or even like different dialects within a language. Style describes variations not in the set of possible messages available to an arguer, but to preferences within a common set of possibilities. This is particularly clear in Reinard and Crawford's analysis: they assume that all arguers share a common set of four basic strategies, but that individuals differ in preferences among these strategies. The practical significance of the style concept is also clear: as Reinard and Crawford argue, knowledge of a person's stylistic preferences can provide valuable insights into the problem of adapting a message to a listener.

The notion of argument skill is also inherently an individual-level concept. Only if there is individual variation in the quality of argumentation does it make sense to speak of the skillfulness of the arguer. A social-level explanation aims to describe a structure or system shared by all language users. Such approaches are indifferent to variations in the skill with which individuals *use* the socially-constituted system.

The analyses presented by Sillars and Pike, by Kline, and by Burleson all identify individual differences that might be considered skill variations. To the extent that these differences can be shown to relate the communication outcomes or other indices of effectiveness, there is obvious applied potential in studies of this sort. Depending on how the skill is conceptualized, one may either train skills directly (e.g., advise parents to cast arguments with their children in terms of reasons rather than threats) or encourage development of skills indirectly through changes in underlying cognitive skills. Although we do not yet have conclusive evidence that individual differences identified so far are true *skill* variables (Sillars & Pike's results specifically negate the idea that ability to reciprocate positive affect is a skill), any link found between these differences and communication outcomes will be a valuable source of advice to arguers.

Clearly, an individual-level analysis of argument is a worthwhile area for research. However, the adoption of an individual-level approach has costs associated with it, some of which may affect the prospects for successful application of argumentation research findings. The most central problem with approaches focussed on the arguer is the danger that the individual difference variables selected for study may relate partially, tangentially, or not at all to whatever it is that makes argument an interesting communicative phenomenon. The important role of the individual in argument or other communication should not lead us to assume that all characteristics of individuals will be worthy of study. Beginning with a social-level approach has the advantage of suggesting what sorts of individual characteristics should be related to skill in arguing. An approach based on rules for producing speech acts, for example, would delineate the classes of knowledge a speaker must have in order to make appropriate requests.

If we begin with a theory of the characteristics of interpersonal *arguments*, rather than with a theory of the characteristics of *arguers*, we have better assurance that the individual difference variables we identify will be relevant to argument. Assume, as most social-level analysts now do, that arguments in everyday interaction have defining features or generic characteristics. There is general agreement that argument is about disagreement-regulation (Jackson & Jacobs, 1980; O'Keefe & Benoit, 1982; Trapp, 1982); a variety of additional suggestions have failed to achieve widespread agreement. No analysis that I am familiar with suggests that reciprocity is a necessary or likely feature of argument. Sillars and Pike observed no clear relationship

between reciprocity and relational satisfaction and inferred from this that skill in arguing is not as important as might be thought. Certainly this is possible - and the point that communication should not take all the blame or credit for relational outcomes is well-taken. But it is also possible that skill *is* important, and that reciprocity simply isn't the place to look for skill.

Even individual difference variables whose relevance to argumentation seems sure (e.g., moral reasoning) may have nothing to do with arguments as they are produced in interaction. A person's level of moral reasoning refers to the kind of justifications the individual gives for deciding right and wrong, not to the kinds of reasons an individual gives to gain compliance. These *are* distinct. One thing we know about conversational argument is that the content of the argument is as much the responsibility of the addressees as it is the responsibility of the speaker. Typically in conversation, argument comes about through an addressee's challenge to a speaker's utterance - for example, through a challenge or objection to a request or an assertion. And one thing we know about moral reasoning is that individuals are not very good at dealing with arguments cast at levels above their own. A Level 5 reasoner arguing with a Level 1 reasoner is not necessarily going to produce arguments based on principle. In fact, if the argument comes about through a challenge like "What's in it for me?", the Level 5 arguer may produce arguments which are not better than the arguments of a Level 1 arguer. Interactionally, there may be no difference between arguers at different levels of reasoning, since the arguments actually produced may reflect the speaker's level, the addressee's level, or the speaker's assumption about the addressee's level. The relevance of moral reasoning *is* open to doubt and must be established through demonstration of individual variation in argument content.

Defining individual differences in terms suggested by the features of the social *system* may offer the best prospects for development of theory and improvement of practice. Elliott (1981) argues that a meaningful analysis of individual development depends upon some prior conception of the system toward which the individual is developing.

Seibold et al. (1981) code argument content in terms of structural or conventional features, and use these features to distinguish successful and unsuccessful arguments. Finally, Millar (1983) uses a speech acts based coding of argument content to derive a stylistic characterization of arguers. Although consistent theoretical positions on argument

must commit themselves to some one position the relationship between the individual and the social, we must be careful never to suppose that the relationship is truly one of indifference.

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Chapter 26

Argument Communities: a Quest for Distinctions

Ray E. McKerrow

Philosophical argumentation is not the only variety of argumentation. The very problem of the typology of argumentation is one of the important questions in the theory of argumentation.¹

One of the central problems on argument theory concerns the distinction between argument as *process* and as *product*.² In the former sense, there is a tacit assumption that arguments exist only in particular environments and that the conditions for such environments can be specified. In the latter sense, there is a tacit assumption that arguments possess definable structures, and that the methods of creating and testing such structures can be discerned and applied. At the risk of oversimplifying complex differences, the disparity between existing descriptions of argument's nature can be accounted for by the tendency to view argument as either process or as product. Even though the two are not necessarily mutually exclusive, they often appear to be essentially antithetical descriptions of argument.

G. A. Brutain, for example, defines philosophical argument as "a system of methods, devices and means."³ Henry W. Johnstone, on the other hand, concentrates attention on the preconditions for the existence of arguments.⁴ Charles Kneppers's disagreement with Charles Willard, to cite an additional example, also can be reduced to the dichotomy between argument as process and argument as product.⁵

An underlying assumption of this essay is that the opposition between process and product views of argument creates unnecessary difficulties in the creation of theory. In moving from one "variety" of argument type to another, as suggested by the headnote to this essay, the relative importance of conceptualizing argument in process or product terms may necessarily shift. As such changes occur, there is a corresponding

alteration in the applicability of theoretical explanations which seek to account for argument's nature in a particular context. A corollary assumption, implicit in the foregoing, is that there are multiple "theories," with each having potentially greater explanatory power in one domain or area than in others.

The final assumption central to this essay is that all theoretical descriptions apply to argument in the context of controversy. Even at the most elemental product level of "reason plus claim", an argument implies the potential existence of an equally weighty counter argument. In the absence of this sense of the problematical, argument ceases to possess any theoretical interest beyond the labeling of pristine forms expressing certain or absolutely known contents.

With these assumptions as a basis, this essay addresses the problems posed by the differing perceptions of process and of product. However, instead of approaching the problems in terms of a review of specific theories, I shall focus attention on a typology of *argument communities*. The discussion of similarities and differences between and among three communities - *social*, *philosophical*, and *personal* - will highlight the roles of process and product perspectives as theoretical accounts of each community's use of argument.

1. Argument in the Social Community

The first community to be examined is that of social argument. Although the phrase "public argument" would seem more appropriate, the reference to social is intended to convey the "collective" or "societal" nature of argument addressed to persons in this community. In addition, the term avoids the possible confusions with the sense in which arguments in the *personal* community may possess a "public" nature.

Social arguments are audience oriented: particular serial predictions owe their existence and often their shape to the stance one takes toward an identifiable audience. To paraphrase Karl Mannheim's discussion of collective or social thought, social argument "constitutes a complex which cannot be readily detached either from the psychological roots of the emotional and vital impulses which underlie it or from the situation in which it arises and which it seeks to solve."⁶ Thus, argument is more than a series of isolateable forms, identifiable as to type and potential effects. For example, social argument typified by the phrase

"Cold War" cannot be perceived simply as an instance of particular individuals addressing mass audiences at finite moments in time; nor can it be perceived as a cacophony of sounds, ultimately identifiable as "argument from justice" or as "non-sequiturs." The significance of the Cold War argument lies in the fact that it is complex; its parts cannot be isolated and dissected without losing a sense of their original force upon the collective consciousness of Americans. As legitimate leaders, individuals such as Truman, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon, have had the "ear" of the "people."⁷ Each could, and did, generate arguments based on a societal understanding of America's mission in the world, of our emotional involvement with a sense of obligation to honor that mission. Social argument involves and uses as its motivating force the accepted modes of thinking within a culture to promote socially defined ends.

Social argument differs substantially from argument in other communities in its emphasis on an identification with the collective consciousness of the audience. Nixon's November 3, 1969, speech on Vietnam is one example. Designed to appeal to America's sense of honor on the battlefield, it was an irresponsible rhetoric which effectuated a division within the populace by pitting an "old" consciousness against a "new" emerging collective attitude towards America's destiny.⁸ Peter Rodino's and Barbara Jordan's impeachment addresses are additional examples of rhetoric aimed at the collective consciousness of the "people."⁹

From a process perspective, argument in the social community is premised on socially defined norms, transcending the personal lives of individuals. The preconditions for argument are, in the general sense, the same as those for other types of discourse. Jürgen Habermas' criteria for communicative competence are suggestive of the kinds of "rules" which govern the acceptability of particular addresses.¹⁰ While such "rules" are idealized abstractions for "perfect communication," there is at least a tacit acceptance of their potency in directing speakers to address audiences in a truthful, comprehensible, and sincere manner. What counts as "truth," however, is determined by the social community, and not by some external standard of truthfulness. In this manner, the truths that are uttered by a Nixon, a Rodino, or a Jordan may be no more than the accepted myths of the prevailing ideology. Furthermore, the employment of such arguments, in accordance with the linguistic constraints imposed, are risk-provoking only in the sense that any linguistic act is a revelation of self.

The risk-provoking sense of such arguments does not entail a person-building attribute accompanying all attempts at argument. While Nixon's abuse of linguistic conventions of truthfulness and sincerity may be taken as evidence of his negation of my person, his proper use of these and other preconditions for the conduct of argument (or any other discourse, for that matter) does not elevate us to any new or refined sense of personal relationship. The conventions are shared intersubjectively with the community, but are objectified in such a way that they no longer have much impact on any level of interaction remotely near that envisaged by an *I-Thou* encounter. There is self-risk, but it is controlled by the normative influences of the social conventions governing the act of arguing. To say that arguers in this community are not lovers is not to decry their efforts, nor is it to consider them as "second-class" arguers. On the contrary, it is simply to affirm that such allusions are inappropriate in this community.¹¹

The stock of argument forms commonly employed in social argument may be characterized as less formal than those utilized in the philosophical community. While the basic element of "reason plus claim" is the same in both arenas, the standards governing the relationship between reasons and claims differ radically. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's treatment of quasilogical arguments such as incompatibility exemplifies the difference between social and philosophical argument.¹² In addition, social argument employs forms which are considered fallacious in the philosophical community. Michael C. McGee has illustrated the rhetorical efficacy of *ad hominem* and *ad populum* arguments in the social community.¹³ Doubtless, a case could be made for the potency of appeals to authority and other argument forms traditionally dismissed as ineffective because formally flawed. Finally, as McGuire's research has suggested, the social community is much less rigorous in its evaluation of the relationship between reasons and claims.¹⁴ If the conclusion is acceptable or believable, the audience is more likely to ignore formal flaws in the reasoning which has been used to advance the claim.

The roles of process and product are integrated in the function of argument within the social community. In the absence of sufficient data to *know* (in the analytic sense of that term) whether a certain action should be undertaken, argument in the social community seeks to *justify* belief and action. Given its relationship to the cultural consciousness of the community, "truths" that are held by the membership are verified through argumentation. Here, "truths" are not per-

ceived as entities verifiable by recourse to external standards, but rather as the aggregate of beliefs adhered to by the populace.

Thus, social argument is characterized by virtue of its appeal to the consciousness of the community, its adherence to socially defined linguistic conventions which, in their normal operation, are shared intersubjectively but do not necessarily confer personhood on the other in the interchange, its appropriation of rhetorically efficacious forms, and its function of justifying belief and action and of verifying the "truths" of the community.

2. Argument in the Philosophical Community

There is a particularly revealing remark about the nature of philosophical argument in R. Hare's discussion of "philosophizing" at Oxford. The atmosphere he illuminates in the following passage is one of Socratic probing: refining statements so as to produce clarity, and then adducing the "logicality" of the position:

Philosophical arguments, conducted in the way that I have described, have the same sort of objectivity that chess games have. If you are beaten at chess, you are beaten, and it is not to be concealed by any show of words; and in a philosophical discussion of this sort, provided that an unambiguously stated thesis is put forward, objective refutation is possible. Indeed, the whole object of our philosophical training is to teach us to put our theses in a form in which they can be submitted to this test. Ambiguities and evasions and rhetoric, however uplifting, are regarded as the mark of a philosopher who has not learnt his craft; we prefer professional competence to a superficial brilliance.¹⁵

Although Hare uses "rhetoric" in a much narrower, and more pejorative, sense than is implied by contemporary rhetoricians, the comments create the picture of an objective, rational *process* which focuses primary attention on the language used to express reasons and claims, and on the relationship between these elemental properties of an argument. Language, or "rhetorical flourishes" which mask meaning impede the progress of the search for logical consistency.

In this context, *philosophically powerful* arguments are distinguishable from *rhetorically persuasive* arguments. As Gilbert Ryle puts the distinction: "On the whole, Plato is rhetorically more efficient than Aristotle, but we can distinguish the question whether a certain argument of Aristotle is more or less powerful than a corresponding argument of Plato from the question whether the presentation of the one is more or less persuasive than the other."¹⁶ Power, in Ryle's sense, derives from the "boundary setting" function of arguments: it aims not at a collective conscious nor even an individual person, but instead at what the community regards as an appropriate external standard. The community defines what constitutes reasonable deductions from "logical types" in accordance with the dictates of the standards or criteria governing "efficient" or unambiguous statements. The concern for words, at least among linguistic philosophers, is exemplified in an approach to the topic of pleasure. Plato suggests that the enjoyment we derive from eating is the same as that which we obtain from drinking: we are merely moving from one "state" to another. Aristotle objects to the equivalency implicit in Plato's analysis: if enjoying were a process of moving from "state" to "state," a person could begin a process but not complete it, as in starting a meal and not finishing it. Enjoyment, however, exists for a finite time: it cannot be fractionalized, hence you cannot equate "dining" with "enjoying" – the terms do not belong to the same logical type. In this fashion, Aristotle objectively refutes the argument presented by Plato. His concern is not for a cultural analysis, nor even for Plato as an individual. Instead, his concern is properly focused on the implications deriving from the use of particular words, arranged in a particular order.¹⁷

Obviously, Ryle's choice of logical typing as the principal task of the philosopher is only one of many possible modes of "doing philosophy." What is central to his approach also is common to all others: "arguments are effective as weapons only if they are logically cogent, and if they are so they reveal connections, the disclosure of which is not the less necessary to the discovery of truth for being also handy in the discomfiture of opponents."¹⁸ The arguments Ryle is concerned with are neither drawn from experience nor from axioms. Thus, although philosophical argument shares the sense of the problematical with other communities, the content and form of the "problem" and its disposition are quite different. Discovery of "truth" as a philosophical enterprise takes precedence over the destruction of an opponent's position.

When used in refutation, the field of argument forms available to the philosopher is much narrower, as all *ad rem* arguments lack the logical efficacy of either *argumentum ad hominem* (in Johnstone's sense) and *reductio ad absurdum* (in Ryle's sense).¹⁹ Because they are derived from experience, the former cannot be used in any manner other than establishing an alternative view - they do not, in and of themselves, act to destroy a position. The latter, on the other hand, concentrate on an internal analysis, and are not dependent on the "facts" of experience for their logical potency. Both seek to illustrate logical contradictions entailed by the acceptance of a position.

Tacitly accepting the same constraints on the environment for argument that were imposed by Hare and Ryle, Johnstone broadens the analysis of process to question the very possibility of argument in the philosophical community. Johnstone resolves the difficulties posed by the dilemma he constructs by hypothesizing the existence of the "self" as the locus of controversy: the "self" is empowered to both embrace a philosophical position and to recognize the existence of its opposite. The strength of argument is monitored through the agency of the self, thereby protecting the normative standards of the community from abuse.²⁰ The precondition for *ad hominem* argument is the emergence of the self as the pivot on which controversy turns.

Thus far, argument in the philosophic community has been characterized by its adherence to an environment in which arguments can be analyzed for their consistency, its objective appraisal of argument as product, its emphasis on the discovery of truth, its employment of internal argument forms (*ad hominem* or *reductio ad absurdum*), and the role of the self as the agency through which the argument is conducted. Because argument in this community is neither experiential nor axiomatic, it focuses on abstractions rather than on concrete public policies and values (which are the products of experience). Since the focus is on neither the cultural milieu nor the advocate, the commitment an arguer makes or the risk he or she assumes differs from that assumed in other communities. The arguers agree to express themselves in accordance with the linguistic conventions of their community: while their agreement amounts to intersubjectively shared perceptions of what constitutes appropriate argument, their conduct of argument does little to advance relationships, beyond the norms defined by the community. These arguers respect for the other is aimed at that person's use of clear language and logical reasoning; argument as process merges with argument as product insofar as both

of these standards are met by the persons involved. While each is willing to risk a philosophical position, the risk is premised on rigid standards of what constitutes a "reason for change."

A final question deserves attention: are arguments in the philosophical community rhetorical? The most recent statement by Johnstone regarding his journey "from philosophy to rhetoric and back" is instructive: "To be human, then, is to practice rhetoric... It has long been acknowledged that one person can use rhetoric to call the attention of another to conditions of which he had been unconscious. It is no more than a natural extension of the use of the term to apply it to situations in which the person makes himself attend to data. This reflexive rhetoric must occur wherever consciousness occurs. If philosophers are conscious, they must engage in rhetoric that is at least self-directed."²¹ In Johnstone's view, there is a "rhetorical vector" attendant to all dialogue within the philosophical community: rhetoric serves to *evoke* an awareness of the others' position in a manner which allows dialogue to continue in a rational and deliberate manner. Even though Johnstone allows rhetoric to inhabit the province of philosophical dispute, it should be noted that this is a bilateral rhetoric, and not the unilateral, manipulative, deceitful rhetoric he so clearly rejected in his early writings on the relationship between rhetoric and philosophy.²² Thus, the rhetorical environment, with a focus on argument as product, parallels that advanced by Hare and Ryle; anything less would be "rhetoric" in the pejorative sense in which Hare employed the term. The linguistic confusions which prevail in the social and personal communities remain foreign to the conduct of a philosophical dialogue. Rhetoric is only legitimate as a resident of the philosophical community when the process admits of bilaterality and the argument is phrased clearly and in consistent form.

3. Argument in the Personal Community

As in social argument, personal argument is problematical, derives from a similar stock of argument forms, and seeks to justify belief or action. However, instead of being addressed to collectivities, personal argument addresses individuals. The standards essential for the conduct of such discourse are initially drawn from the same general linguistic rules in effect in the social community. The decision that one must change his or her views is predicated on a criterion of validity *chosen by the participants*. In the social community, the criterion of validity

is derived from the collectivity or "the people;" in the philosophical community, it is imposed on all participants by prior agreement. To conduct a social dispute or a philosophical argument, in the senses these have been explicated here, a person adheres to community judgment. In actuality, only in the personal community are individuals free to embrace standards drawn from other sources (communities) or to create their own set of standards. One implication of this freedom is that there is no "community" present, except in the sense of an aggregate of individuals, each with the same freedom to ignore all standards other than the one agreed upon with a participant in an interchange of views. While the standard chosen may appear absurd or ludicrous to an outsider, it nonetheless remains as a validating force for those agreeing to its strictures. The principal difference between this community and the others lies not in the process of validation, but in the kinds of standards chosen and their potential influence over others not directly involved in the particular argument.

Because of the possibility for each person to be intimately involved in the validation process, arguments in the personal community assume the greatest potential for being risk-bearing and person-building. This community also possesses the possibility, to an extent much greater than that present in other communities, of moving a relationship beyond the mere intersubjective sharing of standards to a communal state or a truly *I-Thou* relationship.

Perceiving argument in process terms is more useful in this community than its perception as a product. The examination of the elemental properties of arguments (reasons plus claims) which was dominant in the philosophical community gives way to an analysis of a person's understanding or construal processes. Two recent attempts to focus attention on a process view have considerable merit: Charles Willard presents a constructivist/interactionist perspective;²³ Dale Hample presents a cognitive based perspective.²⁴ The differences between these are significant: Willard rejects the argument as product view in its entirety in favor of an analysis of the construal process; Hample begins with the assumption that arguments can be assessed in product terms (as syllogisms) and tests evidence's probative potential and the predictability of an audience's adherence to claims. The common focus of the two perspectives is equally important; both examine the individual's reaction to an argument.

4. Conclusion

This essay began with the assumption that the tendency to view process and product perspectives as antagonistic posed unnecessary difficulties for theory building in argument. With the foregoing analysis as a basis for discussion, the nature of argument as process and as product can be more clearly delineated. A recent statement by Willard provides a useful point of departure for elaborating on the contrast between process and product views:

Traditional explanations of the epistemic functions of argument have been based upon a serial predicative view. Arguments were products, units of proof, serials of propositions, "things," having existence apart from the personal perspectives of the people who used them. The constructionist/interactionist view rejects this insistence upon the "thingness" of arguments by focusing upon the personal perspectives of social actors who "are having an argument." My position is not that the analysis of things people say is impossible or unwise but that the analysis and criticism of talk should be guided by assumptions about the most fundamental sense of the term "argument:" as a kind of social interaction.²⁵

In contrast to Willard's view, the objective of this essay has been to suggest the arenas in which process and product perspectives are most useful, and to identify what each term means in the community to which it is applied. There is no particular theoretical stance which encompasses all communities or governs the analysis of argument wherever it occurs. "Process" answers to different meanings and intentions in each community. Likewise, "product," while referring to the form the argument takes, assumes different degrees of importance in each of the communities.

Theoretical explanations of argument in the social community must account for the manner in which argument addresses the collective consciousness of the members of that community. The *process* of argument follows socially derived rules for the conduct of discourse. The critique of argument as product takes place at the *macro* level of analysis: the concern is for the force of argument in shaping societal values, addressing ideological beliefs, etc. Individuals, *qua* individuals, are not the prime concern in such critiques. Contemporary studies of fantasy theme/rhetorical visions and of ideology/myth are typical

of those appropriate in the social community: they go beyond the argument and style of a single person to an analysis of the interaction between rhetoric and the beliefs of the collectivity.

Theoretical explanations of argument in the philosophical community, on the other hand, must account for the possibility of argument and its ability to advance the search for truth. While argument in this domain may be addressed and received on an individual basis, any attempt to map the cognitive structure of the advocates would miss the whole point of the enterprise. Arguments are linguistic properties to be manipulated, whether by one set of individuals or another. Hence, analyses of argument focus attention on the elements of form and language clarity. The standard of validity, agreed upon by the arguers, is one shared by all who would claim residency in the community.

Johnstone's analysis of philosophical argument, while not the only one, is exemplary as a theoretical account. Johnstone hypothesizes a self capable of legitimizing the existence of argument and establishes the sphere of its form in a discussion of the relative potency of *ad rem* and *ad hominem* arguments. While he still denigrates rhetoric which is unilateral, he outlines the evocative function of a rhetoric capable of making persons aware of their and other's presuppositions. This latter sense of rhetoric is the only type fitting for philosophical dispute; all other uses are alien to the environment within the philosophical community.

Theoretical explanations of argument in the personal community must account for the manner in which arguments are constructed. The participants are free to adopt any validation mechanism, hence it becomes more important to understand how they perceive the argument and to predict their probable reaction to it. Cognitive mapping or constructivist assumptions are both relevant to this community. The phenomenal world of situated actors and their co-orientation to each other and the world is more accessible on an individual basis in this community. Accordingly, a process view takes precedence here, just as a product view assumes dominance in the philosophical community. Precedence and dominance does not necessarily imply superiority, nor does it imply rejection of other perspectives. To the extent that one view is emphasized, it may suggest that others are inappropriate as explanations of the nature of argument within the community. The interaction which occurs is on a *micro* level: the concern is for the individuals in the interchange and their particular ways of

construing arguments. Argument as product becomes important only insofar as one is concerned with the predictive potential of the reasons (evidence) offered in support of claims.

One final comment: this essay is unreservedly in favor of a pluralistic approach to argument theory. What is required in future research is less emphasis on the denigration of one theory in favor of a preferred alternative and more attention to precisely where and when a given "theory" is most usefully applied. Hopefully, this essay is a contribution in the latter direction.

Notes

1. G.A. Brutain, "On Philosophical Argumentation", *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 12 (1979), 77.
2. See Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (1977), 121-28; Wayne Brockreide, "Characteristics of Arguments and Arguing," *Ibid.*, 129-32; Charles A. Willard, "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument: The Constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument," *JAFA*, 14 (1978), 124; Brant R. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," *JAFA*, 15 (1979), 137-47.
3. Brutain, 77
4. Henry W. Johnstone, Jr., "Reply to Professor Brutain," *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 12 (1979), 91-94.
5. Charles W. Knuepper, "On Argument and Diagrams," *JAFA*, 14 (1978), 181-86; Charles A. Willard, "Argument as Non-Discursive Symbolism: A Reply to Knuepper," *Ibid.*, 187-93.
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Chapter 27

The Role of Argumentation in Source Credibility

William L. Benoit

1. Introduction

Ever since Aristotle advanced his justly-famous tripartite division of rhetoric into *ethos*, *pathos* and *pragma* (or *logos*),¹ source credibility has been assumed to be distinct from argumentation. Herbert C. Kelman reinforced this assumption through his theory of the three processes of persuasion: compliance, identification, and internalization.² When considered simply from the standpoint of message variables, there are indeed clear distinctions between source credibility and argumentation, as research by Kelman and others documents.³ However, when we adopt the increasingly popular view that the receiver or audience is an important aspect of the rhetorical or persuasive process, we discover that argumentation plays a central role in social influence through communication.

One of the earliest theorists to recognize the importance of audience argumentation (although he did not advance his views in quite this fashion) is William J. McGuire.⁴ Inoculation theory, which employs a medical metaphor to conceptualize the process of creating resistance to persuasion from one's opponents, argues that for an audience to be maximally resistant to persuasion, they must be motivated (by threat or forewarning of the impending attack) and trained (either by example or practice) to refute the arguments of opponents. One particularly interesting result is the so-called "paper-tiger" effect: the defense which produces the greatest amount of immediate attitude change produces the *least* resistance to counter-persuasion. Hence, it appears that the determinant of resistance to persuasive attacks is not necessarily the strength of the receivers' attitude prior to the attack but their motivations and ability to generate arguments against opponents' messages.

The cognitive response model⁵ provides a systematic approach to this conception of the role of audience argumentation in persuasion, and will provide the theoretic framework for the subsequent analysis. This essay argues that, just as active receiver involvement in the form of counter-argument production determines resistance to persuasive attacks, so too does audience argumentation determine the effectiveness of source credibility appeals, traditionally assumed to be outside the realm of argumentation (or ancillary at best). Accordingly, the following section will discuss the cognitive response model, which will then be employed to elucidate the nature of the relationship between source credibility and argumentation.

2. The Cognitive Response Model

The basic tenet of this perspective on persuasion is that receivers actively participate in influence attempts, producing cognitions (thoughts) in response to the stimulus provided by the persuasive communication. These thoughts are arguments which either support or refute the speaker's position (audience thoughts can also be irrelevant to the message). Just as the notion of "attitude" is a mediating variable between persuasive communication and behavior, so too "cognitive response" is a mediating variable between persuasive communication and attitude change.

Greenwald indicates that research has failed to establish high correlations between learning (retention) of message content and persuasion⁶. Love and Greenwald confirm this conclusion and report that both immediate and delayed attitude change correlate with the audience's cognitive responses.⁷ Other evidence also demonstrates that an individual's cognitive responses to persuasive communication are a significant determinant of persuasion.⁸ Cacioppo, Harkins, and Petty point out that additional support for the cognitive response approach includes studies which report that

manipulations that affect cognitive responses also affect persuasion (Calder, et al., 1974; Petty et al., 1976; Roberts & Maccoby, 1971) and ... implementation of statistical procedures to assess causal orderings of cognitive responses and persuasion has indicated that cognitive response may have mediated yielding to persuasion (e.g., Greenwald, 1968b; Osterhouse & Brock, 1970) but that the reverse causal ordering was not

operating (Cacioppo & Petty, 1979a, 1979b; Petty & Cacioppo, 1977).⁹

Therefore, audience-generated supportive and refutative arguments (cognitive responses to persuasive communication) play a key role in mediating the persuasion process.

This is not to claim that message content or arguments are unimportant to persuasion. The claim advanced here is that attitude change is mediated by the audiences' thoughts. If an idea is not cognitively available to the receiver, it can not be expected to have persuasive impact. The persuasive message provides a) the stimulus for development of the receivers' supportive and counter arguments, b) information useful in developing those arguments as well as c) illustrative examples of supportive and/or refutative arguments. Petty and Cacioppo report that under high involvement conditions, strong message arguments create more supportive and fewer refutative thoughts (audience arguments) than weak message arguments, one indication that content is an important factor influencing cognitive responses.¹⁰ Furthermore, while some studies report that audience arguments which cannot be directly traced to the message are the cognitive responses which most influence attitudes change,¹¹ others indicate that audience thoughts which can be traced to the message are most effective.¹² Cacioppo, Harkins & Petty offer the reasonable suggestion that on topics upon which the audience is knowledgeable, the former might be expected to be more effective, while on topics that the audience knows little there is no alternative but to rely on the ideas and information in the message.¹³

The cognitive response model has several important points in its favor. First, for theorists who reject the "hypodermic needle" model of persuasion (i.e., the advocate "injects" the audience with a persuasive message which forces them to change their attitudes), it posits an important and active role for the receiver. Second, it provides explanations for results which are difficult to account for otherwise (for example the curious finding that distraction may *increase* the persuasiveness of a message, discussed below). Third, because it introduces a new mediating variable (rather than simply positing new relationships or orientations toward existing concepts), it is compatible with existing approaches to persuasion. Petty, Ostrom, and Brock explain that it is congenial to the four major approaches to persuasion:

Each of the four traditional approaches can be discussed in cognitive response terms, although the focus of each is different. For example, a learning theorist would propose that a persuasive communication is effective to the extent that the recipients adopt the message's argument as their own cognitive responses. Perceptual theorists would be interested in how a person's pre-existing repertoire of cognitions influences the meaning given to a message. Functional theorists would expect people to have different cognitive responses to the same communication depending on how the communication relates to underlying needs. Consistency theorists would focus on the consistency or inconsistency between the responses elicited by the message and already existing cognitions.¹⁴

The major drawback to the cognitive response model is that it complicates the process of persuasion by introducing another mediating variable. However, this loss is offset by the gain in explanatory power.

For example, as just suggested, under certain conditions, distracting the audience can enhance attitude change. Petty and Brock report that 20 of 22 studies on distraction find that, at least under certain conditions, distraction enhances persuasion.¹⁵ This finding is somewhat difficult to reconcile with an approach which assumes that message content is learned by the receiver - obviously, distraction, if it influences reception, should impede it rather than facilitate it. However, cast into cognitive response terms, this result is perfectly understandable. In each of the seven studies of Petty and Brock's review which assessed the audience's counter-argument production, distraction decreased audience counter-argumentation. Thus, distraction interferes with the ability of the recipient to develop counter-arguments to the speaker's position, not with reception of the message, and the lack of critical thought permits greater attitude change.

Thus, a cognitive response is a receiver-generated argument which can either support or refute the arguments of the message. Message arguments provide the stimulus for production of these audience arguments, as well as making available information and sample arguments. These receiver-generated arguments mediate attitude change, which is correlated with cognitive responses but not with recall of message content. With this conception of the cognitive response model in hand, we can turn to a discussion of source credibility.

3. A Cognitive Response Analysis of Source Credibility

Only one essay has presented a discussion of credibility from the cognitive response perspective.¹⁶ Unfortunately, this treatment fails to consider some of the issues addressed here. Given the claim that it is the recipient's thoughts (supportive and counter arguments) on the topic which mediate attitude change - and not simply message content as measured by recall - then for credibility to influence attitude change it must affect the cognitive processing of that message. According to this view, a source of high credibility mediates attitude change by suppressing counter-argumentation. In other words, the audience is more likely to question a non-credible source than a highly credible one. Thus, high credibility functions analogously to distraction: the latter interferes with the receiver's ability to generate counter-arguments, while the former reduces the receiver's motivation to generate refutative cognitive responses.

In line with this notion, Gillig and Greenwald report that more counter-arguments are produced in response to a message attributed to a low than a high credibility source.¹⁷ It is also consistent with Cook's finding that persuasive communications given by high credibility sources produce fewer than counter-arguments that messages with no source identified, and that such no-source messages stimulate fewer counter-arguments than messages from sources of low credibility.¹⁸ Thus, it appears that source credibility mediates persuasion by making the audience more (or less, in the case of disreputable sources) likely to carefully scrutinize the message (i.e., generate counter-arguments).

This is not to suggest that credibility is the only, or even the most important factor in the persuasion process, only an important one. Audience involvement in the topic is an important variable in the credibility process. Petty, Cacioppo, and Goldman report that on highly involving topics, message arguments produced significant attitude change, while source credibility did not.¹⁹ On uninvolved topics, both source credibility and message arguments create attitude change, but the former is more effective than the latter. It is not surprising that receivers carefully scrutinize messages on a highly salient topic even when the message is attributed to a highly credible source (deferring less to the opinions of an expert source) and that they would expend less effort examining a message on a non-salient topic (choosing instead to defer to the judgment of a source they respect). If the topic is non-salient, deference to a highly credible source permits receivers

to avoid the cognitive effort entailed in developing counter-arguments, while still exercising some control over yielding (i.e., judgment of the source's expertise instead of judgment over cogency of message content).

This analysis of source credibility effects from the standpoint of the cognitive response model and audience-produced argumentation can be employed to explain several patterns of results in the work on this concept. For example, it can readily account for the finding that more attitude change occurs when the source is identified before the message than after. Ward and McGinnies found no difference in attitude change between high and low credible sources when identified after the speech (i.e., it was too late for the knowledge that the speaker is highly credible to suppress counter-arguing in the high credibility condition).²⁰ They also report that early mention of non-credible sources was less persuasive than late mention of non-credible sources, which is consistent with the suggestion made earlier that receivers are likely to listen more critically to a source they know is suspect. The latter finding is reported by Greenberg and Miller and Husek.²¹ Similarly, Sternthal, Dholakia, and Leavitt as well as Greenberg and Tannenbaum report that credibility has no effect on persuasion when the source is identified after the message²². Mills and Harvey also found that expert (but not attractive) sources produce more attitude change when identified before than after the message.²³ The fact that attractive sources are just as persuasive when identified prior to than after the speech can be explained by suggesting that attractive sources are persuasive because of *who* they are; whereas credibility influences persuasion by affecting how critical we are likely to be of *what* they say.²⁴ Note that a conception of source credibility as distinct from cognitive responses (e.g., as additively or multiplicatively related to message content) cannot readily account for these results.

A cognitive response analysis of credibility can also shed light on the suggestion that extrinsic credibility studies are more consistent than those employing the intrinsic credibility paradigm. The first, and more common approach, which Andersen and Clevenger label "extrinsic" credibility, attributes a single message to several sources with different levels of credibility. Since the actual message and its presentation remain constant, any differences in attitude change must be a function of variations in the sources' credibility. The second paradigm, Andersen and Clevenger's "intrinsic" credibility, prepares different messages and/or presentations of a message, assuming that

those differences will generate differential credibility, which in turn will mediate attitude change.²⁵ Support for the former approach is generally positive.²⁶ There are exceptions to be sure (e.g., in forced compliance studies²⁷), but the literature is generally quite consistent in finding that messages attributed to high credible sources are more persuasive than those attributed to non-credible sources.²⁸

However, support for the latter, less common approach, is mixed. Use of the metaphor,²⁹ and evidence,³⁰ fluency and organization,³¹ rate,³² and language diversity,³³ have all been found to enhance both credibility and attitude change. However, Thompson found that a speech might increase a speaker's credibility without increasing attitude change.³⁴ Studies on delivery³⁵ and perceived organization³⁶ report that these variables enhance credibility but not persuasion. Ostermeier reports that increased use of self-reference is associated with greater perceived competence, trustworthiness, and attitude change, while increased use of prestige reference increased trustworthiness but not perceived competence or attitude change.³⁷

This pattern of results is amenable to explanation by the cognitive response analysis of source credibility, advocated here, which suggests that source credibility mediates attitude change by influencing audience argumentation. Hence, credibility induction must take place early enough in the message to influence processing of the message. That is to say, if perceived credibility increases early in the message, the audience will begin to be less critical of that source's ideas (that is, receivers will generate fewer counter-arguments and consequently experience greater attitude change). On the other hand, if credibility is enhanced too late, the audience will already have produced sufficient counter-arguments to inhibit persuasion. Thus, the results which support the intrinsic credibility approach may well come from studies in which the source's credibility was increased early enough to inhibit much of the audience's counter-arguments, while data which do not support it could very well come from studies in which credibility was eventually increased, but not early enough to stop substantial counterarguing.

Although it is convenient to suggest that there is a "point" at which the source's credibility is enhanced, in most cases this is probably a gradual process (e.g., with each use of evidence the audience's opinion of the source rises a bit), although no research has examined this process. Furthermore, although the claim that credibility induction

must occur "early enough" is vague, it is unlikely that more specificity is possible. If there is nothing controversial in the first half of the speech, there is likely to be little counterarguing, and no need for enhanced credibility at that point in the speech. On the other hand, when the beginning is very controversial, even if credibility is increased early on in the speech it may be too late to stop the audience from developing their most effective counter-arguments.

Another result which is amenable to explanation by this analysis of audience-produced argumentation is that sources of moderate credibility are, in some circumstances, more persuasive than ones of high credibility.³⁸ These results all occurred when the speaker advocated a position close to the audience's own attitude (i.e., one of low discrepancy). Sources of high credibility have been found to decrease argument production, as discussed earlier. However, one would expect that *supportive* arguments would be the predominant type of cognitive response to a pro-attitudinal message (small discrepancy). Hence, low credibility sources permit the supportive argumentation necessary for attitude change on pro-attitudinal topics. In line with this analysis, Sternthal, Dholakia, and Leavitt report that more supportive arguments are produced in the moderate credibility condition than in the high credibility condition.³⁹

Summary

The cognitive response model suggests that, in response to the stimulus of argumentative messages, audiences produce supportive or refutative arguments (cognitive responses). These arguments mediate attitude change, and in fact correlate more highly with persuasion than recall of message content. Receivers are more likely to suspect sources of low credibility, and consequently produce more counter-arguments in response to messages attributed to them. On the other hand, receivers are less likely to be critical of sources they respect, and generate fewer refutative arguments in response to their messages. This perspective can be employed to satisfactorily explain several curious patterns of results, to argue generally for the importance of receivers in argumentation and of the cognitive response model generally, and for a greater scope for argumentation than typically assumed in social influence through communication.

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Chapter 28

The Development of Interpersonal Reasoning: An Analysis of Message Strategy Justifications

Brant R. Burleson

Traditionally, argumentation theorists have been concerned with the products of human reasoning, that is, with the statement sets or utterance sequences through which persons make claims and attempt to justify or support these claims. Focusing on such reasoning products is quite legitimate; indeed many issues of traditional and continuing concern in argumentation have meaning only with reference to such reasoning products.

Recently, however, a number of argumentation theorists have advocated that greater attention be given to the interactional process of arguing and the cognitive processes generative of human reasoning products.¹ In particular Willard's ongoing effort to develop a "constructivist/interactionist" theory of argument can be interpreted as an attempt to place often neglected cognitive and interactional processes at the very center of argumentation theory and research.² Although Willard's work perhaps constitutes an over-reaction to viewpoints primarily concerned with human reasoning products,³ it is certainly the case that our understanding of the processes involved in both "making an argument" and "having an argument"⁴ can be considerably enhanced through more detailed examinations of the reasoning processes productive of these social phenomena.

Of course, many researchers both within and outside the speech communication discipline have conducted investigations on various aspects of the reasoning process.⁵ Many of these studies, however, have focused on the extent to which persons employ formal logical models in evaluating experimenter-supplied arguments and the variables that mediate the use and operation of such formal criteria.⁶ In other words, much research has focused on the processing of reasoning products, and generally has not examined the reasoning processes through which such products are themselves generated. Moreover,

such research usually has not been conducted from a developmental viewpoint, thereby precluding analyses of possible structural changes in the reasoning process itself. The omission of developmental considerations in the study of reasoning processes is significant since a very large body of research suggests that such processes do, in fact, undergo marked changes during the childhood and adolescent periods.

Although not frequently considered by argumentation scholars, research conducted within a cognitive-developmental theoretical perspective has given extensive attention to the nature of human reasoning processes and their development. Best known, perhaps, is the seminal work of Piaget who has demonstrated that the child's reasoning processes are quite unlike those of the mature adult, and that in the process of developing toward a mature state the child's reasoning processes pass through a series of hierarchically-ordered structural transformations.⁷

In general, Piaget's research has been restricted to an examination of the development of reasoning processes pertinent to spatial, logical, and physical relations; his best regarded work has focused on such skills as the conservation of mass, object classification, understanding of proportional relations, and so on. Although important, a considerable body of recent empirical research suggests that the nature of and changes in reasoning processes focusing on physical and logical relations are only minimally related to the nature and development of reasoning processes relevant to the world of interpersonal relations.⁸ These findings have led an increasing number of researchers to conduct investigations on developmental changes in reasoning processes directly concerned with aspects of the social world: For example, Kohlberg, Turiel, and Eisenberg-Berg have examined various facets of the development of moral reasoning,⁹ Damon and Moessinger have conducted developmental research on conceptions of property rights and fair distribution of goods,¹⁰ and Selman and Baldwin and Baldwin have studied the development of reasoning about interpersonal relations.¹¹ Because the reasoning products argumentation theorists are frequently interested in concern moral, ethical, and interpersonal issues, this latter body of research appears more relevant than the work focusing on physical and abstract logical relations.

In the present study the work of researchers such as Baldwin and Baldwin and Selman is elaborated and extended by analyzing developmental changes in children's reasoning about their message choices. Previously, most work concerned with the development of facets of interpersonal reasoning has proceeded by asking children to justify a particular behavior or line of action undertaken in response to a

particular situation. The present investigation differs in that features of interpersonal reasoning processes tapped by asking children to justify what they would say, rather than what they would do, in response to specific interpersonal situations. In a sense, then, children are asked to make arguments justifying the appropriateness of their rhetorical choices. Previous research has found that young children tend to focus on relatively concrete and superficial aspects of other persons and situations while older children and adolescents tend to develop more abstract, psychologically-centered understandings of others that reflect an integration of both individual characteristics and features of the situation.¹² Thus, in the present study it was expected that children's message choice justifications would develop from being based on concrete, immediate aspects of the communication context to being based on more enduring psychological qualities of others involved in the situation. In addition, the present investigation also examined the influence of sex and communicative context on the level of interpersonal reasoning displayed in message strategy justifications.

Method

Subjects.

Participants in the study were forty-eight children attending a parochial primary school in a medium-sized midwestern community. Twelve children (six males and six females) from each of the second-, fourth-, sixth-, and eighth-grades were drawn at random from class rosters supplied by school authorities. Due to difficulties with a tape recorder, however, the data from one female in each of the second- and sixth-grades was lost; thus, analyses were based on data from forty-six subjects. As the study was conducted in the late spring, the children were nearing completion of their respective grades. All of the children were Caucasian and were largely from middle- and upper-middle class backgrounds.

Procedures.

All of the children were interviewed individually by the same male interviewer. Each child was taken from the classroom, brought to a quiet room, seated at a table, and allowed to familiarize him or herself with the tape recorder. Each interview was initiated with the child reciting his or her name, age, grade, birthdate, and other basic demographic information.

Each child was then presented with, in random order, four hypothetical situations in which one of their acquaintances was experiencing some kind of emotional distress. The situations described: (1) an instance in which a friend had done poorly on a test on which the interviewed child had done well; (2) a case where a younger sibling or friend had become frightened and upset while watching a scary movie on television; (3) a situation in which a same-age friend was upset because he or she had not been invited to a party the subject had; and (4) an instance where another child in an earlier grade was quite angry because of supposed ill-treatment by a teacher. For example, situation three (the party) stated:

Suppose your friend.....invited you to this big party he/she was having and you were real excited about this. You went running up to another of your friends,.....and said, "Hey,.....! You want to ride with my mom and I to's party?" But after you asked, he/she said, "No, I guess not," and turned around and just walk away.

With situations one (the test) and three, a visual depiction of a sad, depressed looking child of the appropriate sex was used to reinforce the nature of the other's affect state, while situations two (the scary t.v. show) and four (the friend's ill-treatment by a teacher) used a number of explicit emotional terms (e.g., frightened, scared, upset, angry) to convey the others's affect state.

After the situation had been described to the child a number of questions were asked to determine (1) the child's understanding of the situation, (2) what the child would do or say in the situation, and, most importantly for present purposes, (3) *why* the child would do or say what he/she did. Although the precise wording of the questions varied according to the child's response, the child was generally asked the following series of questions:

- (1) Why would do that? How would feel in this situation? Why?
- (2) Would you do anything in this situation? What? What could you say to make feel better?
- (3) Do you think what you said would make feel better? Why? Tell me why what you said would make feel better.

Subjects whose responses to question set one indicated that they did not understand the nature of the situation and the affect state of the acquaintance had the situation repeated. Also, children who did not spontaneously use verbal communication as a means of managing the situation were asked "to suppose they wanted to make their friend feel better just by talking to him/her;" these subjects were then probed for the rationale for their message.

A number of other tasks not related to the present report were also completed during the interview session. On average, the interviews lasted approximately thirty minutes.

Coding.

A six-level hierarchical coding system was developed to assess structural development changes in the children's interpersonal reasoning as implied by the message rationales. Derived, in part, from the message rationale coding systems reported by Applegate¹³ and O'Keefe and Delia¹⁴ the present system is premised on the assumption that reasoning about affect-laden interpersonal situations progresses from concern about relatively surface features of situations, through focus on purely personal qualities of the actors involved, to an orientation wherein features of both persons and situations are integrated and taken into account. This notion is supported by the extensively replicated finding that with advances in age and social experience children come to form increasingly organized impressions of others that progressively represent and integrate variable and potentially inconsistent information.¹⁵

As noted above, the present coding system is composed of six hierarchically ordered levels. Cases where the child was unable to provide a rationale for his or her behavioral strategy were scored at Level Zero. At Level One message strategies were justified on the basis of general objective features of the situation with little or no regard for the other involved party; rationales at this level frequently took the form of a general principle or rule deemed relevant to the type of situation at hand: e.g., (test) "I'd tell him to study harder because if he doesn't, he'll keep on getting bad grades"; (t.v.) "Say it's just a movie. (Why?) Cause movies aren't real, they can't hurt people." Level Two rationales justify elicited message strategies on the basis of the feelings, desires, or needs of the other without regard for specific features of the other's situation; e.g., (party) "Say that she could have my cake at lunch. (Why?) Cause she likes cake a lot"; or (test) "I'd ask him to come over to my house to play. (Why?) Well, that would get flunking the test off his mind." Rationales scored at Level Three

represented emergent integrations of personal and situational factors; at this level message justifications were based on how a "generalized other" or most people would experience the particular situation: e.g., (party) "I'd tell him I wouldn't go to the party either. (Why?) Well, he probably feels bad because he thinks he was the only one not going to the party. But if I don't go he won't be the only one not there"; or (teacher) "I'd tell her the teacher was just mean - mean to lots of people. (Why?) Cause she probably thinks the teacher really has it in for her, but if she knows the teacher's just like that she won't feel so picked on." Level Four rationales contain elaborated integrations of personal and situational factors based on how a particular, highly individuated other would experience the situation: e.g., (test) "I'd tell her it was just one test and it really didn't matter that much - really didn't mean that much. (Why?) Well, she's always been real smart and done better than me in school. So she feels bad cause this time I beat her, so I'd tell her it didn't matter"; or (TV) "Say I was getting scared too. That's why I turned the TV off. (Why?) Cause she wants to feel grown up, but got scared like a kid, and so got to feeling kind of embarrassed. So if I told her I was scared too she'd think, 'I'm not the only one scared of this,' and get over it." Level Five rationales contain Level Four justifications, and further justify strategies on the basis of providing suggestions for kinds of actions that would help the other to deal with future similar situations in a positive way. However, no message rationales in the present data set were coded at this high level.

Each rationale offered for a strategy was coded within this six-level system. In cases where multiple rationales were offered for a single strategy or multiple strategies and rationales were used for a single situation, the single highest rationale for that situation was scored. Two coders independently scored twenty of the message rationales for reliability purposes; 85% exact agreement on assignment to level was attained. Prior to analysis, differences in coding were resolved by consensus.

Results

The developmental analysis of levels of interpersonal reasoning was carried out with a $4 \times 2 \times 4$ analysis of variance with repeated measures on the last factor. The two between-groups factors were Grade-level and Sex of subject, and the within-subjects factor was Communicative Situation.

As expected, the analysis of variance revealed a highly significant main effect for the factor of Grade-level [$F(3,38) = 9.56, p <.001$; see table 1]. As noted in table 1, this factor explained over one-third of the variability in level of interpersonal reasoning. A Newman-Keuls analysis indicated that significant increases in level of interpersonal reasoning came between grades two and four ($\bar{X}_s = 1.16$ and 1.98 , respectively, $p <.05$) and grades six and eight ($\bar{X}_s = 2.02$ and 2.58 , respectively, $p <.05$). This pattern of means suggests a general linear trend in the increase of level of interpersonal reasoning over the age groups studied. Trend analysis (three-level polynomial regression) conformed this effect: only the linear effect of Grade-level on interpersonal reasoning was significant [$F(1,42) = 23.75, p <.001$; the linear component of the Grade-level trend accounted for 34.21 percent of the variability in level of interpersonal reasoning].

TABLE 1
Summary of the analysis of variance on highest-level of interpersonal reasoning

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square		F	Prob.	Omega ^{2*}	Power**
Grade (A)	46.36	3	14.45	9.56	.001	.36	-----	
Sex (B)	7.54	1	7.54	4.66	.05	.07	-----	
A X B	2.11	3	0.70	0.43	ns	---	.18.44	
Residual	61.46	38	1.62					
Situation (C)	16.21	3	5.40	9.01	.001	.15	-----	
A X C	7.79	9	0.87	1.44	ns	---	.57,.97	
B X C	1.21	3	0.40	0.67	ns	---	.68,.99	
A X B X C	5.96	9	0.66	1.10	ns	---	.27,.69	
Residual	68.37	114	0.60					

* For significant effects only

** For nonsignificant effects only, $\alpha = 0.05$. For each nonsignificant effect, the first entry in each row denotes the power of the test when assuming a medium effect size ($f = .30$); the second entry denotes the power of the test when assuming a large effect size ($f = .50$).

The analysis of variance also indicated that females justified their message choices at a significantly higher level than did males [$\bar{X}_s = 2.07$ and 1.74 for females and males, respectively; $F(1,38) = 4.66$, $p <.05$]. However, it is important to note that the magnitude of the observed sex differences, although statistically reliable, are not particularly large; the variable of sex only explains seven percent of the variability in level of interpersonal reasoning (see table 1).

Finally, the analysis of variance detected a significant main effect for Communicative Situation [$F(3,114) = 9.01$, $p <.001$]. This effect accounts for approximately 15 percent of the variability in level of interpersonal reasoning (see table 1). A Newman-Keuls analysis indicated that the TV, Test, and Party situations ($\bar{X}_s = 1.96$, 2.00 , and 2.33 , respectively) elicited significantly ($p <.05$) higher levels of interpersonal reasoning than did the Teacher situation ($\bar{X} = 1.50$). Mean reasoning levels on the TV, Test, and Party situations did not differ from one another significantly.

To summarize, the main effects of the three factors included in the study accounted for 58 percent of the variability in level of interpersonal reasoning. Age made the greatest contribution to explaining interpersonal reasoning levels, followed by the Communicative Situation factor and Sex, respectively. None of the interaction effects among the three independent factors approached levels of statistical significance. Although the failure to detect any significant interaction effects may be partially due to the relatively low power for some of the specific interactions (e.g., Grade-level X Sex; see table 1), most of the interaction effects failed to attain levels of statistical significance due to very small effect sizes. Moreover, low power for some of the interaction effects is not particularly problematic given that no significant interactions were anticipated.

Discussion

Beyond confirming the study's primary hypothesis regarding the relationship between age and level of interpersonal reasoning, the results are suggestive in a number of respects. Importantly, the age spans where major advances in level of interpersonal reasoning occurred generally coincide with the ages at which previous investigations have documented significant advances in the abstractness of interpersonal constructs.¹⁶ This suggests that developing advanced levels of interpersonal reasoning may be dependent upon developing relatively abstract dimensions for interpreting and evaluating others' characteristics and

behaviors. Indeed, other research has found moderate to high associations between level of message justifications and construct system abstractness in adult populations.¹⁷ Future research should examine in greater detail the precise social-cognitive processes contributing to the development of advanced levels of interpersonal reasoning.

Although level of interpersonal reasoning was found to advance substantially over the age groups studied, very sophisticated forms of such reasoning were not displayed even within the oldest age group. On the average, eighth-graders employed Level Three message justifications, rationales that justify communicative choices on the basis of how a "generalized other" would experience a situation without consideration of more specific, individualized personality attributes and particular features of the situation. Research on both interpersonal reasoning antecedents (e.g., construct system differentiation and abstractness) and consequents (e.g., listener-adapted communication skills and prosocial behaviors) have found that these skills and abilities continue to develop into late adolescence.¹⁸ Thus, it is reasonable to assume that interpersonal reasoning processes also will continue to develop throughout adolescence.

The finding that females employ more advanced interpersonal reasoning processes than do males is consistent with several studies that have found females to possess more differentiated and abstract interpersonal construct systems than their male counterparts.¹⁹ Presumably, cultural norms and traditions lead females to develop a greater investment in the domain of interpersonal relations, and this investment leads them to elaborate relatively more sophisticated interpersonal cognitive structure and reasoning processes.

Level of interpersonal reasoning was significantly lower on the "Teacher" situation than on the other three communicative situations. The Teacher situation described an incident in which acquaintance of the subject was complaining about unfair treatment from a teacher the subject knew. Numerous studies have shown that children tend to revere and defer to authority figures such as teachers.²⁰ In the Teacher situation, then, sensitive reasoning about the distressed acquaintance's characteristics and situation may have competed with the child's natural deference to authority figures. This result is important in highlighting how contextual variables such as the status of those involved in such a situation mediate an individual's level of interpersonal reasoning "competence." Significantly, similar contextual variables have also been shown to affect persons' social perception acuity²¹ and communicative sensitivity.²²

In sum, the present results strongly affirm the utility of a perspective focusing on developmental and individual differences in interpersonal reasoning processes. This perspective may be especially beneficial for those interested in the analysis and criticism of arguments made and conducted by naive social actors in natural social situations. The rationales persons employ in justifying their communicative choices can provide considerable insight into the interpretive schemes that constitute "data" in interpersonal situations, the rules of action or "warrants" that guide a response to those situations, and how such data and warrants vary as a function of age, cultural experiences, and specific features of the communicative context.

Notes

1. Those emphasizing an increased focus on the interactional processes of arguing include Wayne Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 9 (Spring 1975), 179-182; Brockriede, "Characteristics of Argument and Arguing," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Winter 1977), 129-132; Brant R. Burleson, "On the Foundations of Rationality: Toulmin, Habermas, and the A Priori of reason," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 16 (Fall 1979), 112-127; Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs, "Adjacency Pairs and the Sequential Description of Arguments," paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, 1977; Scott Jacobs and Sally Jackson, "Collaborative Aspects of Argument Production," paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, 1979; Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Winter, 1977), 121-128; and Joseph Wenzel, "Jürgen Habermas and the Dialectical Perspective on argumentation," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 16 (Fall 1979), 83-94. Other theorists have suggested considerably more detailed analyses of the cognitive processes employed in generating and evaluating argument structures; for example, see Jesse G. Delia, "The Logic Fallacy, Cognitive Theory and the Enthymeme: A Search for the Foundations of Reasoned Discourse," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 140-148; Dale Hample, "Testing a Model of Value Argument and Evidence," *Communication Monographs*, 44 (1977), 106-120; Hample, "Predicting Immediate Belief Change and Adherence to

Argument Claims," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978), 219-228; and Hample, "Predicting Belief and Belief Change Using a Cognitive Theory of Argument and Evidence," *Communication Monographs*, 46, (1979), 142-146.

2. Charles A. Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1976), 308-319; "A Reformulation of the Concept of Argument: The Constructivist/Interactionist Foundations of a Sociology of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (Winter 1978), 121-140; "Argument as Non-Discursive Symbolism," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (Spring 1978), 187-193; "The Epistemic Functions of Argument: Reasoning and Decision-Making from a Constructivist/Interactionist Point of View," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 15 (Spring 1979), 211-219; and "Propositional Argument is to Argument What Talking about Passion is to Passion," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 16 (Summer 1979), 21-28.

3. Willard's position is critically examined in Brant R. Burleson, "On the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments: Some Theoretical and Methodological Considerations," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 15 (Winter 1979), 137-147; Burleson, "The Place of Non-Discursive Symbolism, Formal Characterizations and Hermeneutics in Argument Analysis and Criticism," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 16 (Spring 1980), 222-231; Charles W. Kneupper, "On Argument and Diagrams," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 14 (Spring 1978), 181-186; and Kneupper, "Paradigms and Problems: Alternative Constructivist/Interactionist Implications for Argumentation Theory," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 15 (Spring 1979), 220-227.

4. The distinction between "making an argument" or producing a type of utterance structure and "having an argument" or engaging in a specific form of interaction is made by O'Keefe.

5. For general reviews of the literature on reasoning research, see Paul N. Johnson-Laird and Percy C. Wason, *Thinking: Readings in Cognitive Science* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1977); and Percy C. Wason and Paul N. Johnson-Laird, *Psychology of Reasoning: Structure and Content* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1972).

6. Representative studies include Loren J. Chapman and Jean P. Chapman, "The Atmosphere Effect Re-examined", *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 58 (1959), 220-226; Vernon E. Cronen and Nancy Mihevc, "The Evaluation of Deductive Argument: A Process Analysis," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 124-131; Mary Henle, "On the Relation Between Logic and Thinking," *Psychological Review*, 69 (1962), 366-378; and William J. Morgan and Antonia B. Morgan, "Logical Reasoning: With and Without Training," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 37 (1953), 399-401. This specific literature has been reviewed by Gerald R. Miller, "Some Factors Influencing Judgments of the Logical Validity of Arguments: A Research Review," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 55 (1969), 276-286; and more recently by Dale Hample, "A Review of Empirical Literature on Logical Processes," paper presented at the annual convention of the Speech Communication Association, 1979.
7. A cogent summary of Piaget's work is presented in Jean Piaget, "Piaget's Theory", in *Carmichael's Manual of Child Psychology*, vol. 1, ed. Paul H. Mussen (New York: Columbia University Press, 1970). Also, see Herbert Ginsburg and Sylvia Opper, *Piaget's Theory of Intellectual Development*, 2nded. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1979), esp. chp. 1.
8. Studies supporting this conclusion are reviewed in Lawrence W. Kurdek, "Perspective Taking as the Cognitive Basis of Children's Moral Development: A Review of the Literature," *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*, 24 (1978), 3-28; and Carolyn U. Shantz, "The Development of Social Cognition," in *Review of Child Development Research*, vol. 5, ed. E. Mavis Heatherington (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).
9. Lawrence Kohlberg, "Stage and Sequence: The Cognitive-Developmental Approach to Socialization," in *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research*, ed. David A. Goslin (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969); Elliot Turiel, "Distinct Conceptual and Developmental Domains: Social Convention and Morality," in *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 1977: Social-Cognitive Development*, ed. Charles B. Keasey (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1978); and Nancy Eisenberg-Berg, "Development of Children's Prosocial Moral Judgment," *Developmental Psychology*, 15 (1979), 128-137.

10. William Damon, *The Social World of the Child* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1977), chp. 3; and Pierre Moessinger, "Developmental Study of Fair Division and Property," *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 5 (1975), 385-394.
11. Robert L. Selman, "Toward a Structural Analysis of Developing Interpersonal Relations Concepts: Research with Normal and Disturbed Preadolescent Boys," in *Minnesota Symposia on Child Psychology*, vol. 10, ed. Anne D. Pick (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976); and Clara P. Baldwin and Alfred L. Baldwin, "Children's Judgments of Kindness," *Child Development*, 41 (1970), 29-47.
12. This finding has been replicated by researchers representing a wide variety of research traditions; for example, see Jesse G. Delia, Brant R. Burleson, and Susan L. Kline, "Developmental Changes in Children's and Adolescents' Interpersonal Impressions," *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, in press; W. J. Livesley and D. B. Bromley, *Person Perception in Childhood and Adolescence* (London: Wiley, 1973); Barbara H. Peevers and Paul N. Secord, "Developmental Change in Attribution of Descriptive Concepts to Persons," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 27 (1973), 120-128; and Helaine H. Scarlett, Alan N. Press, and Walter H. Crockett, "Children's Descriptions of Peers: A Wernerian Developmental Analysis," *Child Development*, 42 (1971), 439-453. Also, see many of the references cited in Delia, Burleson, and Kline.
13. James L. Applegate, "Four Investigations of the Relationship Between Social-Cognitive Development and Person-Centered Regulative and Interpersonal Communication," unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois, 1978. Also, see James L. Applegate and Jesse G. Delia, "Person-Centered Speech, Psychological Development, and the Contexts of Language Usage," in *The Social and Psychological Contexts of Language*, ed. Robert St. Clair and Howard Giles (Hillsdale, N.J.: Erlbaum, 1980 in press).
14. Barbara J. O'Keefe and Jesse G. Delia, "Construct Comprehensiveness and Cognitive Complexity as Predictors of the Number and Strategic Adaption of Arguments and Appeals in a Persuasive Message," *Communication Monographs*, 46 (1979), 231-240.
15. For example, see Alan N. Press, Walter H. Crockett, and Jesse G. Delia, "Effects of Cognitive Complexity and Perceiver's Set Upon

the Organization of Impressions," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 32 (1975), 865-872; and Delia, Burleson and Kline.

16. See Delia, Burleson, and Kline and Scarlett, Press and Crockett.

17. See Applegate, "Four Investigations"; and O'Keefe and Delia.

18. The development of more complex and abstract systems of interpersonal constructs during adolescence is documented by Delia, Burleson, and Kline. Two recently published studies report important advances in listener adapted communication skills during the adolescent period; see Jesse G. Delia, Susan L. Kline, and Brant R. Burleson, "The Development of Persuasive Communication Strategies in Kindergartners through Twelfth-Graders," *Communication Monographs*, 46 (1979), 241-256; and Ellen M. Ritter, "Social Perspective Taking Ability, Cognitive Complexity, and Listener Adapted Communication in Adolescence," *Communication Monographs*, 46 (1979), 40-51. Evidence suggesting an increase in the proclivity to behave "prosocially" or altruistically during adolescence is reported in Francis P. Green and Frank W. Schnieder, "Age Differences in the Behavior of Boys on Three Measures of Altruism," *Child Development*, 45 (1974), 248-251.

19. See Walter H. Crockett, "Cognitive Complexity and Impression Formation," in *Progress in Experimental Personality Research*, vol. 2, ed. Brendan A. Maher (New York: Academic Press, 1965); Brian R. Little, "Factors Affecting the Use of Psychological versus Non-Psychological Constructs on the Rep Test," *Bulletin of the British Psychological Society*, 21 (1968), 34; and Delia, Burleson, and Kline.

20. See Kohlberg.

21. David J. Bearison, "Intraindividual Variation in the Coordination of Social Perspectives," *Social Behaviour and Personality*, 4 (1976), 309-314.

22. James L. Applegate, "Person-and-Position-Centered Teacher Communication in a Day Care Center," in *Studies in Symbolic Interaction*, vol. 3, ed. Norman K. Denzin (Greenwich, Conn., JAI Press, in press).

Introduction: Pragmatics of Argument

The study of pragmatics concerns the relationship between language structure and principles of language usage (Levinson, 1983). Much of the work in pragmatics involves speech acts. To say that language operates as a speech act is to convey that talk accomplishes action, that it performs particular functions for interactants. Two basic issues form the foundation for speech act theory: (a) a differentiation between locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts, and (b) a set of rules (i.e., felicity conditions) for performing a particular act that make it recognizable and correct.

Three acts are simultaneously performed by an utterance. The locutionary act is the utterance of a sentence with propositional content. The illocutionary act is the utterance of a sentence with a particular force (e.g., offer, promise, request). The perlocutionary act is the effect of uttering the sentence. For example, in uttering the sentence "Will you give it to me?", the locutionary act refers to the meanings attached to each of the words (e.g., that "me" is to refer to me). The sentence also functions as a request and this is the illocutionary act. One possible perlocutionary effect could be the acceptance of the request by the hearer. Speech act has come to refer to the illocutionary act.

Speech act theorists also set out rules for insuring that the performance of acts will be recognizable and properly committed. These rules are labelled felicity conditions. In the introduction to section V. (*Individual and Social Viewpoints on Argument*), we described the felicity conditions of a promise. Another type of act is a request and includes stipulations such as (a) the speaker believes the hearer can do the action requested, (b) the speaker believes that the hearer will not do the request without being asked, (c) the speaker wants the hearer to do the action, and (d) the speaker believes the hearer is willing to do the action. Searle (1976) identifies five types of action that can be performed in utterances (i.e., representatives, directives, commissives, expressives, declarations).

The first article in this section is a pair of essays delivered by van Eemeren and Grootendorst following a panel at the Fourth SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation. These remarks make clear

that the purpose of this speech act theory is normative, specifying a code of conduct for rational discussions. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst seek to improve the practice of argumentation. Argumentation is defined by the inclusion of functionalization, externalization, socialization, and dialectification. Functionalization recognizes that argumentation is a purposeful activity. Externalization locates argument in the verbal expression of opinions. Socialization acknowledges that argumentation is a dialogue between interactants. Dialectification specifies that pro and contra-argumentation be acceptable to a reasonable judge. Van Eemeren responds briefly to the issues raised by Jackson (1985), most notably that this theory of argumentation treats all speech acts at the sentence level as assertives. Grootendorst raises a number of questions and provides some answers about unexpressed premises.

Van Eemeren and Grootendorst modify speech acts to explain argumentation. They define argumentation as an activity consisting of a series of utterances that justify or refute opinions for the purpose of resolving a dispute. Speech act theory requires modification for their interests because it's limited to the level of the sentence rather than the more complex level of the text. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst indicate that sentences in argumentation are linked together and that the text as a whole has an illocutionary force that is distinct from the illocutionary force of individual sentences. Thus, argumentation is a complex illocutionary act and the felicity conditions for this act can be specified. When a speaker justifies an opinion, pro-argumentation is performed; when a speaker refutes an opinion, contra-argumentation is enacted. The felicity conditions for pro-argumentation include specifications such as (a) the speaker believes the listener does not accept the opinion, (b) the speaker believes the listener will accept the propositions to be uttered, (c) the speaker believes the opinion. Complementary felicity conditions for contra-argumentation include (a) the speaker believes the listener accepts the opinion, (b) the speaker believes the listener will accept the propositions to be offered, and (c) the speaker does not believe the opinion. The intended perlocutionary effect of pro or contra-argumentation is acceptance by the listener.

In the next essay, van Eemeren adopts a topographical metaphor and sketches the five "estates" of the realm of a full approach to argumentation. Each of the estates is an area for research but a complete treatment of argumentation is seen to require an integration of the five estates: philosophical, theoretical, reconstruction, empirical, and practical. In each estate, a New Rhetoric perspective is contrasted

with the New Dialectic perspective. Only the latter will be highlighted here since it is preferred by van Eemeren and Grootendorst.

Each estate concerns a central question posed to argumentation scholars. The philosophical estate asks when argumentation is to be regarded as acceptable. The New Dialectic answers that argumentation is acceptable when it succeeds in resolving a dispute according to a set of rules by which parties abide. The theoretical estate inquires about the resources that can be used to systematically evaluate argumentation. The New Dialectic looks to an ideal model of discussion and a code of conduct. The reconstruction estate questions how to clarify argumentative discourse. The New Dialectic response is a series of dialectical transformations. The empirical estate invites examination of argumentative reality and focuses on determining factors that affect the convincingness of argumentation. The practical estate asks how practice can be improved and the answer is that scholars can promote critical discussions and encourage the examination of argumentation.

The purpose of the next essay by van Eemeren and Grootendorst is to demonstrate the usefulness of a speech act perspective in the study of argumentation. This is accomplished by revisiting the five estates detailed by van Eemeren. Speech act theory is considered appropriate for examining the philosophical estate because the rules for a critical discussion are designed to be successful and acceptable to interactants attempting to resolve a dispute. In the theoretical estate, a model is developed that specifies the speech acts to be performed at particular stages of the discussion. Similarities between speech act conditions and more general conversational practices are explored. The reconstruction estate examines everyday argumentation through reconstituting argumentative discourse as a critical discussion by submitting it to dialectical transformations. The empirical estate examines the speech acts used to meet the requirements of the individual and those required by reality. The practical estate also benefits from a speech act perspective that enhances the functionality of language and offers a practical explanation of fallacies as possible threats to the resolution of a dispute. Thus, this paper traces how a modified speech act perspective informs the New Dialectic presented in van Eemeren and Grootendorst's writings.

Through this series of papers, you can follow the development of the New Dialectic approach to argumentation. This perspective is sometimes referred to as the Pragma Dialectical Approach because the use of speech acts clearly provides a pragmatic element while the focus on reconstructing argumentative discourse as critical discussions emphasizes the dialectic. A more detailed treatment is available

in van Eemeren and Grootendorst's (1984) *Speech acts in argumentative discussions: A theoretical model for the analysis of discussions directed towards solving conflicts of opinion*. Other essays develop particular aspects and implications of the New Dialectic. For example, on fallacies, see van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1987a, 1987b) and Grootendorst (1987). Additional readings on dialectical analysis are available in van Eemeren (1986, 1987). Critiques of this approach (Jackson, 1985; Wenzel, 1985) question the reduction of argument to assertions, the applicability of the ideal model to real life, and the rigidity of the rules specified by the ideal model.

In the final essay in this section, Jackson and Jacobs' pragmatic analysis of arguments is also based on a speech act perspective. Arguments are seen as rule governed events designed to manage disagreement. Their analysis is rooted in the fundamentals of conversational structure. Conversation is organized by related pairs of speech acts, known as adjacency pairs. These pairs normally exhibit a preference for agreement; but, in arguments, disagreement occurs and must be repaired. Disagreement may be about the proposition or the performance of the speech act. In the latter case, the felicity conditions of the speech act performed provide the grounds for arguing. For example, a request may be rejected if the hearer can't do the action requested, the hearer is unwilling to do the action, or if the speaker is perceived as not actually wanting the hearer to do the action. Thus, arguments can be expanded along predictable lines. This analysis provides a pragmatic explanation of enthymemes (i.e., typically arguments with suppressed premises). Jackson and Jacobs reason that interactants negotiate the support necessary to get agreement. When agreement is reached and certain claims don't emerge, it is because the partner does not object to those claims and not because the audience supplied the missing premise. If you're interested in additional readings on the structure of arguments, see Jackson (1987), Jacobs (1987), Jackson & Jacobs (1981).

The New Dialectic of van Eemeren and Grootendorst and the Structural approach of Jackson and Jacobs share assumptions about argumentation. Arguments are social activities that occur between interactants. Thus, both adapt speech act theory to accommodate dialogue (i.e., interaction, text). Van Eemeren and Grootendorst introduce the complex illocutionary act while Jackson and Jacobs prefer the adjacency pair structure. Arguments are seen as external. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst look to the verbal expressions of attitudes and Jackson and Jacobs are careful to distinguish argument practices from reasoning processes. In the use of speech act theory,

both provide pragmatic analyses that acknowledge the functionalization of argumentation. Van Eemeren and Grootendorst utilize speech act theory to prescribe the speech acts acceptable at various stages of discussion and the felicity conditions of pro and contra-argumentation. Jackson and Jacobs account for the grounds of arguing by reference to the felicity conditions of the speech acts.

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Chapter 29

Response of Frans H. van Eemeren

Frans H. van Eemeren

(Editor's Note: Frans H. van Eemeren's remarks followed papers by Susan Kline, Sally Jackson, and Joseph Wenzel on van Eemeren and Grootendorst's book *Speech Acts in argumentative Discussions* (1984) at the Fourth SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation at Alta (1985). Van Eemeren's remarks have been assembled from notes and transcription.)

Reminding ourselves of the old preacher's proverb "After twenty minutes no more souls are saved", Rob and I will try to say a few things in response to the comments on our book made by Susan Kline, Sally Jackson and Joe Wenzel, and we'll try to be brief.

It's difficult to respond "a capella" as it was called earlier. Of course we would have liked to respond in greater detail but first we'll have to think on those things being said today.

First of all, I must apologize for our English. We are taught English at school, but we don't speak it very often, so we lack practice. [To speak offhandedly is - of course - especially difficult.] That is why we scribbled down a few notes in advance and we will be adding some comments on the contributions of Susan Kline, Joseph Wenzel, and Sally Jackson while talking. We can talk about a great variety of subjects, but in view of the time available a choice has to be made. We are anxious to discuss other topics at the Amsterdam Conference next year.

Rob Grootendorst and I are most pleased with the attention given to our book and we are pleasantly surprised at the degree of agreement between American scholars and ourselves. In our opinion there appear to be no substantial differences of opinion on the main issues between

Kline, Jackson and Wenzel, and ourselves. Therefore, we would like to seize the opportunity to stress some points we consider of particular importance with regard to *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* and we would like to offer you some information about our research scheme and the current state of affairs in our research. As a matter of fact we finished the work on *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* in 1981 and we have done quite a great deal of research as a follow-up, mostly published in Dutch. By no means did we mean the book to be an all-embracing and everlasting complete whole. It was meant to be a starting-point for further research. And so it proved to be. *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* provided the basis for several kinds of publications and continued research in the Netherlands.

I shall now tell you briefly what happened after we finished *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions*, leaving out the particulars. Later on, Rob Grootendorst will tell you something more about our opinion on some topics which are specially relevant in view of the remarks made earlier. Apart from sketching an overall picture of the development in our research, I may be mentioning (if time permits) some often overlooked characteristics of dialectical analysis which we consider of great importance.

In our study, argumentation theory is linked to speech communication, although we dropped the speech communication part in the English translation (because it was very much adjusted to the circumstances in The Netherlands). We try to connect problems from argumentation theory as well as formal dialectics with speech act theory, and with the Gricean ideas about implicatures, and with discourse analysis.

The intention behind *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* is to make a contribution to the theoretical analysis of argumentation conducted for the purpose of resolving disputes, by formulating a code of conduct for rational discussants. Such analysis is necessary if one is to be able to make sensible suggestions for the improvement of the practice of discussion, one of the objects of the study of communication. Answering Professor Joe Wenzel, we can assure him that the model is not meant *in this form* to be an exemplary model for real discussants. It is, in our opinion, of crucial importance for public life that people be critical of argumentation; so, we would like to create a frame of mind (and of reference) which furthers a critical attitude toward argumentation - political or otherwise, but political

in particular. We are trying to develop instruments for letting people know in an systematic way what to look for in a discussion or a speech. We would want our system to be important for someone not primarily interested in rhetoric but in the issue which is at stake. An adequate approach to argumentative language usage that will accord with the starting points for speech communication research preferred by Rob Grootendorst and myself is only possible if the subject of investigation is functionalized, externalized, socialized, and dialectified.

Functionalization means that argumentation is treated as a purposive language usage activity. *Externalization* means that argumentation is linked to the verbal *expression* of attitudes, viewpoints and opinions. *Socialization* means that argumentation is regarded as a component of a *dialogue* with a language user who reacts to the argumentation, and *dialectification* means that argumentation is placed in the context of a *critical discussion* in which both pro- and contra-argumentation can be advanced so that a regimented interaction of speech acts takes place.

A language user is rational if during the discussion he performs only speech acts which are compatible with a system of rules acceptable to all discussants which furthers the creation of a dialectic capable of leading to a resolution of the dispute at the center of the discussion. It is obvious that the rational language user postulated in *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* and the model which is outlined for a rational discussion represent an ideal attuned to the resolution of disputes with a great deal of abstraction and even deviation from reality. Generally speaking, all research efforts from our part after finishing *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* have been aimed at finding ways to bridge, or at least narrow, the gap between normative theoretical insights and empirical argumentative practice. This has been tried in various ways. Here I can only touch in some salient examples.

To begin with, I return to the required functionalization of the subject of investigation. The starting point here is the standard version of Searle's speech act theory, various points of which are in *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* amended and augmented. A distinction is made between communicational and interactional aspects of language use. Communicative aspects relate to the illocutionary effect that the listener *understands* the performed speech act and interactional aspects relate to the perlocutionary effect that the listener *accepts*

the speech act and acts accordingly. This perlocutionary effect is part of the conventional speech act itself, as distinct from any other possible consequences.

In 1983 we published a book - it's written in Dutch - in which we used these theoretical concepts to develop a normative pragmatic frame of reference for a general introduction to speech communication and argumentative analysis. Anyone familiar with the problems facing somebody who tries to apply the Searlean speech act theory to analyse real life everyday discourse, will understand that quite a few adaptions have to be provided to make it work. I do think we certainly made a lot of progress in this respect, although it is perfectly obvious that much more research is yet required. So far we have done a bit of conversational analysis, related to the work of Jacobs and Jackson, and we have carried out several pencil and paper tests and psycholinguistic experiments concerning the identification of arguments and suppressed premises, profiting from research such as Johnson-Laird's, Van Dijk's, and Kintsch's, etc.

Our 1983 book is a textbook of use in university classes, so we also had to pay a lot of attention to the didactics and we had to add a number of practical exercises, adequately reflecting the critical rationalistic approach we would like to advocate.

The 1983 book is the first of a series of three books. It provides the necessary equipment for analyzing expository texts and argumentative discussions. Topics discussed are, for example, argumentation structure, argument identification, and the explicitization of suppressed premises.

The second book of this series, to be published this year, deals with fallacies. Just as in *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* fallacies are being treated as a violation of a code of conduct for rational discussants. Rob Grootendorst will tell you more about it.

The third and last book of the series will deal with argumentation schemata. It is comparable in a way with, for instance, Windes and Hastings. In it several types of arguments are distinguished. Each type, in our opinion, is characterized by a certain argumentation schema, implying certain critical questions.

All these books are a result of our scientific research, often carried out in co-operation with other members of our staff, and the results

of these surveys have been published or will be published in the Dutch Journal of Speech Communication. Maybe we can publish some of the results in English as well. Finally, I would like to mention another project of ours. That is the study of argumentation in the context of law. We are employed in the Faculty of Arts, but in co-operation with judicial experts we are exploring the characteristics of argumentation and argument evaluation in a well-defined and restricted institutional context in which the settlement of disputes is of central importance and is guided by written and unwritten rules which in some sense link up with our code of conduct. But don't let me dwell too long on this subject. I'd better say something in response to the members of the panel.

In response to some comments made by Sally Jackson - which are, by the way, very interesting and we hope to get the opportunity to react in a more appropriate way on paper after we have actually read her contribution.

In response to her comments on our way of analyzing non-assertive speech acts (which are part of argumentation) as if they were *meant to be assertive*, I would like to remark first that our way of analyzing has exactly the same advantages and is in the same way realistic as when one analyses all other kinds of direct speech act as *indirect* speech acts instead of taking them at face value. Real people in real discourse (by which I don't want to suggest that we are not real) are also acting appropriately when they act this way. They won't answer the question, "Do you know what time it is?" simply by saying "Yes, I do" and leave it at that.

Of course we agree with Sally that argumentation, in principle, may consist of *all kinds of speech acts and not just of assertives*, but in our book we present it as a useful device for analyzing argumentation to proceed as if it consisted of assertives. So in the analyzing you'll have to translate other kinds of speech acts (remember the umbrella example) in terms of (and as if they were) assertives. So it is a way of analyzing speech acts which aren't at face value. Assertives (which are actually not assertive) are analyzed if they were. We still think this is a useful way to proceed in view of the commitments undertaken by people presenting speech acts as argumentative.

A dialectical analysis of argumentative discourse, in our opinion, has to make precisely explicit all these commitments of the language

users involved in the dispute. This may be the occasion to assess briefly some of the differences between dialectical analysis and the so called "pure description" of argumentative discourse.

In view of the idealization involved in *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* a comparison between dialectical analysis and pure description of argumentative discourse may be illuminating.

For the sake of clarity, I would like to stress from the outset that, in our opinion, for all practical purposes, it is necessary that a complete theory of verbal communication and interaction which purports to be of importance for discussants, be normative as well as descriptive. In order to comment constructively on a particular specimen of language use one has to know what purpose is served by the verbal utterances and to what extent the verbal behavior is adequate to this purpose. Characteristic of the normative conception we advocate is that, as a matter of principle, every argumentation is considered part of a critical discussion aimed at resolving a dispute, regardless of whether the dispute and the discussion are externalized or not.

In our opinion, this dialectical approach needs to be allied (among other allies) to the functionalist speech act approach, in so-called *normative pragmatics*. Dialectical analysis of an argumentative discourse clearly differs from so called "pure" description. I could have illustrated this by way of an analysis of the confrontation stage of a specimen of political discourse as I have done in a paper completed earlier this year, but for the sake of brevity I shall not do this and confine myself to mentioning the most striking difference. Bearing in mind that even a "pure" description, if it is to be of any significance, has to be theoretically motivated, one must realize that the difference is not just between theory-loaded and not theory-loaded. It is rather a difference between a descriptive record and a normative reconstruction, both equally based on theoretical considerations. The normative perspective, however, as it manifests itself in the dialectical approach to argumentation, by its very nature, has its own characteristic impact. A comparison between dialectical analysis and pure description may show what this distinctive impact leads to.

The first difference between a normative reconstruction and a descriptive recording is one of *selection*. Depending on the criterion of relevance supplied by the theoretical framework serving as a starting point, some data are deemed worth noting while other data are left

aside as immaterial. This doesn't mean that they aren't there, but they are left aside. This means that all redundancy is removed, so that the discourse can be reported in the dialectical garb or a dialogical tableau. This removal of redundancy is why the transformation which has taken place can also be called *deletion*.

The second noticeable difference is one of *completion*. This is partly a question of making arguments explicit (externalizing implicit elements which are required to fill the dialectical gaps) as when by contradicting a standpoint, somebody implicitly expresses his doubt about that standpoint. Completion is also partly a question of adding elements whose presence in a full-fledged dispute has to be assumed, as when somebody defends his position without any attacks being made. Because of this supplementary character, this transformation may also be called *addition*. In compliance with the dialectical theory adhered to, in certain cases the addition may even involve assigning an argumentative communicative force to a constellation of speech acts which seems to lack such force in its literal utterance.

The third difference between dialectical analysis and pure description to be mentioned here, is one of *arrangement*. In contrast to the procedure in a descriptive recording, the normative reconstruction of a dispute need not directly reflect the linear course of events in the sequential order of their actual occurrence. In the dialectical analysis, the arrangement is organized in order to bring out the composition of the dispute as well as possible, the reported facts corresponding to dialectically relevant factors. Because of the alterations it may bring about, this transformation may also be called *permutation*.

The fourth and last difference I will mention is one of *notation*. It is completely in line with the points just made to provide for an adequate notation of the analysis. It is best that the findings be reported in notation of the analysis. It is best that the findings be reported in such a way that the things which are theoretically noteworthy are expressed clearly. Similar cases need to be recognized as similar. Dialectically relevant distinctions need to be easily identifiable, and so on. In order for a comparison to be possible, it is necessary to create a notation system and reformulate the various contributions to the dispute in its terms. In consequence of this procedure, diffuse and ambiguous wordings have to be replaced by standard formulations. For this reason, this transformation can also be called *substitution*. Different ways of expression, which, dialectically speaking, amount to the same thing,

are given one and the same substitute, so that identical cases are treated alike. In a purely descriptive notation, differences of expression are maintained, and dialectical similarities may easily escape attention.

Chapter 30

Response of Rob Grootendorst

Rob Grootendorst

(Editor's Note: Rob Grootendorst's remarks followed papers by Susan Kline, Sally Jackson and Joseph Wenzel on van Eemeren and Grootendorst's book *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* (1984) at the Fourth SCA/AFA Conference on Argumentation at Alta (1985). Grootendorst's remarks have been assembled from notes and transcription.)

Professor Wenzel seems to be rather satisfied with our treatment of unexpressed premises. In fact, he seems to be more satisfied than we are ourselves. Surely, we have no complaints about that. In addition we are grateful for his helpful suggestions on clarifying the role of the context in explicating unexpressed premises with the help of field theory. Besides this we feel there are a number of other problems to be solved and a number of other things to be worked out.

In talking about unexpressed premises with other people and in continued reflecting on the subject, we have learned that our treatment of unexpressed premises in Chapter six of our book can raise the following questions:

- (1) Does there in fact exist such a thing as an "indeterminate context"?
- (2) Does the "conversational minimum" hold always in every other (specific) context than an indeterminate context?
- (3) Do the guidelines formulated in Chapter Six automatically lead to the explicitization of *the* unexpressed premise in a given context?
- (4) Is it justified to assume that the speaker always has the intention to use deductively valid arguments?

No doubt there are many other questions which could be asked about the explicitization of unexpressed premises. The questions mentioned, however, are essential to our theoretical approach. I will confine myself

therefore to some short remarks concerning these questions, without claiming to give any definitive answers.

(1) Of course every piece of real-life argumentation occurs always in some concrete context which is never indeterminate nor neutral. We use the concept of an indeterminate context as a starting point for the explicitization of unexpressed premises, and not as an indication of an existing entity. For us it is just a heuristic device.

(2) The term "minimum" may suggest that the explicitization of an unexpressed premise by means of the conversational minimum is suppose to stand in all possible contexts. This is not our intention. In our opinion the useful role of the conversational minimum has to do with the fact that it enables us to formulate a plausible initial hypothesis with respect to the deleted premise in question. In our example the initial explicitizations also hold in most specific contexts, but one can imagine a context in which they don't. And, of course, one can think of examples other than the (quasi-) syllogistic type we used, in which the initial hypothesis has to be altered rather drastically in a more specific context.

(3) In view of the foregoing it will be clear that it would be an illusion to think that the proposed guidelines automatically could lead to *the* unexpressed premise in a specific case. The only thing one can expect is the formulation of a plausible possibility. Much more work is to be done to elaborate and improve the theoretical framework. But even with the help of more detailed and advanced guidelines it would be impossible to claim that one has found the only possible solution.

(4) Although we are aware of the theoretical and practical problems with the assumption that speakers want their arguments to be deductively valid, we still think that in most cases it is justified, in particular in the absence of clear and univocal indications to the contrary. Anyway, it is useful as a heuristic device. It will be clear that I don't think that we have spoken the final words on the subject of unexpressed premises in our book. Apart from the points just mentioned I see the following problems to be solved in the future:

(1) In what way should one distinguish between the unexpressed elements in argumentative discourse which really serve as parts of the argumentation on the one hand and other tacit background knowledge?

(2) In what way does the theoretical framework relate to the process language users go through in explicitizing unexpressed premises? In connection with this question one also has to deal with the question whether there is intersubjective agreement among language users when confronted with a specific case of argumentation in which a premise is unstated. Both questions lead to a different kind of research than the normative approach elaborated in our book. What is needed will be some sort of empirical research in which experiments are carried out systematically and as long as these experiments are not carried out - and so far to our knowledge they are not - all empirical claims are premature.

As regards Professor Wenzel's comment on the relationship between our code of conduct and the fallacies, we would like to make two short remarks. First, Professor Wenzel casts doubt on the claim that the code of conduct provides the most effective treatment of all fallacies. He points out, for example, that the so-called formal fallacies can be better analyzed by means of logical criteria of formal validity. But it was not our intention to offer an alternative for formal criteria. In fact, these formal criteria are part of what we call the intersubjective reasoning procedure which has to be called upon in the argumentation stage. So no originality is claimed here.

What we consider as one of the main advantage of our model as a tool for identifying and analyzing fallacies is that it offers a possibility to account for the large group of so-called informal fallacies which always give serious trouble in what Hamblin called the "standard treatment". Because in some informal fallacies, as in for example many questions, straw man appeal to force or appeal to pity, there is in fact no question of an argument at all. And in some other cases (like, for example, begging the question, ad hominem, or appeals to authority) there is no question of an *invalid* argument or, when it seems, nevertheless, to be the case the argument can easily be made valid by adding the appropriate suppressed premise. We claim that these and other notorious problems can be satisfactorily analyzed by broadening the scope from the invalidity of arguments to the discussion as a whole and then finding out what way and to what extent a fallacy may hinder the solution of the dispute, as we have tried to show in our book. I must confess immediately, however, that our discussion of the fallacies in the book still is very sketchy. In another book (on identifying fallacies as already mentioned by Frans van Eemeren) we have elaborated on this, and have tried to give a full treatment of many

other fallacies. Unfortunately the book is in Dutch, so you have to take my word for that.

Finally, very short, we agree with Professor Wenzel that the purpose of the code of conduct is not so much to *prevent* fallacies but rather to provide a tool for detecting them, to pin them down, so to speak, in a systematic way. We don't have the illusion that our model can actually prevent anything at all. Idealized models never can.

The Speech Acts of Arguing and Convincing in Externalized Discussions

Frans H. van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst

Abstract

In discussions directed towards solving a conflict of opinion the participants try to convince one another of the acceptability or unacceptability of the opinion that is under discussion. If the participants are co-operative, this means that they are prepared to externalize their position with regard to the opinion and to advance argumentation for or against it. In this article, which is a condensed translation of an article originally published in Dutch (Eemeren and Grootendorst 1980), the authors try to indicate, by reference to the speech act theory, what this entails.

In the way in which it was originally conceived, the speech act theory is inadequate to characterize argumentation. In the authors' view this objection can be met by regarding argumentation as an illocutionary act complex at a textual level. They formulate the conditions obtaining for a happy performance of this act complex and explain that for the speaker the performance is linked by convention to the perlocutionary act of convincing. In the case of an externalized discussion this means that with his argumentation the speaker tries to make the listener, in turn, perform an illocutionary act in which he expresses his acceptance of non-acceptance of the opinion.

1. Introduction

Our subject in this article is the phenomenon of argumentation. Since the reader cannot be expected to know instinctively what we mean by *argumentation*, let us begin with a definition¹:

Argumentation is a social, intellectual, verbal activity serving to justify or refute an opinion, consisting of a constellation of utterances which have a justifying or refuting function and being directed towards obtaining the agreement of a judge who is deemed to be reasonable.

We have already commented on this definition elsewhere (Eemeren et al. 1978). We shall confine ourselves here to some remarks.

The need for argumentation arises when language users disagree as to the acceptability of a given opinion and wish to resolve a subsequent conflict of opinion by verbal means. In principle they should then initiate a discussion in which they indicate their positions *vis-à-vis* the opinion which constitutes the point of contention, put questions, elucidate unclear points and, in particular, advance arguments. These arguments may have a more or less complicated structure. We shall confine ourselves here to "simple" argumentation (which may be part of a compound argumentation) in which one of the parties defends or attacks a given opinion.

In the study of argumentation we regard the following preambles as especially important (cf. Eemeren and Grootendorst 1980):

- (1) Argumentation must not be regarded simply as a "product", but also as a "(language usage) activity" (which is subject to certain conditions).
- (2) Argumentation need not necessarily be directed at "justifying" an opinion, but can also be directed towards "refuting" an opinion.
- (3) Argumentation must not be regarded simply as an "intellectual" process unfolding itself in the mind of the person who is arguing, but also, and more especially, as "external" or (as in the case of 'suppressed premisses') at least "externalizable" activity which creates certain commitments².
- (4) Argumentation can in practice be part of a "monologue" but also of a "dialogue", and even in the first of these two cases it should be interpreted dialogically.

Starting from these four points, it is our intention in this article to provide an analysis of the argumentative function of the use of language. This means that we are trying to establish what it implies for language usage if a language user tries to resolve a conflict with another language user concerning an (expressed) opinion by convincing her or him, by means of argumentation, of the acceptability or unacceptability (as the case may be) of that opinion. It will be clear that here,

unlike some other authors, we take argumentation to be a *specific* language use activity and do not assume a priori that all use of language is argumentative.

The best theoretical framework currently available for studying language use functions is, in our view, speech act theory. However, in its classical conception speech act theory is inadequate to the description of argumentation and does not always accord with our preambles³. We shall try to provide remedies for these objections in our analysis.

The most important questions which we shall attempt to answer during the course of this article are the following:

- (a) What kind of speech act is argumentation?
- (b) What are the conditions for a happy performance of the argumentation speech act?
- (c) What is the relation between the argumentation speech act and the convincing speech act?
- (d) To what extent is the arguing/convincing speech act pair bound by certain conventions?

2. Argumentation as an illocutionary act complex.

In authoritative studies of speech acts, such as Austin (1976) and Searle (1970), arguing, or at least *to argue*, is referred to as an illocutionary act. The authors evidently find this a matter of course, since they give no reasons. Yet this characterization is not entirely unproblematical. True, there can be no question but that advancing arguments for and against amounts to the performance of speech acts⁴, but this does not necessarily mean that arguing is also an *illocutionary act*.

The specific difficulties presented by the characterization of arguing may be indicated by reference to Searle (1970). Here the author considers illocutionary acts performed by sentences with an *unequivocal and explicitly indicated* illocutionary force. Searle indicates the relation between the performance of an illocutionary act and the utterance of a sentence as follows:

[...] the characteristic grammatical form of the illocutionary act is the complete sentence [...] (1970: 25)

In the cases discussed by Searle there is always a one-to-one relation between the utterance of a particular sentence and the performance of a particular illocutionary act. If the conditions for the correct performance of the speech acts concerned have been met, the uttering of the first sentence amounts to making a statement, the utterance of the second amounts to making a question, and so on. And conversely: a statement may be made by uttering the first sentence, a question asked by uttering the second, and so on. In the case of argumentation, however, we regard this one-to-one relation as problematical on at least three counts⁵.

First, account must be taken of the fact that a completed argumentation consists of more than one sentence. Even the simplest argumentation for or against a given expressed opinion will always, if it is made fully explicit, contain at least two elements (cf. the "datum" and the "warrant" in Toulmin's model, 1969: 97-107). Every element can be reproduced in a separate sentence, and if this happens there is no one-to-one relation between what Searle calls the *illocutionary act of arguing* and one particular sentence.

Second, it must be borne in mind that the uttering of the sentences that together form an argumentation implies that with the uttering of each individual sentence a new specific illocutionary act is performed which is a different one from arguing. Such a specific illocutionary act might be a statement, an assumption, or - in typical instances - an assertion (and is therefore a member of the assertive class of illocutionary acts; cf. Searle 1976: 12,13). If arguing is characterized as an illocutionary act, this means that the sentences used in the performance of the illocutionary act of arguing must simultaneously be allocated two illocutionary forces: each sentence individually has a particular illocutionary force (statement, assumption, or assertion), and each sentence is part of a whole which has argumentative force. This again means that there is no question of the one-to-one relation chosen by Searle as his premiss.

Third, the uttering together of particular sentences can only be a performance of the speech act of arguing if those sentences are linked in a specific manner to the uttering of *another* sentence: the *expressed opinion* to which the argumentation refers. The argumentation serves to justify or refute a given opinion, which may either precede the sentences constituting the argument as a thesis or follow them as a conclusion. Even when uttered together the sentences cannot of themselves constitute an argumentation; they only become an argumentation in relation to a particular opinion. The necessity of such

a specific relationship between the sentences which constitute an argumentation and the uttering of another sentence makes it even more difficult to accept a one-to-one relation between the uttering of a sentence and the performance of the illocutionary act of arguing.

Does this triple attack on the idea that in arguing there is a one-to-one relation between sentences and illocutionary acts mean that we endorse the views of those who regard it as impossible, erroneous or undesirable to treat arguing as an illocutionary act? Not necessarily⁷. These problems can be solved if, alongside *elementary illocutionary acts* we also distinguish *complex illocutionary acts*⁸. The elementary illocutionary acts then relate to the uttering of sentences each of which individually has a particular force and the complex illocutionary acts relate to the uttering of sentences which together constitute a particular textual whole which can be allocated its own illocutionary force and which accordingly can be called an *illocutionary act complex*. By starting from the functional similarities which make it possible to distinguish between an illocutionary force at the *sentence level* and an illocutionary force at a "higher" textual level, the speech act theory can also be applied to text entities larger than a sentence.

Argumentation is a speech act entity at the textual level. The illocutionary acts which together constitute the illocutionary act complex of argumentation each have a particular illocutionary force at the sentence level and jointly constitute a textual entity which has an illocutionary force at the textual level. If we accept the idea of this situating at more than one level, the one-to-one relation between sentences and illocutionary acts which Searle takes as one of his premisses remains intact in all cases. At the sentence level the uttering of each sentence individually is the performance of one, and only one, illocutionary act, while sentences constituting an argumentation will in principle tend to have the force of an *assertive* illocutionary act⁹. At the textual level the uttering of an entity of sentences is likewise the performance of one, and only one, illocutionary act complex: in this case, an argumentation. Even if the argument, because there is a "suppressed premiss", constitutes an entity consisting of only one sentence, this still presents no problem: in that case, as an illocutionary act at the sentence level the utterance concerned may have, for example, the illocutionary force of an assertion (and no other) and as an illocutionary act complex at the textual level the illocutionary force of an argumentation (and no other)¹⁰.

The introduction of the distinction between sentence level and textual level enables us to include the relation between the argumentation and the opinion to which the argumentation relates in our analysis. If the analysis were *exclusively* concerned with the sentence level, it would be possible, for example, to account for the manner in which, through the uttering of a particular sentence, the illocutionary act of assertion is performed, but it would not be possible to account for the fact that by the uttering of one sentence an assertion is made which (at the same time) acts as an *argument*, while by the uttering of another sentence an assertion is made which (at the same time) acts as an *opinion*¹¹. These sentences are linked to one another at the textual level, not at the sentence level. Their relationship to one another at the textual level is illustrated in table 1.

Table 1
Two analysis levels of arguments

Textual level	
	Illocutionary act complex
Sentence level	Elementary illocutionary acts
Sentences	$\overbrace{A_1 \dots A_n}^{\text{ARG } +/-} \longrightarrow O$ $S_1 \dots S_n \quad \quad A_i \quad \quad S_i$

Note: A = assertive illocutionary act; S = sentence; $|$ = one-to-one relationship; ARG+ = justifying argumentation; ARG- = refuting argumentation; O = opinion (thesis or conclusion)

Argumentation is a functional language usage entity which is primarily connected with bringing about a particular sort of effect on the listener. The speech utterances used in the performance of the speech act of arguing have a common illocutionary force, since they act as the justification or refutation of an opinion. This means that argumentation is an illocutionary act complex. A speech act, chat, sermon or discussion, though of course, both at sentence and textual level, illocutionary acts (or act complexes) are performed, is not¹².

Speeches, chats, sermons and discussions are *text genres* which are principally connected with the way in which social life is organized in a particular community. In each case the organization of verbal action or interaction is a function of the social and cultural context in which the use of language takes place, and of the forms of com-

munication that have developed within that context. The differences between text genres are determined by various factors, one of which is the social and cultural traditions of which text genres are part: a chat for example, is rather different from a sermon, and both have to be organized in accordance with certain social and cultural conventions.

Unlike functional language usage entities like argumentation, text genres are not connected exclusively with one particular illocutionary force. However, that does not of course mean that it is impossible for there to be any connection between text genres and language usage functions. For example, it is possible for a particular text genre to be virtually dominated, in practice, by one specific language usage function, so that the function comes to be regarded as characteristic of that text genre. Thus a discussion whose object is to resolve a conflict relating to an opinion may be characterized by the occurrence of language with an argumentative function, possibly to the exclusion of all other usage. But in the majority of cases a text will contain not only language with the function which is dominant in that particular text genre, but also language fulfilling other functions. In most discussions, too, there will be an alternation between purely argumentative language and, for example, informative questions and statements.

3. Conditions for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing.

When formulating the conditions which must obtain for a happy performance (that is, one which will be recognized as such by the listener) of the illocutionary act complex of arguing, we have chosen to take as our model the analysis of *promise* given by Searle (1970: 57-64). The starting-point here is a language situation in which a speaker *S* defends or attacks an opinion to a listener *L*, using speech utterances u_1, \dots, u_n . *S* and *L* are ordinary language users, who are serious, act of their own free will, mean what they say, are bound by what they say and are free to say what they wish to say. In short, what Searle calls the "normal input and output conditions" must have been fulfilled.

We shall call a defense of an opinion *pro-argumentation* and an attack on an opinion *contra-argumentation* (cf. Naess 1966). In our view, *S* happily performed a *pro-argumentation* by means of u_1, \dots, u_n , if, and only if, the following conditions have been met¹³:

Propositional content condition

u_1, \dots, u_n together constitute a constellation of expressed propositions $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$.

Preparatory conditions

- (1) S believes that L does not accept the opinion in advance (without reservation, wholly)¹⁴.
- (2) S believes that L will accept the expressed propositions E_1, \dots, E_n .
- (3) S believes that L will accept the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a justification of O .

Sincerity conditions

- (1) S believes O .
- (2) S believes E_1, \dots, E_n .
- (3) S believes that $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ constitutes a justification of O .

Essential condition

The uttering of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ counts as an attempt on the part of S to justify to L , i.e. to convince L of the acceptability of O .

In our view, S has *happily performed a contra-argumentation by means of u_1, \dots, u_n* , if, and only if, the following conditions have been met:

Propositional content condition

u_1, \dots, u_n together constitute a constellation of expressed propositions $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$.

Preparatory conditions

- (1) S believes that L accepts the opinion O as it stands (more or less, wholly or partly).
- (2) S believes that L will accept the expressed propositions E_1, \dots, E_n .
- (3) S believes that L will accept the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a refutation of O .

Sincerity conditions

- (1) S does not believe O .
- (2) S believes E_1, \dots, E_n .
- (3) S believes that $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ constitutes a refutation of O .

Essential condition

The uttering of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ counts as an attempt on the part of S to refute to L , i.e. to convince L of the unacceptability of O .

Each of the conditions listed is individually a *necessary* condition for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing and together they constitute a *sufficient* condition for it. Even if only one of the conditions has not been met, then the act complex is deficient, or, as Austin calls it, *unhappy*. The degree of deficiency (the act complex may be wholly or partially deficient) and the nature of the deficiency are not, however, the same in all cases. We shall therefore indicate briefly what consequences result from the failure to meet each condition.

If the *propositional content condition* has not been fulfilled, this means that there is no constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ in which E_1, \dots, E_n are expressions of propositions. The speaker has then failed at the sentence level to perform an illocutionary act with an assertive illocutionary force and this means that his or her speech utterance(s) is (are) *void*, so that at the textual level no illocutionary act complex argumentation has been performed.

If the *first preparatory condition* for pro-argumentation has not been fulfilled, this means that S believes that L accepts the opinion O in advance (without reservation, wholly). Performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing has then become *superfluous* and will normally be regarded by S as a waste of time and effort, while L already knows that it would be a waste of time and effort. (The same applies mutatis mutandis to contra-argumentation.)

If the *second preparatory condition* has not been fulfilled, this means that S believes that L will not accept the expressed propositions E_1, \dots, E_n , or that S simply does not believe that L will accept the expressed propositions E_1, \dots, E_n . In either case the speaker assumes in advance that his arguments will not convince his listener: performing the illocutionary act complex of arguing has thus, to him, become pointless.

If the *third preparatory condition* has not been fulfilled, this means that S does not believe that L will regard the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a justification (or, in the case of contra-argumentation, as a refutation) of O ; it may even mean that S believes that his listener will certainly not regard $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as a justification (or refutation) of O . Here again, in either case performance of the illocutionary act complex has become *pointless* to S .

Not complying with the three *sincerity conditions* means (1) that S himself *does not* believe (or in the case of contra-argumentation that he does), (2) that S himself does not believe E_1, \dots, E_n and (3) that S himself does not believe that $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ constitutes a

justification (or refutation) of O . In all these cases we may speak of a *misleading* or *manipulation* of the listener by the speaker.

Failure to fulfil the *essential condition* means that the performance of the illocutionary act complex is *not* an attempt on the part of S to justify (or refute) to L by means of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$, i.e. the performance of the illocutionary act complex is *not* an attempt by S to convince L of the acceptability or unacceptability of O by means of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$. The speaker has in that case not performed the illocutionary act complex of arguing at all. However, it is possible that he has performed one or more illocutionary acts at the sentence level, and that these acts have been happy, but then there is no question of argumentation. For example, the speaker may have made a series of unconnected assertions or statements, or he may (seen at the textual level) have added a comment or an explanation.

The consequences of non-fulfillment of the required conditions vary from a total failure of the illocutionary act complex of arguing to the performance of one or more acts which in some respect have not been wholly happy. Total failure is the consequence of non-fulfillment of the propositional content condition (since then, as a rule, no illocutionary act has been performed), or of non-fulfillment of the essential condition (in which case another illocutionary force may have been expressed). In the case of the non-fulfillment of the other conditions argumentation has taken place, but the act is *superfluous* (if the first preparatory condition has not been met), *pointless* (if either the second or the third preparatory condition has not been met), or *misleading* or *manipulatory* (if the sincerity conditions have not been met)¹⁵.

4. Arguing and convincing

In the essential condition which we have just formulated for the illocutionary act complex of argumentation the relation between this illocutionary act complex and the *perlocutionary act of convincing* is indicated explicitly:

The uttering of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ counts as an attempt on the part of S to convince L of the acceptability or unacceptability of O .

The performance of an argumentative illocutionary act complex is always at the same time an attempt to convince. Since it is also easily

demonstrated that a verbal attempt to convince always implies the performance of an argumentative illocutionary act complex¹⁶, it might be thought that arguing and convincing were one and the same act or one and the same act complex. But everyone knows that in practice arguing is not quite the same as convincing. After all, the attempt to convince may fail, even though the listener has recognized the speech utterances as argumentation. True, the verbal means used in arguing and convincing are the same, but the *happiness/effectiveness conditions* are different.

As an illocutionary act complex, argumentation is *happy* if the listener has *understood* that the speaker, by uttering $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$, has attempted to convince him of the acceptability or unacceptability of O ; the perlocutionary act of convincing is effective if it has indeed convinced the listener of the acceptability or unacceptability of O and he endorses the point of view of the speaker.

This difference between the *illocutionary* act complex of arguing and the *perlocutionary* act of convincing finds expression in the second and third preparatory conditions for the illocutionary act complex of arguing. Both these conditions are formulated (for both pro- and contra-argumentations) from the point of view of the speaker. They are concerned exclusively with the opinion which the speaker *ascribes* to the listener in respect of the acceptability or unacceptability of E_1, \dots, E_n and in respect of the justification function (or refutation function) of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ as regards O . For the argumentation to be happy as an illocutionary act complex, it is necessary and sufficient that these conditions and the other happiness conditions previously referred to have been fulfilled. But this is *not sufficient* to ensure the effectiveness of the perlocutionary act of convincing.

For the perlocutionary act of convincing to be effective, it is necessary for the listener to hold the opinion ascribed to him by the speaker. If that is indeed the case, and if the listener adopts a reasonable position, then the illocutionary act complex of arguing is happy and the perlocutionary act of convincing is effective. If this is not the case, then the perlocutionary act is ineffective and we can speak only of the illocutionary act complex as happy (assuming, of course, that the other conditions have been fulfilled). The difference between arguing and convincing is thus caused by the possible discrepancy between the opinion ascribed to the listener by the speaker and the opinion actually held by the listener.

If the effectiveness conditions of the perlocutionary act of *convincing* have been fulfilled, then the point of the essential condition of the illocutionary act complex of *arguing* has been achieved. Although

arguing and convincing are two clearly distinct acts, there is thus nevertheless a specific relationship between them: the one act (arguing) is the *means* whereby the *end*, i.e. that the other act (convincing) is effective, is achieved. Cohen (1973) calls perlocutions that are in this specific way related to illocutions *associated*.

A perlocutionary effect aimed at in the performance of *all* illocutionary acts is that the listener *accept* the act as such¹⁷. By contrast to such illocutionary acts as *asking*, *requesting* and *ordering*, in the case of the illocutionary act of promising it's even the case that *no other* reaction is asked of the listener than that he accepts the promise¹⁸. Something of the kind is also true of such illocutionary acts as *asserting*, *stating* and *thanking*. Acceptance of an assertion or statement implies, *inter alia*, that the listener thinks that the speaker has evidence of the accuracy of his assertion or statement; acceptance of thanks implies that the listener actually intended whatever the speaker is thanking him for to be the speaker's advantage. Just as with promising, these conditions for the acceptance of such *illocutionary acts*, and hence for the achieving of the *perlocutionary effect*, correspond to the preparatory conditions summarized by Searle for the happiness of *illocutionary acts* (1970: 66–67).

If the speaker wishes to use an illocutionary act in order to achieve a perlocutionary effect which goes further than the mere acceptance of the illocutionary act by the listener, then the acceptance perlocution may be a *necessary*, but in no instance *sufficient* condition for the achieving of this far-reaching perlocution. We believe that *in general* it is true to say that speakers will not be satisfied if only the acceptance perlocution occurs: they will also wish to achieve the more far-reaching perlocutionary effect. Following this, we propose (without any intention of suggesting a "natural" hierarchical order) to refer to acceptance perlocutions by the term *minimal perlocution* and to the other (more far-reaching) perlocutions by the term of *optimal perlocution*. Minimal perlocutions thus consist (in verbally externalized form) exclusively of the performance of the illocutionary act of *acceptance*, while optimal perlocutions may consist of a particular state of mind of the listener (a feeling, thought or conviction) or of one or more (*speech*) *acts* – of various sorts – which have to be performed by the listener.

Returning to the arguing and convincing pair, we must now answer the question when the minimal associated effect of arguing occurs that the listener *accepts*. In the case of an externalized discussion it does not matter whether or not, psychologically, the listener is in

a state of mind of being convinced, so that the achievement of the minimal perlocutionary effect of acceptance may be regarded as an *end*. The question is now what acceptance of the argumentation implies for the listener.

Here we conceive of the *acceptance* of the illocutionary act complex of arguing as the performance of an *illocutionary act*¹⁹. This act implies that the listener *explicitly expresses* the fact that he concurs with the expressed propositions E_1, \dots, E_n and with the justification or refutation function of the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ in respect of the opinion O and that *he therefore accepts or does not accept O*.

The listener accepting the speaker's argumentation does not "in reality" have to be in a state of mind of "being convinced" (in which case the *optimal* perlocutionary effect would have been achieved), nor can he once and for all be held to O . As regards this last, we are of the opinion that to the acceptance of opinions the same consideration generally applies as that which Popper advances in respect of the acceptance of scientific theories.:

[...] all acceptance is tentative and, like belief, of passing and personal rather than objective and impersonal significance (1972: 142–143).

However, by this acceptance of the speaker's argumentation the listener is in a particular manner *committed*. In the case of the illocutionary act of *acceptance* this commitment is based on the permitted assumption (in the case of a happy performance) that the sincerity conditions for this illocutionary act have been fulfilled in exactly the same way as it is in the case of the illocutionary act complex of *argumentation*. Furthermore, the consequences of the commitment are exactly the same for the speakers in the case of both acts. The same is true, incidentally, of the *rights* which the two listeners can derive from it.

In both cases the *sincerity conditions* ensure that, as in the case of a promise, the speaker is *committed* to what by the performance of the illocutionary act (or the illocutionary act complex) he purports to believe. Whether he "actually" believes it is not relevant in this context. The speaker is serious (and meets the other conditions for a normal "output") and the listener may call him to account for what he says. The performance by the speaker of the illocutionary act complex of *arguing* gives the listener the right to hold the speaker to the opinion O , the expressed propositions E_1, \dots, E_n and the justification function (or refutation function) of the constellation $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ in respect of O . The *acceptance of the argumentation* gives the listener (in this case the person who acted as speaker during

the argumentation) the same right to hold the speaker (in this case the person who acted as listener during the argumentation) to the same opinion, expressed propositions and justification function (or refutation function).

The sincerity conditions for the illocutionary act of *accepting an argumentation* thus imply, *inter alia*, that the speaker (the earlier listener) "believes" the opinion O, the expressed (or, in the case of a happy attempt at refutation, that he does not believe it) in the sense that the listener may hold him to it. That is to say, the speaker *may be regarded as convinced* by the argumentation. This sincerity condition for the illocutionary act of acceptance, the performance of which must be regarded as the *minimal* perlocutionary effect of the happy performance of the illocutionary act of acceptance, thus corresponds to the optimal perlocutionary effect of the illocutionary act complex of arguing. If the person who is arguing succeeds in making the listener *accept* his argumentation (minimal perlocutionary effect), then, though he still has no certainty that the listener is also actually *convinced* in the psychological sense (optimal perlocutionary effect), the consequences for the further (verbal) behavior of the listener are the same, and that is what must count here. In both cases the speaker has the right to reprove the listener if he says or does something which conflicts with the point of view earlier endorsed by him.

The relationships between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the two associated perlocutions are shown diagrammatically in table 2.

Table 2
The minimal and optimal perlocution of argumentation

Illocutionary act complex		Perlocutionary act		Minimal AP (illocutionary act)	Optimal AP(mental)
Arguing	$u_1 \dots u_n$	C	Acceptance	'Being convinced'	
<i>PC: S_1 believes that L_1</i>		<i>L_1 endorses</i>		<i>L_1 is convinced</i>	
<i>EC: the uttering</i>		<i>-C</i>		<i>(= L believes</i>	
<i>as an attempt at convincing</i>		<i>-that C is a justification</i>		<i>(does not believe) O</i>	
		<i>(refutation) of O</i>			
<i>SC: S_1 believes</i>			<i>u_1</i>	<i>$S_2 (= L_1)$</i>	
<i>- O</i>				<i>SC: S_2 believes</i>	
<i>- C</i>				<i>-C</i>	
		<i>- that C is a justification</i>		<i>-that C is a justification</i>	
		<i>(refutation) of O</i>		<i>-(refutation) of O</i>	
				<i>-O</i>	

Note: S = speaker; L = listener; u = utterance; C = constellation of expressed propositions $E_1 \dots E_n$; O = opinion; AP = associated perlocution; EC = essential condition; PC = preparatory; SC = preparatory; SC = sincerity condition.

5. The conventionality of perlocutions

We shall now try to answer the question of whether the perlocutions associated with illocutionary acts or act complexes are conventional. No one disputes the *conventionality* of illocutionary acts, but opinions differ when it comes to the conventionality of perlocutionary acts, of which *convincing* is an example. Austin and Searle take the standpoint that perlocutionary acts are never conventional, while Cohen in "Illocutions and perlocutions" allows for the possibility that perlocutionary acts may have just as good a claim to conventionality as illocutionary acts.

Austin and Searle have followed, as Morgan (1978: 279) puts it "hallowed linguistic tradition" in carefully not saying what they mean by "convention", and Searle is apparently using the term in a different way. Let us therefore begin by stating as precisely as possible what we mean by conventionality, before we go into the question of the *conventionality* of the associated perlocution of the illocutionary act complex of arguing. We shall start from a definition proposed by Lewis in *Convention*:

A regularity of R in the behavior of members of a population P when they are agents in a recurrent situation S is a convention if and only if, in any instance of S among the members of P ,

- (1) everyone conforms to R ;
- (2) everyone expects everyone else to conform to R ;
- (3) everyone prefers to conform to R on condition that the other do, since S is a coordination problem and uniform conformity to R is a coordination equilibrium in S (1977:42).

Lewis takes a game theory approach to conventionality, but his findings, as he himself observes, are not bound to a game theory approach.

The nucleus of Lewis's view is that a convention is a regularity in the behavior of people brought about by a system of expectations. What is the significance of this view for the relationship between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and its associated minimal and optimal perlocutions? In the first place, if we are to call this relation *conventional* in the Lewis sense it is necessary that a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing by the speaker *regularly* be followed by the occurrence of the minimal or optimal associated perlocutions on the part of the listener and in the second place it is necessary that the speaker *expect* that this will happen. To what extent is this the case?

If *regularity* is the decisive criterion of conventionality, it is clear that the associated perlocution of the illocutionary act complex of arguing does *not* have much chance of being capable of being called *conventional*, since there is no question of a regular occurrence of the minimal or optimal associated perlocution: one does not have to be a dyed-in-the-wool pessimist to dare assert that in practice an argument fails to be accepted just as often as it *is* accepted, and that the listener *fails to be convinced* by the argumentation (ineffective optimal perlocution) at least as often as he *is* convinced.

Does this also hold for the speaker's *expectation*? We believe not. The illocutionary act complex of arguing and the perlocutionary act of convincing maintain, as we have already seen, a bilateral relationship: arguing is an attempt to convince and for the performance of an attempt to convince a speaker must argue. If the speaker had no confidence in his succeeding in convincing the listener with his argumentation, he would not have to argue. By arguing with the listener, instead of, for instance, giving him an order, the speaker indicates that he regards the listener as a *reasonable judge* who keeps up to the same standards for correct arguing as he does himself. These standards of correctness relate, *inter alia*, to the *justification function* (or *refutation function*) of $C(E_1, \dots, E_n)$ for O and the combination of the illocutionary act complex of arguing implies that the speaker may be regarded as assuming that the listener has the same standards of judgment as he himself.

If speaker and listener have elected jointly to seek a solution of the conflict regarding the opinion to which the argumentation relates, then it is in their interest to co-operate with one another and act in co-ordination as far as possible. This means that as far as possible they must apply the same standards of judgment and that they must hold one another to these standards of judgment. If he wishes to fulfill the conditions for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing, the speaker will therefore *prefer* in his attempt to convince the listener to observe the same standards as the listener applies (or as the speaker thinks the listener applies) when making his judgment.

The speaker's expectation that the listener will judge the argumentation by the same standards as himself, the fact that the listener may infer from the speaker's decision or argue with him that the speaker expects him to apply the same standards, and the fact that the speaker prefers to apply the same standards as the listener, indicates that the performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing is *founded on the expectation that common standards are available for judging the argumentation and that these standards will be applied by the*

listener. This means that the occurrence of the associated perlocution of argumentation *may from the point of view of the speaker be called conventional* in the sense in which Lewis uses the term.

6. The conventions of the perlocutionary act of convincing.

The question which immediately has to be asked, is what extent the speaker's expectation that the listener will apply the same standards of judgement is *realistic*. In other words: to what extent may it reasonably be expected that the listener will apply the same standards of judgement as the speaker? If we follow Grice (1975) in assuming that in conversations a general *co-operative principle* operates (and *must* operate to enable serious participants in a conversation to reach their objective), then it seems to us that ordinarily speaking the speaker may assume, precisely in the case of argumentation calculated to find a common solution to a conflict relating to an opinion, that the listener is taking a co-operative attitude and will indeed as far as possible try to judge the argumentation by common standards. That is, *in so far as reasonable common standards are available*.

In so far as the speaker's expectation that the listener will judge the argumentation by common standards is realistic, we may call the relationship between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the associated perlocution *conventional* (in the sense indicated). The conventions observed by the speaker and listener will in practice not be based on an explicit accord between the participants in the conversation. According to Lewis, however, this is no reason for not referring to *conventionality* (1977: 83-88). Even so, we might express the distinction from *explicitly agreed* conventions terminologically by following Barth and distinguishing between *conventions* and *semi-conventions*, which are *tacitly* ("implicitly") accepted by the participants in the conversation (1972: 16).

The speaker's expectations regarding the way the listener will proceed are founded on the general principle of co-operating in conversations. We therefore propose to call the conventions of the perlocutionary act of convincing *conversational conventions*. The semiconventional status of these conversational conventions means that they were not arrived at through an explicit agreement, but that they are implicit accords which have come into being by degrees and are tacitly observed by speaker and listener (see Wunderlich 1972: 12). In principle, however, it is always possible to *make explicit* these tacitly functioning conventions, so that speaker and listener can still

enter into a "contract" *if that offers advantages*, such that they undertake to adhere to these conventions.

Naturally, such agreements can only be made with regard to *behavior of the language users which they themselves can consciously control*. In his definition of convention Lewis speaks of "a regularity *R* in the behavior of members of a population *P*". However, uncontrolled or even uncontrollable behavior (such as an automatic reflex) is beyond the reach of conventions, and to some extent this also applies to certain forms of "inner behavior" - such as "considering" and "feeling" - which are important for the achievement of the *mental state* of being convinced. The *conventions for convincing* can therefore be no more (and no less!) than act conventions relating to the achievement of (in the form of accepting, or not accepting, opinions) *externalized, i.e. publicly stated, beliefs*.

The conversational act conventions for the conduct of discussions determine which (speech) acts are permitted to the participants in this text genre in the course of arguing and convincing. They regulate not the language users' behavior which is governed by language-variant conventions of "meaning" and "usage" (Searle 1979a: 49), but their deliberate acting in language-invariant (though not language-independent) verbal *actions*²⁰. The conventions determine what the participants in a discussion may *say* (verbal acts) and do in order to resolve a conflict about an opinion. This means that as regards argumentation only the *minimal* associated perlocution may be regarded as an effect to be achieved *conventionally*. It will be recalled that the minimal perlocution implies that the listener performs the (illocutionary) act of *acceptance*, whereas the optimal perlocution relates to a mental state (in a psychological sense), by the listener, of being convinced.

7. Speech acts and rules for rational discussions

If speaker and listener have entered into no "contract" whatsoever with regard to the standards to be applied in the judgement of argumentation, it becomes extremely difficult to achieve a resolution of a conflict about an opinion which will be satisfactory to both parties. Continuing for a moment our use of language appropriate to a monological interpretation of the conversation situation, we might say that the "listener" can still escape the occurrence of the perlocutionary effect. If speaker and listener have explicitly agreed upon the standards of judgement, however, then by the nature of this agreement the listener is obliged, as long as the speaker has ob-

served the agreed conventions, to endorse the point of view of the speaker and thus to allow the minimal perlocutionary effect aimed at by the speaker to occur. He does this by performing the illocutionary act of *acceptance*.

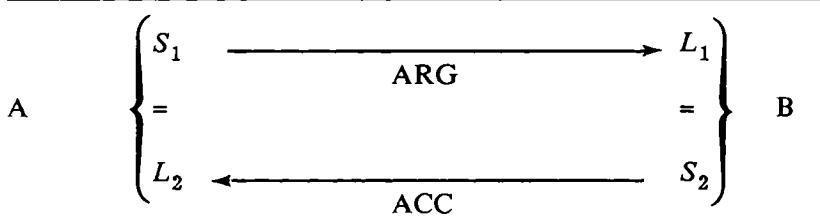
In this case we may say that the listener now *may be deemed* to believe the opinion defended by the speaker, or, in the case of a contra-argumentation, to not (or no longer) believe the opinion attacked by the speaker. However, in view of the "contract" that has been entered into, it does not in this context matter whether he "actually" believes (or does not believe) the opinion concerned. The listener cannot, after all, *be obliged* "actually" to believe (or not believe) the opinion, and for this reason the relationship between the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the *optimal* associated perlocution can never be conventional either.

In colloquial speech the word *convince* is almost always used in the wider sense of what we here call the striving after an *optimal* perlocutionary effect. It will be evident that in this wide sense the perlocutionary act of convincing is not conventional. We use the term *convince* in the more limited sense of what we call the striving after the *minimal* perlocutionary act of *acceptance*. In this specific sense, which does not conflict with the meaning of *convince* in colloquial speech, the perlocutionary act of convincing is conventional.

If an argumentation theory is considered to be a system of rules (descriptive or normative) for the performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing and the illocutionary act of acceptance, then, in our view, a *dialogical design* will be the most appropriate for that theory. The speaker who performs the illocutionary act complex of arguing is the *listener* in the case of the performance of the illocutionary act of acceptance, while conversely the language user who acts as listener in the illocutionary act complex of arguing is the *speaker* in the performance of the illocutionary act of acceptance. Moreover the illocutionary act complex of arguing, which is itself *qualitate qua* always a *reaction* to a particular utterance (or other sign) of doubt on the part of the listener, is always calculated to bring about in the listener the perlocutionary effect that he *react* to the argumentation by performing the illocutionary act of acceptance. The smallest unit in the performance of argumentative illocutionary act complexes with effective minimal perlocutions is a completed *dialogue* in which the roles of speaker and listener are exchanged once and once only. This dialogue situation is shown diagrammatically in table 3.

Table 3

The smallest unit of argumentation with a happy minimal perlocution.



Note: A, B = participants in the dialogue; S, L = communicative roles of speaker and listener; ARG = illocutionary act complex of arguing; ACC = illocutionary act of acceptance.

As we have already argued in the foregoing, it is only possible to regard arguing as an illocutionary act complex if this speech act is situated at a *textual level*. In fact, of course, the same applies to acceptance, for the illocutionary act of acceptance maintains a direct relationship at the textual level with the illocutionary act complex of arguing. Both acts are performed by means of other illocutionary acts situated at *sentence level*, such as assertions, suppositions, statements, affirmations, admissions, and denials.

If arguing is to be regarded as an illocutionary act complex at textual level, explanatory and normative argumentation theories must specify the rules determining the manner in which the (elementary) illocutionary acts performed by the speaker at sentence level further or hinder, or ought to further or hinder the occurrence of the illocutionary act of acceptance. *An argumentation theory must provide the answer to the question in which cases particular (elementary) illocutionary acts are (or ought to be) permissible in an argumentative dialogue and the question in which cases the associated acceptance perlocution will (or ought to) occur.* Only when this happens may we say that in the argumentation theory the "rules of the game" are formulated for the performance of argumentative speech acts in discussions and that this theory links up with the study of language use as it takes place in (descriptive and normative) pragmatics.

8. Conclusion

At the beginning of this article we stated that it was our aim to provide an analysis of the argumentative function of language use. In our

analysis we have made use of the conceptual and terminological apparatus provided by the *speech act theory*. Having characterized argumentation as an illocutionary act complex at the textual level we formulated conditions which a complete whole of speech utterances must fulfil in order to count as *argumentation* for the language user.

We then tried to demonstrate that argumentation is connected by convention with the striving after the perlocutionary effect that the listener is convinced of the acceptability or (in the case of contra-argumentation) unacceptability of a particular opinion. Here we distinguished between an "optimal" perlocutionary effect, which consists of a particular state of mind in the listener, and a "minimal" perlocutionary effect, consisting of the acceptance or non-acceptance of the opinion which was the subject of the discussion and expressed in externalized discussions by the performance by the listener ("I (do not) accept the expressed opinion") of the illocutionary act of "acceptance" (positive or negative). Only this minimal (and not the optimal) perlocutionary effect can be connected in conventional manner with the performance (in an externalized discussion) of the illocutionary act complex or argumentation.

Language users normally tacitly assume that there are common rules for argumentation and that their partners in the discussion will adhere to those rules. A speaker who adheres strictly to the rules derives from that fact the right to claim that an interlocutor who is prepared to act according to the rules is obliged to perform the illocutionary act of *acceptance or non-acceptance* (depending on the speaker's standpoint) of the opinion that was the subject of discussion. With the help of examples it is easy to demonstrate that in practice there are common conventional rules for argumentation, but also that interlocutors by no means always adhere to the same set of rules. Empirical research will have to show the extent of agreement and where the differences lie.

Defective argumentative language use can have important intellectual, ethical and social disadvantages (both for interlocutors and for third parties), and the defects may, as in the case of fallacies, remain concealed from the language users involved in the argumentation, and may continue to go unnoticed even in empirical research. Moreover the rules for correct arguing which are commonly accepted in practice may not only display serious defects when tested against a particular ideal, but may also in some respects prove insufficient. For this reason a descriptive approach is not enough in argumentation theory. What is needed is a normative theory of argumentation which will indicate which argumentative moves are and are not admissible to the various

stages of a discussion if the interlocutors wish to have a rational discussion.

In the requisite normative theory of argumentation, in our view, argumentation will have to be regarded as part of a *discussion* between two parties assuming different positions with regard to the opinion that is the subject of discussion and each attempting by means of a deliberate exchange of attacking and defending moves to convince the other of the acceptability or unacceptability of that opinion and hence of the soundness of his own point of view. This means that in our view an adequate theory of argumentation will have to be a dialectical theory in which it is indicated which speech acts may be allowed the respective parties at the various stages of the discussion in order to make possible a *reasonable* resolution of the conflict and what conditions will have to be satisfied (cf. Barth 1972: 17). Perhaps the "formal dialectics" which Barth and Krabbe (1978) – inspired by the insights of Lorenzen and other members of the *Erlanger Schule* – have formulated may be the starting-point of the development of such an argumentation theory.

Notes

We are grateful to Else Barth, Dorothea Franck, Hartmut Haberland, Herman Parret and Daniel Vanderveken for their useful comments.

1. It is important to note that this definition of the term *argumentation* must be regarded as a *stipulative* definition.
2. Our reason for wishing to achieve consistent externalization corresponds to the reason given by Popper in *Objective Knowledge* for the "linguistic formulation" of theories: only a *formulated* theory can be the subject of a *critical discussion*; a theory which is merely *believed* does not lend itself for discussion (1972: 31, 66). Likewise only *verbally expressed* opinions lend themselves for critical discussion. In order to solve a conflict of opinion in a reasonable way, the parties involved have to make clear, at every stage of the discussion, not only their positions towards the opinion, but also their argumentation for or against it. This means, *inter alia*, that they have to state their standpoint and their arguments *expressis verbis* or at least in such a way that their standpoint and their arguments are "knowable" from what they have said.

3. Cf. Franck (1980: 182-192) for similar criticism of speech act theory.

4. Against the view that arguing always requires the performance of one or more speech acts one might advance the argument that it is sometimes possible to convince someone of something without saying a word, as by merely showing him something. The speaker can show the listener fingerprints so that he comes to the conclusion desired by the speaker, viz. that the speaker has indeed accused the right person of the crime. Quite apart from the fact that in colloquial speech no one would ever term such a mutely performed (and effective) attempt as convincing *argumentation*, it would be right to observe here that this process of convincing must always be based more or less on the following train of thought: "These are the fingerprints of suspect X, these fingerprints must be those of the culprit because there was no one else at the scene of the crime, therefore X is the culprit". Only *seeing* the fingerprints is not enough, nor is it decisive, for the effectiveness of the attempts at convincing: the listener must also endorse to the above reasoning. Whether the reasoning itself remains implicit or is formulated explicitly is of secondary importance. In this case both speaker and listener act on the *tacit* assumption of this reasoning, but if asked to do so they would be able to make it explicit and would be able to affirm explicitly that they endorse it. We therefore prefer in such cases not to speak of a *non-verbal* attempt to convince and a *non-verbal* argumentative act, but instead to refer to an *implicit* ("pre-verbal") performance of the speech acts of arguing and convincing.

5. The breach of the one-to-one relationship which makes it problematical to regard arguing as an illocutionary act also occurs in the case of *indirect speech acts* (Searle 1979a: 30-57). In contrast to argumentation, indirect speech acts, however, do not have to consist of more than one expressed sentence (indeed, they generally do consist of only one expressed sentence), nor are they in any specific manner connected with any *other* utterance (whereas argumentation is always connected with an opinion). Furthermore, in the case of indirect speech acts the primary force is not solely determined by the literal meaning of the sentence uttered and the secondary force is, while in the case of argumentation the forces are in both cases determined to the same extent by the meaning of the sentences uttered.

6. Naturally it is also possible in other cases that two or more sentences together constitute a complete whole. A statement, for example, can

very well consist of two sentences. But in that case the two sentences composing the statement are each in themselves statements, and that is not true in the case of argumentation. The person who sends a telegram stating "Father dying. Mother not well either" is in fact making two separate statements, albeit interconnected ones.

7. Quasthoff (1978) does not regard arguing as a *speech act* at all. However, her use of the term "speech act" appears to be synonymous with the term *illocutionary act*. It would be mistaken to conclude that Quasthoff holds the view that arguing also, or even perhaps predominantly, takes place with non-verbal means.

8. Cf. Searle and Vanderveken (1985).

9. Fogelin too appears, though without saying so in so many words, to make a distinction between the argumentative force at the textual level and an (other) illocutionary force at sentence level. The illocutionary acts which at sentence level are the most characteristic are, according to him, *statements*. On the relation between the two levels he observes: "Arguments [...], like promises and bets, are not used to make statements. Although an argument is (typically) constructed from statements, the argument itself, *taken as a whole*, is not a statement" (1978: 34; our italics). Searle, again, who incidentally hardly refers to arguing at all, sees a connection between assertions and argumentation. He regards as the distinguishing feature of argumentative speech acts the circumstance that, unlike assertions and related illocutionary acts, they are primarily *attempts to convince*. Referring to *assert*, *state (that)* and *affirm* he observes: "Unlike *argue* these do not seem to be essentially tied to convince. Thus "I am simply stating that *p* and not attempting to convince you" is acceptable, but "I am arguing that *p* and not attempting to convince you" sounds inconsistent" (1970: 66). According to Ohlschläger (1979: 44), however, argumentation is not necessarily an attempt to convince, but he does not explain this statement.

10. What we understand by the illocutionary act complex of *argumentation* appears to come closest to what Kopperschmidt (following Habermas 1973: 241) calls a "Kette" or "Sequenz" of speech acts (1980: 88-89). Van Dijk (1978) and Quasthoff (1978), when introducing the terms *makro-taalhandeling* (macro-speech-act) and *Handlungsschema* (action schema), disregard the distinction between text genres and functional language use units and the distinction

between illocutionary forces at textual level and illocutionary forces at sentence level. Quasthoff moreover turns out to think that arguing is not an illocutionary act, so that in her view there can also be no question of an argumentative illocutionary force (1978: 6). This kind of approach to argumentation makes it very difficult to do justice to the connection which in our view exists between the illocutionary acts at sentence level which jointly constitute an argumentation and the conditions for a happy performance of the illocutionary act complex of arguing.

11. Argumentation has the connecting function at textual level in common with the other members of the group of illocutionary acts which Austin terms *expositives* and which he defines as follows: "Expositives are used in acts of exposition involving the expounding of views, the conducting of arguments, and the clarifying usages and of references" (1976: 161). In our view the majority of Austin's examples could likewise best be situated at a textual level. In his proposal for a better classification of illocutionary acts Searle does not call Austin's "expositives" a separate class, but he does refer to the connecting function of some illocutionary acts as a possible criterion for classification (1979b: 6). The group of *expositives* he places entirely within his category of *assertives*, referring to their characteristic feature "that they mark certain relations between the assertive illocutionary act and the rest of the discourse or the context of utterance" as not more than an "added feature" (1979b: 13).

12. The common testing function of argumentative speech acts distinguishes these speech acts from the text genres, in which there is no such all-embracing covering function; the text genres tend rather to correspond to what sociolinguists sometimes call *speech events* (see e.g. Gumperz 1972: 17 and Hymes 1962 and 1967).

13. In our view one of the preliminary conditions for the happiness of the illocutionary act complex of argumentation at the textual level is that the conditions which apply to the happiness of the specific illocutionary acts at sentence level which together constitute the argumentation have been fulfilled during the argumentation. If the argumentation consists of two elementary illocutionary acts which have the force of assertions, then the argumentation is not happy, for example, if the preparatory condition for the making of assertions, viz. that the speaker has evidence (arguments etc.) for the validity of the propositions he is expressing in his assertions, has not been

met. The specific thing about the conditions for argumentation at the textual level is that they are calculated to connect the constituent illocutionary acts with a particular opinion.

14. The reason for referring in the conditions for argumentation (both pro and contra) to the *acceptance* or *non-acceptance* of the opinion and the argumentative expressed propositions, instead of referring – as is commonly done in the speech act analyses of Searle and his followers – to *believing*, is that in this way it is possible to bring about the *externalization* of the discussion which we desire. Here Searle's theory reveals a remarkable inconsistency: the conditions for the happiness of illocutionary acts are always stated from the point of view of the speaker and assume circumstances which may be known to the speaker, but in the case of preparatory conditions Searle regularly includes in his analyses a condition which is stated from the point of view of the listener and relates to a circumstance which, in the way in which it is referred to by Searle, cannot always be known to the speaker (see Searle 1970: 66–67).

15. Cf. Harder and Kock (1976: 50–59) for similar consequences of "presupposition failure".

16. Incidentally we are of the opinion that illocutionary and perlocutionary acts *always* have different happiness/effectiveness conditions and are thus two distinct sorts of act. Austin, too (with Searle following close behind), clearly and emphatically makes the same assumption, but Holdcroft, for example, finds that perlocutionary acts are really a special sort of illocutionary act (1978: 20, 21), while Sadock opines that illocutionary acts are a special sort of perlocutionary act (1974: 153).

17. In the first instance Cohen appears to feel that the acceptance of the illocutionary act is *not* a perlocutionary effect which can occur in all cases of illocutionary acts. For example, he regards the acceptance of a *promise* as a perlocutionary effect as being *alongside* the other sorts of associated perlocution, *warning*, *arguing* and *threatening* (1973: 499). But a little later he takes account of the possibility that this is a *general* perlocutionary effect (1973: 501).

18. As we do, Searle accounts it one of the preparatory conditions for the happiness of a promise that the speaker must *believe* that what he is promising is *valued positively by the listener* (1970: 58–59). Our

objection concerns his rider that the listener must indeed value positively the thing promised before the *illocutionary* act can be called happy. The same objection, in fact, also applies to the other preparatory condition, in which Searle requires that it be unclear *both to the speaker and to the listener* that what the speaker is promising he would normally have done even without the promise (1970: 59). By thus involving the listener in the conditions for *promising*, Searle is in fact requiring that the speaker always has a correct assessment of the listener's thoughts, wishes and expectations in order to ensure a happy performance of the illocutionary act. But a speaker can very well promise his listener something that he either does not want at all or which he has been expecting for some time anyway. In that case it is also quite possible that the listener *realizes* perfectly well that the speaker is giving him a promise. Essential to the happiness of the illocutionary act, in our view, is that the listener can recognize the speaker's intention to make a promise. Whether this intention corresponds to what the listener thinks, wishes or expects is immaterial to the happiness of the act as *illocutionary* act, but can at most have an effect on the achievement of the *perlocutionary* effect striven for by the speaker.

19. Austin too regards acceptance as an illocutionary act. In the final lecture of *How to do things with words* he classifies *accept* in the group of illocutionary acts which he calls *expositives*. He notes of this category that some of the examples might equally rightly have been included in some other category. For *accept* and some other illocutionary acts, he says, the group of *commisives* (to which *promise* also belongs) might be considered (1976: 162). This suggestion is understandable, since *accept* has in common with *promise* that the happiness of its performance as an illocutionary act results in the speaker becoming *committed* in some specific manner. (We also believe that the observation that *accept* should preferably be seen as an illocutionary act is of greater importance than the question of what place this act should be allotted in Austin's classification. Moreover, Austin's classification is itself far from perfect; for criticism and an alternative, see Searle 1979b: 1-29).

20. Here we endorse a fairly well established convention in the social sciences by which *act* is regarded as a conscious, intentional and controllable form of *behavior*.

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Chapter 32

Argumentation Studies' Five Estates

Frans H. van Eemeren

To those of you who know David Lodge's satirical novel *Small World* it might be enlightening to confess that the invitation to deliver this keynote speech, flattering as it may be, instantly reminded me of Professor Arthur Kingfisher's similar undertaking at the conference on 'The Crisis of the Sign' which in the book takes place in Chicago. This is how Fulvia Morgana, who is, by the way, one of the most interesting characters, informs professor Morris Zapp about Kingfisher's keynote speech:

"He gave the – what do you call it – keynote address. On the first evening."

"Any good?"

"Terrible. (...) 'E said, on the one hand this, on the other that. 'E talked all around the subject. 'E waffled and wandered. (...) It was embarrassing." (1984: 118-119)

Embarrassment is not what I'm aiming for. But some wandering is exactly what I have in mind in this tour of argumentation land.

Let me first return for just a little while to that nice Professor Zapp. One of his wisecracks should be remembered here, because I think there is something in it for us. This is when Zapp explains to his young colleague Persse McGarrigle how modern scholars work:

"There are three things which have revolutionized academic life in the last twenty years, though very few people have woken up to the fact: jet travel, direct-dialling telephones and the Xerox machine. Scholars don't have to work in the same institution to interact, nowadays: they call each other up, or they meet at international conferences. And they don't have to grub about in library stacks for data: any book or article that sounds interesting they have Xeroxed and read it at home."

Or on the plane going to the next conference. I work mostly at home or on planes these days. I seldom go into the university except to teach my courses."

"That's a very interesting theory," said Persse. "And rather reassuring, because my own university has very few buildings and hardly any books." (1984: 43-44)

We still don't altogether live up to all Professor Zapp's standards, I am afraid, but we could say that we are on our way. In fact, the main point of my discourse is that in order to emancipate the study of argumentation as an academic discipline, it is precisely the course of international and interdisciplinary communication and interaction which must now be pursued with gusto.

The Study of Argumentation as Normative Pragmatics

In order to give you a clearer picture of my general view of our joint venture, I would like to invite you for a short sightseeing tour of the realm of the study of argumentation. Let's go by whirlybird, so that we get a clear bird's-eye view of the various estates and their interconnections. This way I hope to supply you with a map which does justice to the ecological diversity in the field, rather than having the estates appear as mere blots on the landscape.

It is my considered opinion – and for dialectical if not for other reasons it is good to know that this opinion is shared by Rob Grootendorst, so I could also say: it is *our* considered opinion – that the study of argumentation should constitute the right environment for insights from different perspectives on discourse to converge. In brief, it is the calculated fusion of normative modelling and empirical description which is in our view the major and distinguishing task of scholars in argumentation.

Normative modelling is in this context most strikingly exemplified in modern logics, irrespective of their theoretical shape.¹ For fear of getting metaphysical cold feet or psychologizing, modern logicians strictly limit themselves severely to "world-independent" (or non-empirical) formalism. On the other hand, contemporary linguistics, particularly in its more sectarian branches of discourse analysis, such as "conversation analysis", exemplifies a preoccupation with purely empirical description, being unwilling to take into account any theoretical (or, for that matter, non-theoretical) consideration, let alone leaving room for normative standardization. This attitude, un-

doubtedly, also stems from an inferiority complex of being taken for a priggish pedantic purist.

We think that the required integration of normative idealization and empirical description perspectives on discourse can be realized by construing the study of argumentation as part of *normative pragmatics*. This is what Rob Grootendorst and I tried to do in our book *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions*, defining the crucial term *argumentation* (or, as some colleagues would prefer: *argument*) as:

(...) a speech act (...) designed to justify or refute an (...) opinion and calculated (...) to convince a rational judge (...) (1984: 18).²

This definition combines normative and descriptive aspects. In brief: it is descriptive in its pragmatic conception of argumentation as an ordinary, albeit complex, speech act, while it is normative inasmuch as it relies on a, somehow idealized, "rational judge". This way a mixed perspective on argumentation is provided which enables us to overcome the limitations of an exclusively normative logic, while not suffering from the limitations of painstakingly descriptive linguistics.

Here we have, or rather: hope to have, a point of general significance: the idea that a whole series of false dilemmas, such as (to name just a few of the most familiar labels) the acknowledged dichotomies of description and prescription, empiricism and rationalism, correspondence and consistency, realism and idealism, can be eliminated and maybe even surmounted (I won't say: transcended) by recognizing their compatibility at a different (you might say: higher) level.

Intellectual progress would be totally impossible without some kind of systematic and permanent interaction between the constructions of human knowledge and the many states of reality. Data can't just be shaken down off trees but must first be shaped via symbols and models: by means of interpretation and transformation. For example, before we are able to identify an argument as, say, *pragmatic argumentation*, or, for that matter, as belonging to any type of argument at all, we first need to have some theoretical conception of argumentation types. Otherwise pragmatic arguments, although they may be just as "real" without such a conception, can't be said to "exist" in any sense which is relevant to other minds. Here, reality can't be externalised without modelling.

As advocates of the study of argumentation we are, just as everybody else, at the same time "passive", that is, receptive, and "active", namely interpretative and constructive. In a sense both

logicians and linguists - for practical purposes I restrict myself here to these two groups - may be said to deny this interaction, by exaggerating either the (normative) significance of rational constructionism or the (descriptive) significance of empirical experience, respectively. In the study of argumentation these two perspectives are closely interwoven, at least I think they should be, so that the study of argumentation can bridge the gap between normative and descriptive insights (to name just the most pertinent dichotomous pair) and serve as a *trait d'union*. Eventually, we should make it our business to clarify how we can reconcile the real and the ideal.

On this occasion, I can, of course, do no more than give you just a glimpse of my ideas on how we should go about this. In an Academy of Argumentation which is functioning well there should, I think, always be two distinct but complementary schools which have to be integrated. On the one hand, argumentation specialists, just like other practitioners of speech communication, choose their point of departure right in the concrete world around us and start from the, sometimes shocking, moral challenges we are confronted with in what is known as "real life". On the other hand, these specialists will keep their reflective distance, contemplating from their argumentation Valhalla what would be appropriate as far as rules and regulations go. However, if things are going as they should go, these separate schools of thought are premeditatedly and mutually accommodating. Argumentation theory and research ask for interdisciplinary co-operation where they converge.

The study of argumentation requires a research programme which is designed to ensure the systematic interaction of observation and proclamation, analysis and evaluation, description and prescription, each occupying its proper place. This way its point of departure in the "objective", "concrete" and "real" world is connected with "subjective", "abstract" and "ideal" models.

How is the interaction between argumentation theory and argumentative reality to take place? It cannot start, unilaterally, from experience, as discourse analysts sometimes suggest, nor from mere intellectual construction, as rationalist logicians claim, but these two approaches must be closely interwoven in an integrating perspective on argumentation.³ To put it bluntly: the study of argumentation should serve as an interdisciplinary connector in science. This would, by the way, be in perfect agreement with the appraisal of argumentation by modern, sociologically-minded philosophers as the ultimate decisive force in science.

Let me now, starting from this keynote, sketch the topography of the realm of the study of argumentation. In taking you on a tour round the main Estates, I shall try to draw a map of the landscape which gives you an unfiltered picture of its outlines – not confined to one specific approach in particular, say (to name just the obvious candidates from which my illustrations are drawn) the New Rhetoric or the New Dialectic. I think there are Five Estates of the Realm. In my view, each of these Estates represents a subject of research in its own right which is a necessary component of a full argumentation school, whereas only taken together, and interdependently, can the Estates be sufficient for this.

1. The Philosophical Estate

Let me lead you, using a very simple sample of everyday argumentation into the Philosophical Estate, which is a *Chambre de Réflexion*. Imagine a Mr. So-and-since being reprimanded by a very wise man, say: a rabbi, because he and his wife are always arguing (in all possible senses of the word, I assume). "Why don't you ever agree with your wife?", the rabbi asks. "How can I?", Mr. So-and-since says: "She's never right."

Rather than about right or wrong (or, for that matter, true or false, or acceptable or unacceptable), the study of argumentation is about the way claims to acceptability, truth, rightness, et cetera (like Mr. So-and-since's implicit claim that he couldn't agree with his wife), are, or ought to be, supported or challenged. It is a study of justifications and refutations. Witness the example of "She is never right", such *pro-* or *contra-arguments* (as the individual constituents of an argumentation are called) are nothing out of the ordinary. They are, in fact, common but nonetheless intriguing phenomena in everyday discourse, spoken as well as written. Where there is a will, there is an argument. Scholars of argumentation should detect them wherever they can, thus trying to live up to Woody Allen's significant maxim that some people can find an argument in any subject.

As indicated in the definition of argumentation, its study is, Alpha and Omega, concerned with practical effects: the speech act of argumentation should convince a rational judge of a certain point of view. This means that arguments must be studied in their interactional function of rational cogency. Those of you who think that this outlook on arguments is self-evident, I would like to remind of other possible viewpoints, as, for instance, the vision once put forward by E.M.

Forster, who claimed that he was only interested in arguments as "gestures", i.e. as clues to somebody's personality.⁴

To emphasize the study of argumentation's concentration on the ways arguments are designed in order to bring about acceptance effects on a rational judge, it might be good to further clarify our definition of argumentation by precizing the position of our rabbi, as *a rational judge who acts reasonably*. In this way, we have a point of departure which is shared by all scholars of argumentation and which at the same time explains their different outlooks. As it happens, it is their joint interest to specify what the rabbi acting reasonably amounts to, but their perspectives on what is meant by "acting reasonably" may diverge from the outset. This is where philosophy comes in.⁵

Though the philosophical estate can best be described as a real wilderness, which is partly impenetrable, it would be short-sighted to deny, for fear of loose talk, its general importance as a necessary source of contemplation. Philosophical reflection is indispensable since it concerns the vital questions - some would say: the fundamentals - of any scholarly discipline. Any consistent scholarly proceeding starts from some philosophy which affects the theorizing and is also expressed in the choice of topics, the way research is carried out and the mode of putting results into practice. This is why scholars of argumentation should start from a well-chosen and consistent philosophical perspective.⁶

With the help of the "She is never right" example, I can show you in what ways different philosophical positions on rationality and reasonableness would, roughly speaking, affect the rabbi. "Being a rational judge who acts reasonably", the rabbi wonders, "when am I to regard argumentation as acceptable?" As notions such as "acceptable" and "unacceptable", or their substitutes, whatever their nomenclature and their exact meaning, are central to the study of argumentation, it might be good to have a closer look at the various philosophical perspectives the rabbi could take.⁷

Following Toulmin, we could make a distinction between a *geometrical*, an *anthropological* and a *critical* perspective on reasonableness. For our rabbi, a geometrical perspective would mean that he wonders if the reasoning "I couldn't agree with her. She's never right" represents a substitution instance of a valid form of inference and if there is any reason why the premiss "She's never right" should be regarded as an indisputable starting-point. In the case of an anthropological perspective, the rabbi wonders whether he himself, being the intended audience, accepts the statement that Mr. So-and-

since's wife is never right, and whether he is actually persuaded by the way this argument is presented. If the rabbi chooses a critical perspective, he tries to establish which argumentation scheme has been used and to answer the critical questions which go with it.

At this juncture, the crucial distinction seems to me to be between philosophers who want to demonstrate how things are (geometricists) and philosophers who prefer to discuss them (anthropologists and critics). The latter try to convince you by way of argumentation, reckoning right from the start of the testing of their claims with the necessity of distinguishing between two distinct discussion roles, whereas the demonstrators try to prove their claims by showing that they, ultimately, follow from something which in an undisputable certainty.⁸ The geometrical conception of reasonableness is actually altogether part of the demonstrators's tradition, and in fact anti-argumentational. Due to the way this conception is usually put forward, this deplorable fact often escapes attention. Many logicians who favour the geometrical outlook conceal geometrical dogmatic premisses in a veiled argumentational presentation.

This still leaves our rabbi with the choice between the anthropological and the critical perspective on reasonableness. If he were using the anthropological perspective, his general answer to the key question of when, philosophically speaking, he is to regard argumentation as acceptable, could be: "When it agrees with the standards prevailing among the people in whose cultural community the argumentation takes place". The anthropological perspective is dominated by the idea of the cultural relativity of our conceptions of rationality and reasonableness. These notions are not objective, static, and universal, but intersubjective, dynamic and culture-related, that is, specific to particular people in a particular historical situation. What is considered to be reasonable is, in this view, group-dependent as well as time-dependent.⁹ That's why I call this an *anthropological-relativist* perspective on reasonableness.¹⁰

A nice example of how this perspective could be carried to its sociological extremes is provided by the biographer Paul Levy in *G.E. Moore and the Cambridge Apostles*: "My claim is that what Moore's followers had in common was admiration - even reverence - for his personal qualities; but that as their hero happened to be a philosopher, the appropriate gesture of allegiance to him meant saying that one believed his propositions and accepted the arguments for them." (1981: 9) It is undeniable that Levy gives a recognizable description of how arguments often function, so I guess its so-called "representational

validity", which is deemed so important these days, will be all right. This semiotic symptom function of arguments, however, can only be fulfilled thanks to the primary function of rational cogency which argumentation, according to its definition, is primarily deemed to have. The symptom function is derivative, or - as John Searle would prefer to call it - parasitical.

As a rule, scholars favouring the anthropological perspective won't go as far as saying clearly that the mere fact of arguments being presented to the audience is sufficient. They will stress the necessity of a link between the arguments' contents and some elements in the system of belief of the audience. The persuasiveness of certain arguments is then explained by pointing to the knowledge and beliefs that a particular audience already has - for short: its *epistemes*.¹¹

The *critical* perspective on reasonableness starts from the suspicion that we can't be sure of anything, so that we ought to be sceptical of any claim, whoever made it and whatever its subject. Philosophers who favour such an outlook, propagate a discussion-minded attitude, which invites one party's claims to be systematically subjected to another party's critical doubts, thus explicitly eliciting argumentation, which may again be challenged, until the dispute is resolved in a way which is acceptable to the parties. This way, all argumentation is regarded as part of a critical discussion between parties who are willing to comply with an agreed discussion procedure. A general *critical* answer to the rabbi's key question of when, philosophically speaking, he is to regard argumentation as acceptable, could therefore be: "When it is instrumental in resolving a dispute according to discussion rules which are acceptable to the parties concerned."

In the critical perspective on reasonableness certain insights from the geometrical and the anthropological perspective conjoin with critical insights advocated by Popper and Albert et al. Formalization which is reminiscent of geometry is aimed for by formulating the discussion procedure for rational discussants who want to act reasonably as a self-contained and orderly set of rules. This formal procedure is designed as a set of rules to resolve disputes. The "problem-validity" of any set of rules which is proposed as a procedure depends on the extent to which it actually enables discussants to solve their conflicts of opinion. As I can think of no convincing reason for assuming a final and absolute reasonableness, in my perception, reasonableness is a gradual notion and the degree of reasonableness to be attributed to a certain rule depends on its problem-validity as part of a procedure for critical discussions.

You might say that "intersubjective validity", being the other half of the double reasonableness requirement of the critical perspective, replaces the anthropological perspective. The fact that there can be *more* discussion procedures, the one more, or less, reasonable than the other, already suggests that in some respects reasonableness might be something less than universal. Justice is done to this predicament by the criterion of "intersubjective validity". Contrary to geometrical pretensions, in this criterion reasonableness is, as it were, confined to human judgement, or rather: related to a certain group of people at a certain place at a certain moment of time.¹²

An important advantage of adding the criterion of intersubjective validity to the usual (problem-oriented) criterion of logical validity, is that - via the acceptability for listeners and readers - a connection is guaranteed with ordinary - who knows, even "natural" - thinking. The chances are great that a good many of the well-known logical rules may count on general - who knows, even "universal" - acceptance. On the other hand, it may be unavoidable to bother language users who are really interested in resolving their conflicts by way of argumentation, with at least a few proposals as to standardization. To make up for some inconvenient peculiarities of our established language use, some reconstructions seem to be necessary in order to get a medium which is more adequate for discussion - or in order to have at least a suitable point of reference (or "ideal model") for argumentative discussions. This concerns, for instance, the use of generic expressions.¹³

This Popperian version of the critical conception, thus complemented with rationalist insights, is what I call a *critical-rationalist* perspective on reasonableness. In a theory of argumentation which starts from this philosophy of argumentation, problem-validity and intersubjective validity (which may become conventional validity) can best be pursued by way of functionalization and dialectification, and externalization and socialization of the research subject, respectively, thus bringing ordinary argumentative discourse within the scope of standardized critical discussion. Apart from critical rationalism, the rationale for this can be found in pragmatic and utilitarian philosophies, but I won't elaborate on that now.¹⁴

To set the record straight, I shall elaborate somewhat on the appreciation of *logic*. First, it should be clear that, contrary to that which Toulmin suggests, not all logicians favour the geometrical perspective. At least verbally, many of them share the critical perspective nowadays, whereas a very few others might be considered to

favour the anthropological perspective. Secondly, if modern mathematical logic is a more advanced stage of development of logic than the traditional Aristotelean and the psychological Cartesian logic, as philosophers of logic will have it,¹⁵ then present-day logic has long passed the phase of geometrical philosophy and is no longer on a par with the anthropological and the critical perspective.¹⁶

Let me play the devil's advocate and tell you that the formalism of modern logic is a blessing in disguise. Formalism can take, literally, different forms, which have in common that they are all abstractions designed to facilitate the understanding of certain phenomena (say: argumentative discourses), by making the relevant factors (say: argumentation structures), more clearly visible at the expense of other elements (say: the stylistic qualities of the discursive texts). In that particular set-up, these abstract formalisms serve that particular purpose and they can only be evaluated against that background. As long as you are not forced to use it, it does not make sense to fight the instrument of formalism in general or any specific kind of formal instrument as such.

Formalism has made it possible for modern mathematical logic to allow for "empty" terms in the premisses of an argument, dismissing all material questions as being dependent upon empirical data. Thus, no "existential import" is attributed to universal statements, and, paradoxically, in this way, more justice is done to "natural" thinking than, for example, in less formalized syllogistic logic. This can be illustrated by an argument in the *Barbari modus* which is *not* valid in modern logic or, as far as I can tell, in natural thinking, but which is nevertheless permitted by syllogistic logic.¹⁷ Imagine the following "Cornutus" dialogue:

Rabbi: "Did you ever give support to your wife's claims?"

Mr. So-and-since: "No, I've never given support to her claims"

Rabbi: "What you didn't give, you still have; you didn't give your wife support; so you have support"

One of the main advantages of modern formal logic is that reasoning from supposition and other kinds of hypothetical reasoning can be taken into account and that logic can be made dialogical (which syllogistic logic was explicitly not intended to be).

However, as seen from the viewpoint of a scholar of argumentation, a major drawback of modern logic's artificial character is that the communicative function of utterances is, from sheer necessity, forcibly and unambiguously fixed once and for all, while in ordinary language

- as Mr. Strawson so rightly observed - expressions only get their full meaning in the broader framework of their context, verbal and non-verbal.¹⁸ As a consequence of its detachment from any context, modern logic's formal validity criterion offers the study of argumentation, in my view, nothing more than a reduced and deflated *Ersatz*. By arbitrarily robbing speech acts of their contexts, terms and expressions are deprived of their social function, and at the same time of their specific meaning. Unwarrantedly, and often incorrectly, it is pretended in so-called "applied" logic that the contexts in which the terms and expressions are used in the argument, are simply *identical*, but this need by no means be the case. Without resorting to this artificial reductionism, the argument might not be valid at all.

Of course, reductionism is to a certain extent inevitable (and, as I have said, there is nothing against formalism in itself), but the idealization ought to be adequate for the purpose involved, that is the abstractions must not do injustice to the subject and object of research and must accord with its philosophical starting-point. Unfortunately, this is exactly where logic with its enervating defunctionalisations and its making uniform of speech acts in argumentative discourse goes wrong. Abstracting by taking a step backwards has its advantages, but if you withdraw too much, the ditch may have become too wide to traverse. Scholars of argumentation, however, should not overreact and immediately proclaim logic worthless for their study. Unlike Toulmin and Perelman suggested in their praiseworthy revitalizations of the study of argumentation, it is exactly because of its formal character that logic can be a useful and maybe even an indispensable tool, especially for the elucidation of hidden arguments.¹⁹

I hope to have made it clear by now that the question as to when a rational judge who acts reasonably should accept an argument, may be answered in several ways, but basically two interesting ones, each reflecting a different philosophical perspective. For an anthropological-relativist it should be in agreement with the standards prevailing among the people in whose cultural community the argumentation takes place. For a critical-rationalist it should be in agreement with discussion rules which are instrumental in resolving a dispute and which are acceptable to the parties concerned. This is splendid, but what good it all will do for the study of argumentation largely depends on the kind of theoretical propositions which can be formulated within each of these perspectives, which is where the Theoretical Estate comes in.

2. Theoretical Estate

Typical of the Theoretical Estate are its treacherous waters which may run very deep. Of course, the main streams seem to be navigable, but in order to drift with the right stream, you certainly have to be aware of the current. I'd better not say anything about turning the tide.

In the Theoretical Estate the various conceptions of reasonableness get a particular theoretical shape. This means that a consistent set of propositions is formulated which provide a model of what it means for a rational judge to act reasonably. In this model a specific meaning is given to notions such as "acceptable" and "unacceptable", and "justification" and "refutation", which signify the crucial properties and relations in an argumentation theory. The theoretical propositions in the model are defined in terms of such psycho-pragmatic primitives.

Different philosophical perspectives lead to different theoretical approaches and, eventually, to different theories.²⁰ The primary question is, however, what is the meaning of giving a certain philosophical perspective a particular theoretical shape? Exploiting a rather well-worn metaphor, one could say that a theoretical model provides a pair of spectacles through which reality can be seen in the chosen perspective. Some scholars think that their spectacles show them "the real reality", or they try to construct their prosthesis precisely to this effect, while others consider these model spectacles as a means of gaining a particular perception of reality, and still others, idealists, even use them to define reality as what they see through their spectacles, so that looking through different spectacles automatically shows them different realities.

Spectacles may vary a lot: the lenses can be coloured and polished in many different ways. If they are just plain glass, they aren't of much use, except perhaps as a facade. More sophisticated spectacles, however, can cause illuminating distortions, which may resemble effects varying from those of magnifying glasses to those of carnival mirrors. Similarly, theoretical models in the study of argumentation may have varying designs - some models are said to be created for merely descriptive purposes, while other models have more articulated normative pretensions. In all cases some degree of (formal) idealization is involved, otherwise it wouldn't make sense to have a model at all. The idealization takes place in line with a certain philosophical conception of what it means for a rational judge to act reasonably.

An ideal model is needed to enable scholars of argumentation to get an adequate grip on their problems and to approach these

problems systematically. It plays an instrumental role in mediating between abstract philosophy and "concrete" reality. An extra complication in the study of argumentation is that in this attuning manoeuvre there are also normative aspects involved. If things work out well, the design of the model will be optimally geared to the conception of reasonableness inherent to the favoured philosophical perspective, so that the model can fulfil an heuristic as well as an analytical and critical function in argumentation theory.²¹

Our rabbi knows that in the Theoretical Estate philosophical perspectives on reasonableness are given a particular theoretical shape. In entering this Estate, he wonders which instruments are available to him for dealing systematically with his problem concerning the acceptability of argumentation. He would like to know what theoretical aid he can get in order to pass a reasonable judgement on the acceptability of the argument "She is never right" as a justification for Mr. So-and-since's claim "I couldn't agree with her". What ideal model of reasonableness can he rely on?

Regardless of whether he is an anthropological relativist or a critical rationalist, the rabbi will have to deal with the problem of assessing the quality of Mr. So-and-since's argument for his claim that he couldn't agree with his wife. Coming prepared out of the philosophical wilderness, he can discern at least two main streams in the troubled waters of this Theoretical Estate and, thus, as many answers to his key question. One stream would lead him to an answer like: "I can make use of a stock of knowledge about the systems of beliefs entertained by different audiences and the ways they can be turned to account in argumentation." The other stream leads to an answer like: "I can make use of an ideal model of a critical discussion and a code of conduct for the performance of speech acts in such a discussion." In the first case his theoretical stance could be characterized as *epistemo-rhetorical* and in the latter as *pragma-dialectical*.

The epistemo-rhetorical stream has its source in anthropological relativist philosophy. If the rabbi is indeed a *rhetorician*, he'll have to make sure that the argument is effective in persuading the intended audience, and know why. In this example this would simply amount to a self-examination, but in other, less private, cases it could have led him to an extensive measuring of responses among the target group. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, in fact, supply him with a long catalogue of starting-points and argumentation schemes which are deemed to be useful ingredients of persuasive argumentation techniques. But are they really persuasive? And to whom and when?

In carrying out this kind of research it would be a great help if the rabbi could profit from results of anthropological studies comparing the ideas of reasonableness and the argumentation rules which go with it, from different cultural settings. As empirical facts are supposed to be dependent on theories, and theories depend in their turn on the world-views, paradigms and cultural images beyond it, the success of such a venture would be of great general significance. Maybe Galtung's broad ideas about differing Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic styles of thought and argumentation could be of use here.²² However, our rabbi should be warned that in this kind of work a lot of concealed metaphysics seems to be involved.

The second theoretical mainstream has its source in critical rationalist philosophy. This pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation leads the rabbi to an examination of the quality of Mr. So-and-since's argument for its convincingness in view of problem-valid and intersubjectively valid discussion rules. Being a *dialectician*, our rabbi should make sure exactly where in the process of resolving a dispute the argumentation comes in. Thereupon he should, among other things, check which critical questions go with the argumentation scheme that is used and how these questions in this case have to be answered. In carrying out this kind of research the rabbi could profit from pragma-dialectical insights.

In the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation every argument is regarded as part of a discussion, whether explicit or implicit, between people who are attempting to resolve a conflict of opinion, which may be explicit or implicit. In order to resolve the dispute, the discussion has to pass through four indispensable stages of discussion. The dialectical aspect of this theoretical approach consists in there being two parties who try to resolve the dispute by means of a methodical exchange of discussion moves. The pragmatic aspect is represented by describing these discussion moves as speech acts.

The ideal model explains which rules apply to the distribution of speech acts in the four stages of such a "critical discussion". Although the consequences of violating these rules may vary in their seriousness, every violation is a potential threat to the successful conclusion of the discussion. All violations of the rules are incorrect rules in a critical discussion, which correspond roughly with the kind of defects traditionally referred to as "fallacies". The problem-validity of the code of conduct for rational discussions based on these rules is shown by its being fallacy-proof. Its claim to being also intersubjectively valid, and thus potentially conventionally valid, is sustained by the

obvious pragmatic and ethical advantages which accrue to people who actually observe the code.

Whether a theoretical model is used which is aimed at gaining approval or a theoretical model which is aimed at resolving disputes, in both cases reality has to undergo some degree of interpretation before insights provided in the model can be brought to bear in practical situations. The Reconstruction Estate has to take care of that.

3. Reconstruction Estate

Perhaps it is because I am a Dutchman that I can't help thinking of the Reconstruction Estate as a polder, where the wasted waters are drained to reclaim the land we need and to consolidate it. Sometimes realities as we find them are not yet ready for use, and we have to reshape them somewhat. This cultivation work may amount to nothing more than digging a canal, filling in a ditch, etc., but it can also lead to very complicated Delta works. What we undertake and how we do it depends on our theoretical masterplan. In the case of argumentation study, this would be our ideal model. Using the theoretical model in this way, we are not putting it to an empirical test, but we are trying to make use of it, where this makes sense, for the reshaping of reality, in our case that of argumentative discourse, in such a way that we get a reconstruction which makes clear to what extent it fits the model.

Risky as it may seem, a study of argumentation which purports to be practical must incorporate normative as well as descriptive elements in the theorizing process. Such a calculated merger of the normative and the descriptive is aimed for in the *normative reconstruction* of argumentative discourse. This reconstruction reflects both the peculiarities of the reality where it started from and those of the ideal model which served as a framework for analysis. The significance of normative reconstruction is that it offers scholars of argumentation the chance of sensibly joining together the philosophical "ideal" with the practical "real". This happens via a systematic confrontation of the levels of norms and descriptions, which ends up in a theoretically motivated fusion. In my view, the Reconstruction Estate is therefore to be regarded as a vital asset of the study of argumentation.

In order to comment constructively on a sample of discourse, whether it be argumentative or not, we must know to what extent the verbal utterances comprising the discourse are adequate in view of the purpose of the discourse. As linguistic usage can, as we all

know, serve more than one goal at once, and the argumentative function will not always be the chief of these, it is first necessary to establish to what extent it is possible to reconstruct the "speech event" as it unfolds in practice, wholly or partly, as argumentative. This gives normative reconstruction a conditional character: the analysis may hold true only insofar as the discourse can indeed be considered argumentative. Furthermore, one form of discourse will be closer to the ideal than another, so that in the one case a more comprehensive reconstruction may be necessary than in the other. This lends the analysis an open character as well.

Bearing all these provisos in mind, the reconstruction can have great advantages in terms of surveyability and discernment, especially in more complex discourse. If the reconstruction takes place within the framework of an ideal model which is in accordance with a well-considered philosophical starting-point, then it will make the things we're looking for more clearly visible. This is due to the selection, completion, arrangement and notation which are the result of analysis.

Whatever its philosophical starting-point and whatever form it takes, normative reconstruction is a many-faceted process, which consists of several distinct operations. These operations can be considered transformations of the discourse. Because the normative reconstruction must be adequate, the transformations to be carried out should be accounted for by the ideal model which serves as its theoretical framework. This means that the model must explain which transformations are required and what they amount to. It should also explain when and why they are useful, not only with regard to argumentation but also to standpoints and other relevant utterances in the discourse.²³

In entering the Reconstruction Estate, our rabbi wonders how he can get a clearer picture of what is relevant for him in what is going on in the argumentative discourse. In answering this key question, he views argumentative reality in the light of his special interests in argumentation. Depending on the theoretical stance he takes, the rabbi will get a different answer to the key question of this Estate. Although one specific angle of approach need not necessarily exclude another, it is a good idea if he makes sure that he is keeping the different perspectives separate, in order not to confuse them in the analysis.

If the rabbi is in favour of the epistemo-rhetorical approach, he will try to get an *audience-oriented* reconstruction, because in this case, first and foremost, he would like to know which elements in the discourse play a part in the persuasion process. The answer to

his key question will then be something like: "By uncovering the rhetorical patterns and reconstructing the discourse as an endeavour to persuade the audience." This means that he must try to uncover the rhetorical patterns of the discourse and reconstruct it as if it were designed to be a work of persuasion only.

In an audience-centered reconstruction of a discourse, certain rhetorical transformations have to be carried out. These are transformations which are motivated by the epistemo-rhetorical ideal. Carrying out these transformations is usually called making a *rhetorical analysis* of the discourse. Perelman and other authors of the same conviction provide us with many examples of parts of such an analysis, but they usually seem to be rather *ad hoc*. Analysis seems to lean heavily on introspection and individual intuition. Is it relevant in view of the "She is never right"-example's persuasiveness that it is "quasi-logical" or rather that it is a wisecrack? A consistent apparatus for rhetorical analysis, providing us with all the necessary tools for transformation, is, in spite of the long-standing tradition of this form of analysis, not yet available. Moreover, the need for it is not generally recognised, I'm afraid, and neither is the impact on the normative aspect of the analysis.

In these respects rhetorical analysis reminds me of "conversation analysis". Just like rhetorical analysis, conversation analysis claims to describe what is going on in the discourse from the viewpoint of the language users involved, trying to let the data "speak for itself". But, as we all know, data don't speak. They can't even be called "data", were it not for some kind of, partly concealed, theoretical frame of reference. Without any avowed theoretical starting-point, such over-cautious approaches to reconstruction are, in my opinion, lacking in explanatory power and therefore not living up to their potential.

If the rabbi follows another line of thought, and favours the pragma-dialectical approach, then he will try to get a *resolution-oriented* reconstruction, because in that case, first and foremost, he would like to know which elements in the discourse play a part in the process of resolving the dispute concerned. His answer to the key question of the Reconstruction Estate will then be something like: "By carrying out dialectical transformations and reconstructing the discourse as an endeavour to resolve a dispute." This means that he must try to get his clearer picture by trying to detect the resolution-relevant stages in the discourse and reconstruct them as though the discourse were designed solely as a critical discussion.

Because it is a prerequisite for a critical discussion that the discourse be externalized, functionalized, socialized and dialectified, in order

to reconstruct fragments of discourse such as the "She is never right" example dialectically, these fragments must be identified as being part of a particular discussion stage and, consequently, certain transformations should be carried out.²⁴ The question "How can I?", for example, can, with the help of the transformation of substitution, be analysed as the standpoint "I couldn't agree with my wife". Mr. So-and-since's statement "She is never right" can with the help of the transformation of addition be reconstructed as an argument. The missing premiss in this argumentation can also be expressed with the help of the transformation of addition. *Et cetera.* All these transformations, and also those of deletion and permutation, are motivated by the pragma-dialectical ideal model.²⁵ This model serves as an heuristic tool for a systematic resolution-oriented reconstruction of the relevant stages and speech acts in the discourse - thus providing for a *dialectical analysis* of the discourse.²⁶

Regardless of whether the normative reconstruction is audience-oriented or resolution-oriented, however, the transformations of a discourse can only be accounted for if we can start from an insightful description of the interpretative clues which are provided by argumentative reality. If in a certain context a particular transformation would be motivated by the theory adhered to, the question is whether or not the conditions are fulfilled which allow for that reconstruction to take place. In order to be able to check this, we have to know more about how the aspects of the discourse which seem relevant are actually perceived by listeners and readers, and whether this adds to the plausibility of the reconstruction. Such an assignment leads to close and detailed examinations of argumentative reality - with the help of pencil-and-paper tests, experiments and all that. This is where the Empirical Estate comes in.

4. Empirical Estate

The bare lands of this Empirical Estate are extensive and not yet cultivated. In order to exploit them in the way we want, a well-considered plan of action is needed for their exploration. The country is so vast and there are so many ways to explore it that you can easily get lost. With the help of the surrounding wildernesses, the waters and the artificially designed polders, we can try to orient ourselves in those parts of the land which may be significant to us, and draw a selective map of the area. What this all amounts to is that we should get a description of the landscape which is systematically related to

the requirements of reconstruction, theoretically motivated and consistent with an articulated philosophy.

In the Empirical Estate, attempts are being made to describe argumentative reality. The focus of these descriptions depends in particular on what is considered to be relevant in view of the need for reconstruction and can be problematical in practice. Empirical descriptions do not just mirror reality, as some "objectivist" empiricists would have us believe, but necessarily involve some kind of scientific reductionism. We'd better realize this right from the start, and ask ourselves what kind of reductionism we are after. I think that this is determined by two leading questions: (1) What have we got to go on as far as reconstruction is concerned?, and (2) How do we go about furthering practical improvements?

Normative reconstruction indicates what kind of empirical research makes sense, and should, systematically speaking, come first. It provides the possibility of selection and systematization among the many possibilities and desirabilities in empirical research. Neither audience-oriented rhetorical nor resolution-oriented dialectical reconstruction makes ready-made and watertight methods of analysis that will always produce the correct results. At every stage of analytical activities, certain decisions have to be made. Ideally, these will be reasoned decisions. It is here that the Empirical Estate can offer its services.

Empirical research could, for instance, make clear in exactly which circumstances something is in practice already perceived as being part of what rhetoricians call the "peroration" and what dialecticians call the "concluding stage". It could also inform us when exactly listeners or readers take a verbal utterance to be a standpoint or an argument. The general question to be answered here is which factors influence the identification of the relevant speech acts.

Sometimes the reconstruction will be more or less automatic, but it will often be necessary to turn again to the broader textual context for assistance. How far we are justified in choosing the reconstructive angle of approach depends on various factors in the actual "speech event". For this, a theoretically underpinned version of conversation-analytic notions such as "adjacency pair" and "repair" would come in handy in the hypothesizing phase of empirical testing (and in this way they *would* get some real testing). Of course, factors influencing argumentation production also need to be investigated, but in view of the reconstruction aim the listener/reader perspective has priority.

In order to get a proper answer to the question of how we should go about furthering practical improvements, which will be prominent in the next Estate, we also need empirical knowledge. Otherwise we

would not know whether a proposal for improvement is realistic. Research is required into the actual "on line" processes of production, identification and evaluation of argumentative discourse and the way they are administered by speakers, writers, listeners and readers. It should be borne in mind, however, that "measuring" always amounts to setting an artificial standard which allows for deviations to be determined. In order to make exact measurement possible, this usually implies a conversion of qualities (like the colours of things) into quantitative data (like frequencies). Along these lines, argument recognition has, for instance, been made operational by defining it as correctly filling out a pencil-and-paper test and also by equating it with the latency-time scores in computer tests.²⁷

In entering the Empirical Estate, our rabbi wonders what specific knowledge he can gain about argumentative reality which is useful to him. He would like to know what is known about argumentative reality as far as his special interest goes. Empirical knowledge can be useful, say, in order to decide whether it is indeed realistic to assign the "standard translation" which is required by rhetorical or dialectical theory to a certain part of discourse. In the "She is never right"-example this kind of knowledge could consist in decisive information about whether "She is never right" is really meant as an argument and not just as a joke.

Among the more clearly defined responses to the key question of the Empirical Estate are, again, epistemo-rhetorical and pragma-dialectical answers. If the rabbi aims for an audience-oriented reconstruction, adopting anthropological-relativist premisses and epistemo-rhetorical theoretical instruments, then his empirical descriptions should be *persuasion-centered*. This is because in this case his main interest lies with talking the audience into something, or out of it. Then his answer to the Estate-profiling question would be something like: "I must find out what kind of audiences should be distinguished and which rhetorical patterns have persuasive force for them."

This means that it would be informative for the rabbi to know exactly which factors make people actually change their minds about something. Many kinds of experiments have been carried out to find out more about this. As it is primarily the result that counts in persuasion-centered research, rhetoricians tend to be more interested in the concrete factors of influence involved than in the psychological processes beyond them. Persuasion is linked with immediate response in the form of the audience carrying out some, verbal or non-verbal,

action, or abandoning it, and this explains why persuasion-centered descriptions seem to stem mainly from a behaviourist type of research.

In order to know what appeals to an audience, it must be clear what kind of things strike these people and make an impression. These questions are akin to those researched in *Rezeptionsesthetik* in literary theory and dramaturgy. Persuasion research concentrates in particular on questions concerning the effectiveness of argumentation, such as whether the categories from rhetorical theory indeed have the kind of impact they are supposed to have. Precisely what kind of point of departure or argumentation scheme can be brought to bear on what type of audience?

If, on the other hand, the rabbi aims for a resolution-oriented reconstruction, adopting critical-rationalist premisses and pragma-dialectical theoretical instruments, then his empirical descriptions should be *convincingness-centered*. This is because in this case his main interest would be to overcome all doubts in order to resolve the dispute. Then the rabbi would give an answer like this to the key question: "I must find out which factors and processes play a part in the convincingness of argumentative discourse." This means that he will have to be engaged in cognitive research.

Much more complex cognitive activities on the part of the listener or reader are involved in convincing him than in persuading him. Whereas persuasiveness consists in bringing about the instantaneous effect of the audience responding to the argumentation in the desired way, convincingness presupposes some further reflection by the recipient. In order to be convinced he first has to understand that an argument is put forward and what this argument amounts to, before he can start contemplating how convincing it is to him. For their success, rhetorical tricks, on the other hand, usually even depend on their not being recognized as such.

Precisely because the convincingness which is required for the resolution of disputes involves a whole series of mental processes, in order to get adequate resolution-centered empirical descriptions, a well-considered long-term research programme is necessary which guarantees continuance in the research (including the required replications) as well as systematic order, starting with the problems of identification.²⁸ These identification problems range from the description of factors influencing the recognition of simple argumentation and indirect and more complex argumentation, to the "on line" processes in which these identifications take place.

In fact, the problems hinted at when dealing with the other Estates already suggest some kind of systematic empirical research programme.

For the sake of being realistic, dialecticians would, for instance, like to know to what extent normal language users in real-life contexts are indeed inclined to try to resolve their disputes, and when and why not. They would also like to know what kind of clues there are that a confrontation has taken place and a critical discussion is going to start. Do argumentation schemes and argumentation structures as distinguished by pragma-dialectical theorists in any sense play a part in everyday discourse? And is there any evidence for the fact that normal language users may be inclined to carry out the same kind of transformations as dialecticians suggest? These are the kind of practical questions which occupy empirical researchers engaged in making resolution-centered descriptions of argumentative discourse.

Although it is undeniable that scholars of argumentation have practical pretensions with these kinds of projects, it would be very unwise to say that empirical research should only be undertaken in order to solve practical problems, let alone that it should always start from such problems. If that were to be the case, fallacies, for instance, would almost by definition be excluded from research, and many other important questions would go unnoticed. Without any doubt, however, the relevance of empirical research is more immediately visible if it relates directly to practical problems. That brings us to the Practical Estate. Let's go and see what's going on there.

5. Practical Estate

The Practical Estate ranges over all human settlements in the Realm, including towns and big cities, but also hamlets, oilrigs and sea-vessels. It has a multifarious ecology, which encompasses all the different modes and manners in which the lands and waters of the Realm are used. In this Estate all kinds of argumentative skills and abilities are put to good use, concerning both the oral and written production of argumentative discourse and its reception and evaluation.

Argumentative competence, however defined and delineated, is at any rate a gradual disposition, the mastery of which is relative to the specific goals that are set and which can only be measured by standards relating to these goals. That's why, in order to improve argumentative practice, argumentation should be studied in the varying institutionalized and non-institutionalized contexts in which it occurs: ranging from the formal contexts of government and law, as in argumentation in an address to the court, to private letters and perfectly ordinary conversations, as in argumentation in small talk at "cocktail

parties". In discourse which takes place in formal and institutionalized settings the goals will, generally, be more clearly established than in informal and spontaneous talk. This has its consequences for the demands that are made on argumentative competence.

If we want to influence argumentative practice, by way of education or by other means, we must develop argumentative methods which take the variety of practices explicitly and systematically into account. Such methods should adapt insights concerning the production, analysis and evaluation of argumentative discourse from the Philosophical, Theoretical, Reconstruction and Empirical Estates and translate them into recommendations which are directly suited to the diverging needs of the various segments of the Practical Estate. Irrespective of whether they are inspired by a critical-rationalist or an anthropological-relativist philosophy, that is, irrespective of whether the gaining of approval or the resolution of disputes is considered to be the principal aim of argumentation, these argumentative methods must be designed to bring about practical effects which can be helpful in achieving the specific goals of a particular mode of oral or written argumentative discourse. Scholars of argumentation have a major and complex task here, and in view of their practical alpha and omega they certainly can't escape from it.

It is clear that in order to get outsiders, let's say teachers, to bring an argumentative method developed by argumentation scholars into use, a number of conditions need to be fulfilled. Firstly, space should be created within the teaching timetable. I am not sure how the situation is in these parts of the world, but in Europe it will undoubtedly be some time before the study of the principles of argumentation is taken for granted in schools. Secondly, and this aspect should perhaps precede the first, teachers should be sufficiently *au fait* with developments surrounding the study of argumentation. It's not only a question of them and others realising the importance of integrating an argumentative method in the curriculum, but possibilities should also be created for teaching this subject adequately. A most important further factor preventing the immediate implementation of the principles of argumentation in schools is, at least in Europe, the lack of the proper teaching methods. An elaborately worked-out theory of argumentation is not enough: an effective syllabus needs to be developed and this material should be presented using reliable pedagogics. A course in the principles of argumentation should be structured in such a way that the students work step by step toward a final objective. While taking into account interest, age and capacity of the pupil, student, etc., suitable didactics must be developed.

Entering the Practical Estate, our rabbi wonders in what ways he can help to improve the practice of argumentative discourse. What could he do to help Mr. So-and-since and his wife to deal with their arguments? For the answer to this key question, again, it makes all the difference in what line of thought he is engaged in as far as the philosophy, theory, reconstruction and empirical research of argumentation is concerned. There are, of course, several possible answers for this question. Among the more clearly defined answers are also two which fit in with the two subdivisions we distinguished in the other Estates.²⁹

With an epistemo-rhetorical theory goes, as a rule, an *instruction-minded* attitude towards practice. This is because the anthropological-relativist starting-point of this theoretical approach leads to the idea that getting the approval of an audience is the primary aim of argumentation and that in order to be successful in this all available knowledge regarding the target audience's persuasibility should be effectively utilized. In this case the rabbi's answer to his Estate-profiling question is that he could draw up instructions for people on how to win an argument and not to let themselves be taken in by the arguments of others.

Practical instructions on argumentation are often sold under titles which are themselves supposed to be appealing to the success-ridden mind, such as *How to win an argument*. For his offer the rabbi could have invented the even more direct title *How to persuade your wife*, but *Seven ways to get your point across* would also have been O.K. Of course, there are many less superficial instruction-minded textbooks about the art of persuasion and some of the same insights are to be found in publications about composition and in writing manuals. Furthermore, it should be noted that not only politicians take an interest in public debate and public address.

A pragma-dialectical theory would lead to a more *reflective-minded* attitude towards argumentation practice. In this case the emphasis is placed on the dispute-resolving capacity of argumentation and the need for dialogue in order to be really convincing. Reflection is pursued by trying to supply people in all sorts of social practices with the necessary tools for dealing adequately with argumentative discourse, both as speakers and writers and as listeners and readers. This means that the rabbi answers his Estate-profiling question by acknowledging that he could promote critical discussion and stimulate reflection on argumentation by providing adequate instruments for producing, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating argumentation.

Systematic reflection on what it means to be reasonable is, as far as argumentation is concerned, facilitated by the pragma-dialectical code of conduct. The discussion rules, however, do not provide a simple trick that merely has to be learnt by heart to be applied successfully in practice. The critical rationalist ideas which lie at the root of the reflection principle also remain valid for the way the rules are to be viewed. These rules are not "algorithmic" but could better be characterized as "heuristic". They do not lead to a set of instructions which are simply to be followed, and this at all cost. Argumentation is not an abstract nor a mechanical process, but a verbal and social activity aimed at convincing another person of one's point of view by systematically conquering his doubts. Therefore, argumentation should be studied and taught as a specimen of normal communication and interaction between language users. This means that it must be taken into consideration that there can be evidence of polysemy or elements which remain implicit. It can even occur that a person deliberately formulates something which deviates from what he really means, being indirect or ironic. Seldom can it be suggested that tailor-made solutions are reached or that sound knowledge is offered.

In connection with this, it should be stressed that a student of argumentation should never be regarded as a mere sponge whose instruction is finalised once all the facts have been absorbed. The assumption regarding a reflective-minded practice is that a person who wants to learn something is by no means an ignoramus, but already possesses certain skills and knowledge because he is familiar with verbal practices. Moreover, in the process of learning he is not a passive register who only records necessities, but an active discussion partner who can respond critically. This means that material should be offered which fits in with existing knowledge, and precipitates further reflection, which should result in greater insight. Such insight can only come about if all the complications which inevitably arise from various subjects are acknowledged by the teacher right from the outset and attributed to the Estates to which they belong, the student thereby being systematically drawn into the reflection process.³⁰

The discussion rules which are the point of departure of reflection represent necessary elements of a code of conduct for the resolution of disputes. This code of conduct may be partially congruous to the system of norms students have internalized anyway. If he wishes, each individual himself can, to a certain extent, fulfil the prerequisites of the reasonable discussion attitude which is assumed in the rules. His freedom to do this, however, is often restricted by factors beyond his control. The internal characteristics which specify a reasonable

discussion attitude are "second order" conditions, and the external requirements of the circumstances in which the discussion takes place are "third order" conditions.

For example, in order to fulfil the ("first order") rule which says that parties must not prevent each other from advancing viewpoints or casting doubts on viewpoints, Mr. So-and-since and his wife must, among other things, possess a second order discussion attitude which involves the willingness to express their own opinions and to listen to the other's opinions. In order to be able to adopt this attitude, the psycho-social reality in which Mr. So-and-since and his wife operate – their marriage, so to speak – should be such – so Western, that is – that it fulfils the third order condition that not only Mr. So-and-since, but also his wife, has the right to advance all desired views to the best of his or her ability.

The second order conditions imply a plea for quality education in argumentation which stimulates reflection. The third order conditions make it clear that for scholars of argumentation there is also an important political responsibility in striving for individual freedom, non-violence, intellectual pluralism, and institutional safeguards for rights and means to obtain information and pass criticism. Only insofar as an argumentation theory takes into account these three components, can it, according to reflective-minded scholars of argumentation, provide a socially as well as theoretically interesting clarification of the concept "reasonableness".³¹

To improve practice in a way which really cuts ice, it is also indispensable to examine the philosophical roots of anti-argumentative attitudes which obstruct or hamper critical discussions and to analyze the rationalization of these often covert attitudes. This will take us to the predestinarian doctrines of hard determinists, such as fundamentalists, orthodox Marxists, radical feminists, etc. Then, we are back to where we started: reflection on practice asks for philosophical contemplation, so our tour of the Estates of the Realm of the Study of Argumentation can start all over again.

In entering the X-Estate the rabbi wonders Y.
P is a general New Rhetorical answer, while Q is a general New Dialectical answer.

X 1. The Philosophical Estate

- Y 1: *Being a rational judge who acts reasonably, when am I to regard argumentation as acceptable?*
P 1: When it agrees with the standards prevailing among the people in whose cultural community the argumentation takes place.
Q 1: When it is instrumental in resolving a dispute according to discussion rules which are acceptable to the parties concerned.
-

X 2. The Theoretical Estate

- Y 2: *Which instruments are available to me for dealing systematically with problems concerning the acceptability of argumentation?*
P 2: I can make use of a stock of knowledge about the systems of beliefs entertained by different audiences and the ways they can be turned to account in argumentation.
Q 2: I can make use of an ideal model of a critical discussion and a code of conduct for the performance of speech acts in such a discussion.
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X 3. The Reconstruction Estate

- Y 3: *How can I get a clearer picture of what is relevant for me in what is going on in the argumentative discourse?*
P 3: By uncovering the rhetorical patterns and reconstructing the discourse as an endeavour to persuade the audience.
Q 3: By carrying out dialectical transformations and reconstructing the discourse as an endeavour to resolve a dispute.
-

X 4. The Empirical Estate

- Y 4: *What specific knowledge can I gain about argumentative reality which is useful to me?*
P 4: I must find out what kind of audiences should be distinguished and which rhetorical patterns have persuasive force for them.
Q 4: I must find out which factors and processes play a part in the convincingness of argumentative discourse.

X 5. The Practical Estate

- Y 5: *In what ways can I help to improve the practice of argumentative discourse?*
- P 5: I could draw up instructions for people on how to win an argument and not to let themselves be taken in by the arguments of others.
- Q 5: I could promote critical discussion and stimulate reflection on argumentation by providing adequate instruments for producing, interpreting, analyzing, and evaluating argumentation.
-

Argumentation Studies' Five Estates, Rabbinical P's and Q's

Conclusion

Now I have sketched the five Estates which in my view constitute the Realm of the Study of Argumentation. Each of these Estates represents a necessary component of an adequate research programme, but in a complete, mature and well-worked out programme all Estates should be represented. Specialising in one particular subject may be useful and perfectly legitimate, but in order not to be isolated and *ad hoc*, the research involved ought to be part of a comprehensive research programme consisting of a series of interdependent projects which are systematically linked to each other. To indicate what a five-part research programme of an argumentation school would look like, we could compare the basic outline of the programme of the New Rhetoric (the Perelman School) with a similar outline of the programme of what I call the New Dialectic (the Amsterdam School).

New Rhetoric	New Dialectic
1 Anthropological-relativist philosophy	Critical-rationalist philosophy
2 Epistemo-rhetorical theory	Pragma-dialectical theory
3 Audience-oriented reconstruction	Resolution-oriented reconstruction
4 Persuasion-centered description	Convincingness-centered description
5 Instruction-minded practice	Reflective-minded practice

The characteristics of two distinct research programmes

The five Estates are relatively autonomous. This means that researchers might do all kinds of useful and coherent work on subjects belonging to just one Estate. For example, in the New Rhetoric, persuasion-centered researchers may concentrate - in the Empirical Estate - on measuring persuasive effects, and in the New Dialectic, critical-rationalists may concentrate - in the Philosophical Estate - on the grounds of validity. Although each Estate has to a certain extent its own standards and traditions, the five Estates are also mutually dependent. This, for instance, is something which does not seem to be realised by logicians who, for all their practical pretensions, when confronted with the problems of applying their models to everyday language, do not seriously take into account the systematic peculiarities of ordinary language use and ignore the problems of reconstruction by treating them as "mere translation problems". Thus, by leaving out some vital components, they deprive their venture of its would-be status as a research programme within the study of argumentation and prove their practical pretensions to be false pretensions indeed.

A genuine research programme ranges over all five Estates. Our New Dialectic programme, for example, combines a critical-rationalist philosophy with a pragma-dialectical theory, a resolution-oriented reconstruction, a convincingness-centered description and a reflective-minded practice. The New Rhetoric school combines an anthropological-relativist philosophy with an epistemo-rhetorical theory, an audience-oriented reconstruction, a persuasion-centered description and an instruction-minded practice. It goes without saying that there are also other approaches and that there is a lot of variety.³²

It could be enlightening to compare the Realm of the Study of Argumentation and its five Estates with a country, which needs, in order to function properly, a (written or unwritten) constitution (the Philosophical Estate), specific laws and further regulations (the Theoretical Estate), some form of administration which sees to the implementation of the laws and regulations (the Reconstruction Estate) in such a way that the requirements and possibilities of social reality are met (the Empirical Estate), taking due notice of practical problems and solving them appropriately (the Practical Estate). In a country where the government is unaware of social needs or doesn't take these into consideration, funny things can happen. And this, of course, is also the case if the government couldn't give two pins about its own laws. Just as you can't rule properly without laws and regulations, theory is needed in order to improve practice sensibly. Just as laws and regulations should be consistent with the constitution, a theory ought to be in accordance with its basic philosophy. Just as you cannot make adequate laws and regulations unless you have knowledge of social reality, you cannot make a resolution-oriented reconstruction of a critical discussion unless you know the relevant aspects of empirical reality. This is why argumentation studies are pivoted on normative reconstruction just as the administration is in social life.

The pivotal function fulfilled by the normative reconstruction again focusses the attention on the characteristic cohabitation of philosophical and theoretical efforts on the one hand, and empirical and practical efforts on the other. This explains why a complete research programme can only be carried out adequately in interdisciplinary co-operation. At this juncture, the expertise of philosophers and logicians as well as that of empirically-oriented linguists and speech communication specialists can play an important part. In order to get their contributions effectively connected, a certain degree of multidisciplinary, if not interdisciplinary, co-operation is required. This co-operation, however, does not necessarily mean that these scholars are simply carrying out a joint research programme. Sometimes their combined efforts will lead to a planned merger of ideas into a united argumentation school, but researchers can also co-operate in order to get a clearer picture of their disagreements, to distinctly contrast their insights.

Just like any other discipline, the study of argumentation needs the competition among schools each with its own research programme, which shape separate "paradigms", setting out a framework for various types of research. In my view, the scholarly work done so far should be clearly clustered according to the characteristics of their general

research programmes. In this way a convenient arrangement can be made which offers a better view of the state of the art and makes it possible to contrast the available alternatives and promote fruitful competition. The development of well-defined and clearly-delineated research programmes is a prerequisite.

This being said and having taken due note of it, a warning is called for as to the (probably quite natural but nonetheless very annoying) scholarly inclination to found, prematurely and wantonly, a school of their own. Of course, it is nice to have your own shop, but too many specialist shops, each with its own display cases full of jargon will only scare the customers away except when there is a sale on. One should not start a school unless in all five components of the research programme a distinctive, articulate and consistent position can be offered, that is, if there is an academic imperative. Otherwise, scholarly co-operation is harmed rather than helped. In fact, scholars of argumentation should not make things more complicated than necessary and should try to be understood by as many interested fellow-scholars as possible. Multidisciplinary and also international communication and interaction among scholars of argumentation will help to prevent this kind of provincialism from occurring. Only then, can we put into practice Professor Zapp's ideas of how the scholars of an academic discipline set about things - these days.

Notes

1. Grize's Piaget-inspired "natural" logic is a notable exception, but then the question arises: ought we call this "natural" logic *modern*? It rather seems to belong to the "psychological" stage of the development of Logic. Authors such as Peirce, Dewey and Quine, by the way, have put forward ideas on logic which are of similar interest to the study of argumentation.
2. In van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Kruiger (1987) we stressed the "process/product ambiguity" of the term *argumentation*, which relates it not only to a process but also to a product. O'Keefe, Trapp and others seem to make too much out of this, which is, I think, partly due to their solely concentrating on the use of this word in English.

3. This is why we combined these two aspects in our definition of argumentation. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: 18) and van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Kruiger (1987: 7).
4. Cf. P.N. Furbank (1977: 77).
5. Cf. Govier (1987), Willard (1983) and Wenzel (1987).
6. Philosophical reflection may, of course, take rather diverse questions into consideration, and all kinds of positions can be adopted, varying from allegedly strict positivism to so-called soft hermeneutics. As far as I am concerned, the study of argumentation should not be tied and confined to just one particular meta-theoretical stance. Its philosophical range should allow for general laws to be established or discovered as well as for special and unique pieces of argumentation to be interpreted and judged. This means that the classical dichotomy between nomothetic and ideographic is not considered to be a conundrum to be resolved. It also means that neither an exclusively finalist nor an exclusively causal methodology is favoured in advance.
7. We must be prepared to recognize that the way reasonableness is dealt with often combines or intermingles with a variety of other epistemological, ideological, didactic, or perhaps just practical, premisses. Some of these are of philosophical significance, some are not. Together they may imply a philosophy of argumentation which is part of a world view which is rather less coherent than one would hope for. As Barth (1974) has clearly pointed out with regard to the use of generic expressions, we should be aware of the dangers of sometimes hidden lapses from a consistent world view caused by eclectic insertions of preconceived ideas, and not belittle their consequences.
8. For geometrical philosophers who happen to be absolutists such an undisputable certainty would eventually be the Absolute.
9. These relativist tendencies are most prominent in Wittgensteinian ideas about convertible language games which can be characterized by their distinct modes of argumentation. If they were to be characterized by their varying modes of argumentation, and not the other way round, Toulmin's fields of argument would fit in here. Anyway, the anthropological-relativist main point is that there is not just one reality behind the diversity of argumentation modes, but several,

depending on people's ways of life, and that it's no use to try to find one common denominator.

10. Just like the anthropological reasonableness conception itself, attempts to make plausible that this divergence exists by showing some of its symptoms seem to belong to the psychological phase (I won't say that they got stuck in that phase). As far as argument forms are concerned, I don't think that they ever succeeded in proving their point. I would rather say that classical, medieval and current logics display, on closer inspection, striking similarities. Without any doubt, however, at other levels of presentation there are very interesting cultural socio-geographical and temporal differences, which are in fact most intriguing.

11. In order to describe "epistemes" - or, for that matter, people's "schemes of argumentation" *material* information is required. It is doubtful whether this information can be arrived at, say transcendental-ly, by normative introspection, as is obviously thought by some scholars of argumentation. The question arises who is to tell what these claims are worth. One could, however, also try to get the required information empirically, by a meticulous description of argumentative reality, but then a full-scale examination of all kinds of argumentative practices is called for. Either way, epistemological relativism appears hard to avoid, and communication problems are created rather than solved. In the Perelman School of New Rhetoric, which in the study of argumentation most prominently represents the anthropological-relativist perspective on reasonableness, an unclear mixture is offered of the introspection and the empirical approach. Nevertheless, the anthropologists are to be credited for providing some vital insights, which allowed critical rationalists to develop their perspective. Judging from appearances you might think that there is also a considerable influence the other way round, but this is not so. Though Perelman pays a lot of lip-service to dialectics, it is clear from its general set-up that his theoretical approach is in fact still "idea-ist", as Hacking (1975) terms it. Coining one of Perelman's phrases, it could be called *quasi-dialectical*.

12. If a certain group of people deliberately have been given a special status that authorizes them to lend conventional validity to what they consider to be intersubjectively valid, this is a special form of cultural relativism. Some philosophers assign such an authority to what they call the "Science Forum", Perelman and his New Rhetoricians have

their "Universal Audience", and there are also modern variants of conventionalism, such as the "consensus theory", which have a similar function. It is not always altogether clear, however, exactly who is entitled to be a member of the elite group and why. Sometimes the reasoning even threatens to become circular: when the group is defined by its ways of arguing or by its use of language ("academic discourse").

13. Cf. Barth (1974).
14. See for a more elaborate exposition of this philosophical rationale van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Rationale for a Pragma-Dialectical Perspective" (1988).
15. Beth, for one, defended this position.
16. Judging from his own account of logic in *The Uses of Argument*, as if there were only syllogistic logic, it would not come as a big surprise if Toulmin actually thought otherwise.
17. I owe this insight to Beth.
18. Here I have to resist the temptation to enlarge upon the many advantages of the speech act approach. See Grootendorst (Ch. 33).
19. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: 119-149).
20. In van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Kruiger (1987) we gave a survey of contributions to the theory of argumentation in which the already classical works of Crawshay-Williams (1957), Naess (1966), Toulmin (1958) and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958) feature most prominently. After the completion of that book (in 1981) so many interesting theoretical approaches to argumentation are proposed that I can do nothing more than refer to a few examples of books where they can be found: Barth and Krabbe (1982), Johnson and Blair (1983), Cox and Willard (1982), Cox, Sillars and Walker (1985), Woods and Walton (1987). Our own theoretical ideas are summarized in van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Fallacies in Pragma-Dialectical Perspective" (1987).
21. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, *Argumentation, Communication and Fallacies* (1991).

22. Even more striking differences exist between Western and Eastern cultures. In countries like Japan, for instance, it seems that expressing one's differences of opinion is not done, because of "face." Within Western cultures, at least at the level of presentation, the argumentation styles in predominantly "Anglo-saxon" countries and predominantly "Teutonic" countries already differ considerably. In my opinion, a really interesting explanation of these differences can't be given without taking into account the differing philosophical traditions in the background.
23. Cf. van Eemeren (1986), (1987) and van Eemeren and Grootendorst, *Argumentation, Communication and Fallacies* (1991). An approach which is in several respects akin to ours is developed in the many interesting articles of Jackson and Jacobs, for example in Cox and Willard (1982).
24. Functionalization means that argumentation is treated as a goal-oriented language usage activity, externalization that argumentation is related to the verbal expression of standpoints and other positions, socialization that argumentation is linked to one or more language users who have to be convinced, and dialectification that argumentation is placed in the context of a critical discussion in which pro- and contra-argumentation is advanced, so that a regulated interaction of speech acts can take place. Together, these four steps provide the normative starting-point for a resolution-oriented reconstruction of argumentative discourse.
25. The first transformation that is needed entails selection from the text as it is presented. Elements that are relevant for the process of resolution are recorded, elements that are irrelevant for this purpose are omitted. This transformation amounts to the removal of information that is not required for the chosen goal. For this reason it is known as dialectical deletion. The second transformation entails a process of completion. This is partly a matter of explicitizing implicit elements, partly of supplying unexpressed steps. In such cases something is added that is not explicitly present. Thus this transformation is supplementary by nature; it is accordingly called addition. The third transformation entails a degree of ordering or rearrangement. What may be an effective order of presentation in analytical terms has to do with the way in which the process of resolution would proceed in the ideal situation, and this need not necessarily be the same as the actual chronology. This transformation of ordering or rearranging the relevant elements

is called dialectical permutation. The fourth transformation entails an attempt to produce a clear and uniform notation of elements fulfilling the same dialectical function in the text. Ambiguities and vaguenesses are replaced by unambiguous and clear formulations, et cetera. The transformation of translating the literal wording into the language of dialectical theory amounts to replacing formulations by standard formulations and is accordingly called dialectical substitution.

26. In order to give the speaker or writer at least the benefit of the dialectical doubt, this analysis may in certain cases even lead to following the strategy of *maximal argumentative interpretation*. This strategy, together with other, similar strategies, ensures that every part of the discourse that may play a part in the resolution of the dispute is taken into consideration.

27. In van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Meuffels (1989) we report on a series of empirical tests and experiments on argument recognition in which both these operationalisations play a part. (Previous reports about this project are in Dutch.) Other reports on empirical research which are of interest here, are supplied by, for instance, Benoit (1987) and Trapp, et al. (1987).

28. In the resolution-oriented reconstruction of argumentative discourse the "rational cogency" effect aimed for by an argumentation is the externalized acceptance of a standpoint. Its cognitive analogue in the discussant's psychological reality would be that the person who accepts the standpoint is convinced. There is a vital difference, however, between being convinced and being persuaded. Whereas being persuaded consists in the instantaneous effect of responding as desired to the argumentation, being convinced presupposes some further reflection on the part of the recipient. In fact, instead of saying that someone "is" convinced one should rather say that getting convinced is an ongoing process, and it is hard to tell for sure when precisely it has come to an end. Critical-rationalist philosophers would even say that there is no reason to assume that "the" "final" point of convincingness is ever reached. So there is no apparent reason to assume, contrary to critical-rationalist philosophy, one final mental state of being convinced.

29. Other interesting articles are, to name just a few names, supplied by Scriven (1987), Paul (1987), and Weddle (1987).

30. Persons willing to adopt the required discussion attitude, thus guaranteeing the conventional validity of the rules, should accept doubt as an integral part of their way of life and use criticism towards themselves and others to solve problems by trial and error. They use argumentative discussion as a means to detect weak points in their viewpoints regarding knowledge, values and objectives, and eliminate these weaknesses where possible. Such persons are opposed to protectionism with regard to viewpoints and to the immunization of any kind of viewpoint against criticism. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Rationale for a Pragma-Dialectical Perspective" (1988).
31. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Rationale for a Pragma-Dialectical Perspective" (1988).
32. See, for instance, the three volumed proceedings of the First International Conference on Argumentation of the University of Amsterdam (van Eemeren, et al., eds. 1987).

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Chapter 33

Everyday Argumentation from a Speech Act Perspective

Rob Grootendorst

I Introduction

Talking about *a* Speech Act Perspective to the study of everyday argumentation is somewhat misleading. It suggests that there exists only one single conception of speech act theory and that there is only one way to apply this theory to argumentation. Both suggestions are false. In this paper I shall confine myself to one particular approach: the Pragma-Dialectical Approach advocated by van Eemeren and me, which starts from Searle's standard theory of speech acts.¹

By referring to *our* Speech Act Perspective, I don't want to claim originality with respect to speech act theory in general, nor is it to be understood as a sneaky attempt to monopolize the speech act perspective on argumentation. The only reason to express myself in this way, is to stress that no one else but we can be blamed for the things I am going to say about this perspective.²

Referring to our approach as a *Speech Act Perspective* in fact does not do justice to it, because this label over-emphasizes one aspect of a more comprehensive pragma-dialectical theoretical framework which contains at least one other component of equal importance. We think it is fruitful, from both a theoretical and practical point of view, to treat argumentation as part of a critical discussion aimed at resolving a dispute. Since the first ingredient has a *pragmatic* flavour, and the second a *dialectical* one, we prefer to call our approach a *Pragma-Dialectical Approach*. We are even inclined to refer to this approach as *The New Dialectic*, or - not without pride and chauvinism - *The Amsterdam School*.³ But I don't want to build a Tower of Babel out of these terminological refinements, and, besides, this paper focuses on the pragmatic ingredient, so there is no great harm done after all in simply talking about a Speech Act Perspective.

Now it is time to explain how the study of everyday argumentation can profit from a Speech Act Perspective. In my opinion, the decisive advantage over rival perspectives is, first, its potential to provide a comprehensive coverage of all aspects of argumentation studies, and, second, its capacity to take systematically into account that everyday argumentation is carried out by means of *ordinary language use*. In order to acquit myself of the burden of proof created by giving away my main conclusions, I will take a closer look at the main components of the Study of Argumentation by visiting the Five Estates of its Realm as explained by van Eemeren⁴.

Van Eemeren's account of the five Estates is not tied to one particular research programme but draws a general picture of the study of argumentation. It pays special attention to two influential programmes by sketching their rough outlines, leaving out any details on exactly how the various Estates of these programmes can be implemented. I will try to fill this gap by colouring the map with our Speech Act Perspective. In carrying out this endeavour I hope to show that this perspective is the best way to rule each Estate separately and guarantees optimal interrelations between the Estates.

The first of the Five Estates which constitute the Realm of the Study of Argumentation is the Philosophical Estate, where the question has to be answered when it is reasonable to regard argumentation as acceptable. The second Estate is the Theoretical Estate, where the various philosophical conceptions of reasonableness are moulded into a particular model of the acceptability of argumentation. The third Estate is the Reconstruction Estate, where the various theoretical models are used to find ways to get a better grasp on argumentative discourse. The fourth Estate is the Empirical Estate, where the various forms of empirical argumentative reality are explored systematically. The fifth Estate is the Practical Estate, where the various findings of the previous Estates are integrated and employed to improve argumentative practice in different contexts and settings.

In a research programme which claims to be comprehensive, each of the Five Estates should be somehow represented, but for its viability, the Reconstruction Estate is indeed crucial. By connecting the Philosophical and the Theoretical Estate to the Empirical and Practical Estate, it prevents philosophizing and theorizing about argumentation from getting unrealistic and ethereal, and empirical research and practical advice from being unsystematic and *ad hoc*. Of course, this also applies to our own research programme.

What do the Five Estates look like in this perspective? As van Eemeren has indicated, this question can be neatly answered by means

of some catchwords. In the Philosophical Estate we take the position of a *critical rationalist*, in the Theoretical Estate we commit ourselves to *pragma-dialectics*, in the Reconstruction Estate we opt for an orientation towards the *resolution of disputes*, in the Empirical Estate we prefer a *convincingness-centered* description, and in the Practical Estate we are in favour of a *reflective-minded* practice. In what way are these characterizations coloured by our Speech Act Perspective? In order to answer this question I will look in more detail at each Estate individually.

II The Speech Act Perspective in the Philosophical Estate

The Philosophical Estate is about reasonableness with regard to the acceptability of argumentation. By adhering to a critical conception of being reasonable, in our philosophy of argumentation, the dialectic idea of having a regulated critical discussion is made the basic principle of reasonableness. By linking the acceptability of argumentation to the problem-solving and conventional validity of the rules of a critical discussion, the concept of reasonable argumentation is externalized, functionalized, socialized, and dialectified.⁵ What this means, can be explained by pointing out that its object is not an internal state of mind, but the verbal expression of attitudes and opinions (*externalization*); it does not derive its acceptability from some external source of personal authority or sacrosanct origin, but from its contribution towards the achievement of a specific objective (*functionalization*); it does not pertain to certain characteristics of a single individual, but to the interaction between two - or more - individuals (*socialization*); and, finally, it is not reduced to an extremely absolute or relative concept - as is in a geometrical or an anthropological conception respectively - , but it is systematically connected with a critical disposition displayed in the pursuit of the resolution of a dispute (*dialectification*).

How does a Speech Act Perspective facilitate the externalization, functionalization, socialization, and dialectification of the topic of research in Argumentation Studies? On a philosophical level this can be expounded by pointing out once more the functional character of the acceptability of argumentation rules in critical discussions, which is not metaphysically based, but rests on the suitability and effectiveness of these rules for doing the job for which they are intended: the resolution of disputes. Because of this the rules should in principle be optimally acceptable to those whose first aim is to

resolve a dispute. This means that the rationale for accepting these rules as conventionally valid is, philosophically speaking, pragmatic. Philosophical pragmatists judge the acceptability of rules on the extent to which they appear successful in solving the problem they wish to solve. In fact, to them a rule is a rule only if it performs a function in the achievement of their objectives.⁶

Speech act theory is the pragmatist approach to language use – be it argumentative or otherwise – *in optima forma*. Speech act theory describes the conditions which make it useful – because of the practical consequences they may have – to distinguish between certain forms of language use. In this way it becomes clear which specific commitments people accept in their verbal behaviour, and this makes it possible to explain what it exactly means to conform to the philosophical principle that you should be prepared to undertake certain obligations in a discussion. The speech acts which are most useful to all who share a certain goal – in our case: the resolving of a dispute – possess a degree of problem validity which may lead to their conventional validity.⁷

The merits of a Speech Act Perspective for a critical rationalist approach to the reasonableness of argumentation can also be explained in a more specific and less philosophical way by starting from a speech act-centered definition of argumentation as a speech act designed to justify or refute a proposition by convincing another person of the acceptability of a positive or negative standpoint in respect of this proposition.⁸ By concentrating on the performance of a speech act as a means of verbally expressing an opinion, externalization is guaranteed. By specifying the purpose of this speech act, functionalization is warranted likewise. By addressing the speech act to another person, socialization is on its way. And by requiring the acceptability of the speech act for this person, the road to dialectification is paved.

The contribution of a Speech Act Perspective to socialization and dialectification is formulated more cautiously than its contribution to externalization and functionalization. The reason for this is that addressing another person does not necessarily imply a discussion in which both parties play an active role, as trying to convince this person does not automatically lead to the idea of resolving a dispute, but from a critical-rationalist point of view both certainly are moves in the right direction. This is even more so when one realizes that the subject of research is everyday argumentation, because especially in daily life argumentation is often part of a conversational setting of a more or less discussion-like character.

Defining argumentation as a speech act creates in at least three respects some kind of clash with Searle's standard theory. First, unlike speech acts such as asserting, requesting, and promising, argumentation always requires more than one sentence to be completed. Sometimes it appears that the utterance of only one sentence will do, but on closer inspection it always turns out that in such cases one or more other sentences - which are a genuine part of the argumentation - are left unstated.⁹

Second, unlike Searle's prototypes, as a speech act, argumentation always has a dual illocutionary or - as we prefer to call it - communicative force: besides functioning as argumentation it is also an assertion, a question, an advice, a proposal, or whatever. Third, unlike most of Searle's examples, argumentation cannot stand by itself, but is always in a particular way linked to another speech act, which expresses a standpoint. If this specific relation is absent, any allusion to argumentation is unjustified.¹⁰

In order to solve the problem caused by these three differences, the standard theory of speech acts needs to be modified in such a way that it becomes applicable to larger units than single speech acts. In our book *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* (1984) van Eemeren and I tried to solve this problem by distinguishing between communicative forces at the sentence level on the one hand and communicative forces at some "higher" textual level on the other. It is only at the textual level that a speech act can have the communicative force of argumentation, whereas speech acts such as assertions, requests, and promises are situated at the sentence level. The difference between speech acts at the sentence level and at the textual level can be made clear by referring to *elementary* speech acts in the former case and to *complex* speech acts in the latter. Clearly, argumentation belongs to the second category, and its definition has to be adjusted accordingly.

There is still another element in the definition which has to be clarified. The definition says that argumentation is aimed at convincing another person of the acceptability of a standpoint, but what is meant by that? One possible interpretation would be: attempting to evoke in that person the "feeling" of being convinced. However, from a critical-rationalist point of view this interpretation is undesirable, because it threatens the externalization by perceiving "being convinced" as an internal mental state. As a consequence, what is gained at one end of the process (externalizing argumentation as a speech act) would be lost at the other.

Fortunately, it is possible to avoid the danger of "internalization" by perceiving *convinced* as being prepared to accept the standpoint supported by the argumentation. Since accepting a standpoint requires the performance of a speech act in which the acceptance is expressed, externalization remains unaffected. Treating the acceptance of a standpoint by another person as the purpose of the complex speech act of argumentation means that this acceptance is seen as a perlocutionary or - as we prefer to call it - interactional effect of this speech act. In general, acceptance can be seen as a universal effect aimed for by any speech act. Plausible as it may seem, this idea requires another substantial modification in the standard theory of speech acts. Introducing this idea in *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions*, has in my opinion been one of our contributions in improving the theory.

Although the standard theory of speech acts has not much to say about perlocutionary acts or effects, one gets the impression that these constitute a category as diffuse as diverse. It seems that all kinds of possible consequences of speech acts fall under the general heading of perlocutions: opening a window, quitting smoking, getting frightened, et cetera.¹¹ In our opinion, it is necessary to distinguish different kinds of effects upon the listener (or reader) which can be brought about by speech acts. First, consequences intended by the speaker (or writer) should be distinguished from unintended consequences. Second, consequences brought about on the basis of understanding of the speech act should be distinguished from consequences where this is not the case. Third, consequences brought about by way of a rational decision by the listener should be distinguished from consequences which take place without any control on the part of the listener.¹²

Only the first parts of these three oppositions lend themselves to interesting and systematic research in a speech act theoretical framework. This applies to accepting the complex speech act of argumentation. It is intended by the speaker, it requires recognition of this speech act as argumentation, and it can be based upon rational considerations of the listener. Undoubtedly, all kinds of consecutive consequences can also occur, but these are beyond the scope of speech act theory. The next question is, of course: when exactly will it be reasonable for the listener to accept a standpoint on the basis of the speaker's argumentation? Answering this question requires the formulation of rules for critical discussions and leads to the next Estate, in which the socialization and dialectification of our critical-rationalist philosophy of argumentation get a particular theoretical shape.

III The Speech Act Perspective in the Theoretical Estate

In the Theoretical Estate our preference for a critical-rationalist philosophy is moulded into a pragma-dialectical theoretical model for argumentation. The dialectical aspect consists in there being two parties who attempt to resolve a difference of opinion by means of a methodical exchange of moves in a discussion, whereas the pragmatic aspect is represented by the description of the moves in the discussion as speech acts. In order to resolve a dispute by means of argumentation, the language users involved must observe a number of rules. If they jointly attempt to resolve the dispute by engaging in an interaction of speech acts according to these rules, then their discourse can be referred to as a critical discussion.

The model van Eemeren and I have developed in *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions* (1984) explains which rules apply to the distribution of speech acts in the various stages the resolution of a dispute should pass through. Although as an ideal model it by definition is not a true-to-life representation of reality, and reproduces only aspects that are relevant to the resolution of a dispute, the model provides a set of instruments to grasp reality and to determine the extent to which practice corresponds with the requirements for the resolution. In this respect, the model not only links theory to practice, but also combines normative and descriptive aspects.

A critical discussion passes through four discussion stages: the confrontation, opening, argumentation, and concluding stage. In the confrontation stage the dispute is externalized: it becomes clear that there is a standpoint which meets with doubt or contradiction, so that a difference of opinion arises.¹³

In the opening stage agreements are reached concerning the manner in which the dispute and the discussion are to be conducted: the parties have to determine whether there is sufficient common ground to serve as a starting point. Only if there is such a common point of departure, it makes sense to undertake an attempt to remove the difference of opinion by means of argumentation. In the argumentation stage - as is obvious from the terminology - argumentation is advanced and reacted to. By definition, the purpose of adducing argumentation is to overcome possible doubts about the standpoint. And by reacting to the argumentation put forward, it can be made clear that this attempt has not yet succeeded in a fully satisfactory way. Finally, in the concluding stage the result of the discussion is established. It is only if both parties can agree on the result that the dispute can be regarded as having been resolved.

Furthermore, the model specifies which speech acts the participants in a critical discussion have to perform at the four stages in order to contribute to the resolution of the dispute. The rules of the model indicate what sorts of speech acts in the four stages of a critical discussion can serve the purpose of resolving a dispute. They prescribe when the discussants are entitled, or indeed obliged, to perform a particular speech act. The ideal model is elaborated in rules for critical discussions that specify who may perform what type of speech act with what intention at what stage of the discussion.¹⁴

Starting from Searle's taxonomy of speech acts¹⁵, it can be said that all kinds of *assertives* can be used to express standpoints and argumentation, and to establish the results of the discussion. The use of *directives* is restricted to challenging somebody to defend his standpoint and requesting him to put forward argumentation in support of his standpoint. *Commissives* are used to accept (or not accept) a standpoint or argumentation and to agree upon the division of dialectical roles in the discussion and upon the discussion rules. *Language usage declaratives*, finally, can be helpful in avoiding all kinds of misunderstandings. It should be noted that other types of *declaratives* and all *expressives* are not listed in the model, because they don't contribute in a direct way to the process of resolving a dispute.¹⁶

The starting point underlying the model is that the discussants have the intention of jointly resolving the dispute. That is, the discussant whose arguments do not prove strong enough must be prepared to abandon his position, and the discussant whose doubts or objections have been overcome by the argumentation must be prepared to drop them. This is the basis of the reasonable attitude that is a prerequisite to the conduct of a critical discussion. The rules of the ideal model tell us what such an attitude amounts to and constitute a code of conduct for rational discussants who want to act reasonably.¹⁷

Apart from incorporating the critical-rationalist ideal into a coherent theoretical framework, the model serves both descriptive and normative purposes. With regard to the former, more will be said in the Reconstruction Estate and the Empirical Estate, with regard to the latter in the Practical Estate. In the Theoretical Estate, the importance of the model is shown for the analysis of the fallacies which traditionally pose theoretical problems, especially for the so-called informal fallacies for which the logically-based approach does not provide a satisfactory account.¹⁸ Fallacies can be analysed as violations of the rules of the model. Having the required attitude and observing all the rules of the model, do not guarantee that the participants in a discussion will actually bring their dispute to a successful

resolution, only that a number of preconditions for doing this have been met. Any violation of the rules may have the consequence that the dispute will not be resolved.

Although the consequences of violating the rules may vary in their seriousness, every violation is a potential threat to the successful conclusion of the discussion, regardless of which party is responsible and regardless of the stage of the discussion in which it occurs. Seen in this perspective, all violations of the rules are incorrect moves in a critical discussion. These incorrect moves correspond roughly to the various kinds of traditional fallacies. In our pragma-dialectical theoretical conception, the term "fallacy" is reserved for speech acts which hinder in any way the resolution of a dispute in a critical discussion. Thus this term is systematically connected with the rules for critical discussion, and our treatment of fallacies is linked to a particular theoretical approach. In this conception, committing a fallacy is not tantamount to unethical conduct, but it is wrong in the sense that it frustrates efforts to arrive at the resolution of a dispute.¹⁹

How does a Speech Act Perspective facilitate the development of a Pragma-Dialectical model for critical discussion? Since the rules in the model are formulated as rules for performing speech acts, a Speech Act Perspective is, by definition, indispensable. But what advantage is gained by formulating the rules like this? In my opinion, the main point is that by doing so, the normative rules for carrying out speech acts in a critical discussion are linked in a more or less natural way with the descriptive conditions of performing elementary and complex speech acts. In turn, these are closely connected with all kinds of more general descriptive rules for conducting everyday discourse and conversations, such as the rules described in Grice's maxims, and the rules for turn-taking as described by conversation-analysts.²⁰ To put it more bluntly, our normative discussion rules can partly be seen as dialectical regulations of the rules that already apply in ordinary conversations. Of course, this is a simplification and an exaggeration, but it draws attention to the fact that proposing normative rules for critical discussions has more ties with reality than some people think.²¹

The conditions for the performance of speech acts as described by Searle serve as a link, so to speak, between the ideal and the real. In order to be able to fulfil this important task optimally, it is necessary, however, for the speech act conditions to be formulated in a way that makes it possible to reveal the similarities with conversational rules, say, Grice's maxims. Van Eemeren and I tried to integrate these

two sets of conditions and rules in our book *Argumentation, Communication and Fallacies* (1991).

This crucial difference can be accounted for by realizing that there is a correspondence between the propositional content condition and the essential condition on the one hand, and Grice's maxim of Manner ("Be perspicuous") and our first communication rule ("Perform no incomprehensible speech acts") on the other. Violating these two conditions, damages the recognizability of a speech act, whereas violating one of the two others affects its correctness by causing insincerity, inefficiency, or irrelevancy. In order to express this difference terminologically, van Eemeren and I refer to the first two as *recognizability conditions*, and to the second two as *correctness conditions*.

By integrating Searlean and Gricean insights in our rules for communication, I think an important step has been made towards a comprehensive theory of everyday communication and interaction. Of course, much remains to be done. For example, all kinds of concepts from conversation analysis have to be incorporated in the theoretical framework. Up to now, many conversation-analysts have shown some reluctance to make use of speech act theory, or any other theoretical framework, for that matter. As a consequence, conversation analysis lacks a firm theoretical foundation. This lends most of its results an *ad hoc* character and makes them less interesting. It also makes it more difficult to carry out the required integration. The important notion of "adjacency pair", for instance, could gain from incorporating theoretical insights from speech act theory. Not only should speech act theory become more conversation-oriented, but conversation analysis should also become more speech act-oriented.²³

IV The Speech Act Perspective in the Reconstruction Estate

In the Reconstruction Estate a specific theoretical model is used to get a better grasp on the empirical reality of argumentative discourse. Following on from our Speech Act Perspective in the Reconstruction Estate, we opt for an orientation towards the *resolution of disputes*. A resolution-oriented reconstruction means that one tries to get a clearer picture of everyday argumentation by reconstructing argumentative discourse as a critical discussion. Since the reconstruction starts from an ideal model, it can be called a *normative reconstruction*. The main task of such a reconstruction is to connect the real to the ideal by confronting empirical reality with a theoretical model. The Reconstruction Estate is determined by the Theoretical Estate, which

in turn is determined by the Philosophical Estate, and is instrumental in moulding both the Empirical and Practical Estate. Therefore, the Reconstruction Estate has a pivotal function which is really vital to the Study of Argumentation.

In a resolution-oriented normative reconstruction, everyday discourse is treated as a discussion which solely aims at resolving a dispute. This does not mean that every piece of discourse is automatically regarded *in toto* as a critical discussion. Instead, we look to see what happens if the analysis is carried out as if it were a critical discussion. The normative reconstruction represents the angle of approach which is, seen from a pragma-dialectical theoretical perspective, the most relevant, and it is also the most illuminating.²⁴

A resolution-oriented normative reconstruction entails some specific operations which amount to carrying out four dialectical transformations. The first transformation is called *dialectical deletion*, and entails a selection from the descriptive reality of the discourse. Elements that are relevant for the process of resolution are included, others are left out. The second transformation is called *dialectical addition*, and entails a process of completion. This is partly a matter of explicitizing implicit elements, partly of supplying unexpressed elements, such as unexpressed premisses. The third transformation is called *dialectical permutation*, and entails an ordering and rearranging of elements in the discourse. In contrast to a purely descriptive record, a normative reconstruction need not necessarily follow the order of events in time, or its linear presentation. It rearranges the elements in such a way that the process of resolving a dispute as described in our ideal model, is directly reflected. The fourth transformation is called *dialectical substitution*, and entails a clear and uniform notation of the elements which fulfil the same dialectical function in the discourse. Ambiguities and vaguenesses are replaced by unambiguous and clear standard formulations, whereas different formulations of elements with the same function are reduced to one single standard formulation.²⁵

Normative reconstruction of ordinary discourse from a resolution-oriented perspective depends to a large extent on the ideal model for critical discussions, but a Speech Act Perspective can contribute substantially to the carrying out of all dialectical transformations. It is of special significance, however, to the transformations of addition and substitution. If the transformation of addition requires the explicitization of implicit elements, this means, for example, the allocation of the communicative force of a standpoint to a statement in which that force remains implicit. In speech act theory it is a recog-

nized fact that in ordinary discourse the communicative – or, as Searle calls it, illocutionary – force of a speech act is, as a rule, not expressed explicitly. However, normally this does not present much of a problem in practice. Sometimes verbal indicators give an unambiguous hint towards the desired interpretation. And, in the absence of such indicators, both the verbal and non-verbal context provide sufficient clues. So, a Speech Act Perspective points to a phenomenon which is inherent to everyday language use, and it also makes it clear that critical discussions are no exception.

With regard to the addition of unexpressed elements, such as unexpressed premisses, a Speech Act Perspective has already conclusively proven its usefulness.²⁶ Therefore, it is more interesting to look closer at the transformation of substitution. Here, all kinds of indirectness pose the main problem. To explain this, the following piece of discourse can serve as an example:

"Let's take a cab. You don't want to be late for the show, do you?"

Carrying out a resolution-oriented normative reconstruction, I would say that we have argumentation here all right, but where is the standpoint and what constitutes the argumentation? The standpoint is to be found in the first sentence, and the argumentation in the second. However, the first sentence clearly has the communicative force of a *proposal*, and the second of a *question*, and a normative reconstruction should take this into account. How can we justify the attribution of the dialectical function of a standpoint to the first sentence, and that of an argumentation to the second?

Performing a proposal presupposes that the speaker himself believes it to be a *good* proposal. According to the preparatory conditions for the performance of a proposal, the speaker also wants it to be accepted by the listener (otherwise his proposal would be pointless). One way to get the proposal accepted by the listener, would be to show that it is in his interest. By asking rhetorically whether the listener wants to be late for the show, the speaker indirectly provides a possibly conclusive reason for the listener: he surely knows very well that the listener does *not* want to be late (at the same time it is understood that not taking a cab would cause this unwanted effect).²⁷ By adding the rhetorical question to his proposal, the speaker tries to resolve a potential dispute with the listener in advance.

This explains how the speaker's proposal to the listener can be transformed into the standpoint that it is wise to take a cab, and his

rhetorical question into the argumentation that otherwise they will be late for the show (which is undesirable). Although more could be said about this reconstruction, it suffices to show the merits of a Speech Act Perspective in helping to get the transformation of substitution carried out properly. Without speech act theory, no satisfactory explanation can be given.²⁸

An important advantage of a Speech Act Perspective is that it emphasizes that argumentation in ordinary discourse is not always about assertive statements, nor does it always consist of assertive statements. On the contrary, argumentation can pertain to all kinds of speech acts and it can be presented by means of all kinds of speech acts. This is really a big step forwards compared to the many argumentation theorists (and practitioners) who restrict argumentation to assertions which can be considered true or false. A Speech Act Perspective not only shows that this is incorrect, but it can also systematically account for this diversity by turning to the correctness conditions of the speech acts involved.²⁹

However, this example also shows again that it is necessary to modify the standard theory of speech acts in several respects. First, in the standard theory both recognizability and correctness conditions are formulated, though not always consistently, from the speaker's perspective, whereas it is clear from the example that it is necessary to differentiate between the correctness of a speech act from the speaker's point of view and the correctness from the listener's point of view. Seen from the first perspective, it is sufficient that the speaker believes that his proposition is in the interest of the listener, but seen from the second perspective, it is also required that the listener thinks that too. Only if this is actually the case, can the proposal be acceptable to him. So the correctness conditions have to be formulated from both a speaker's perspective and a listener's perspective (and the same applies, by the way, to the recognizability conditions).

Second, the Communication Principle underlying the communication rules as specified by the speech act conditions, has to be complemented by an Interaction Principle which can account for the fact that in performing a speech act, the speaker is not only supposed to believe that it is correct from his own point of view, but also that it is acceptable to the listener to whom the speech act is addressed. Otherwise, it would remain unexplained what it means to give a reason in support of a proposal, as happens in the example. As a rule, every speech act presupposes its own acceptability, and this is accounted for in the Interaction Principle, which enables us also to explain why speakers, even when the listener doesn't ask for it, take the effort to establish

the acceptability of their speech acts by putting forward direct or indirect argumentation.³⁰

V The Speech Act Perspective in the Empirical Estate

In the Empirical Estate the various forms of argumentative reality are explored systematically by examining to what extent the insights from the Philosophical, Theoretical, and Reconstruction Estate have their realistic counterparts in argumentation in everyday contexts and settings. Starting from a critical-rationalist philosophy, a pragma-dialectical theory, and a resolution-oriented reconstruction, a *convincingness-centered* description of all kinds of aspects of everyday argumentation must be carried out. This means that empirical research from this perspective should be aimed at answering questions concerning the way normal language users in ordinary situations go about in resolving their disputes.

A prerequisite to the resolution of a dispute is that it is clear to the language users that there is a dispute, and what it exactly amounts to. They also have to recognize the argumentation put forward in order to resolve the dispute. Of course, there are many other possibilities for empirical research, but these matters are elementary and they should not be ignored. Moreover, they can illustrate what an important role the Speech Act Perspective can play in this Estate.

The rise of disputes and the way they develop in everyday situations is subject to conversation-analytical research. How are disputes expressed in ordinary language? How do people make clear that a dispute is at hand, and how do they try to avoid a dispute? And how do they try to settle a dispute? In the ideal model of a critical discussion, the rules prescribe exactly in what way a dispute should start, and the same applies to the way it should be resolved.

For various reasons, however, reality does not always in every detail resemble the ideal. According to the confrontation stage of the ideal model, an antagonist of a standpoint must state his doubts clearly and unambiguously, but in an informal situation this can be "face-threatening" for both parties. It also creates a potential violation of the "preference for agreement" which rules normal conversation. Although it conflicts with the demands of the ideal model, it is an established fact of empirical reality that disputes do occur. The question is: how do ordinary language users manage to meet both the ideal requirements and the requirements posed by reality?

Though much more could be said about this, I content myself with the answer that in the strategies employed implicit and indirect speech acts are performed. Conversation-analytical research should find out how these strategies are carried out in practice and what role implicitness and indirectness exactly play. For this kind of empirical research a Speech Act Perspective is required.

The same applies to empirical research aimed at tracing the factors influencing the recognition of argumentation. This requires experimental empirical research. The main question is whether language users are capable of recognizing argumentation which is not explicitly presented that way. Again, it is interesting to look in particular at the various kinds of implicitness and indirectness in presenting argumentation, because it is to be expected that this argumentation is more difficult to recognize than its explicit and direct counterparts. Experiments carried out so far, suggest that verbal indicators do indeed significantly facilitate the ease of recognition of argumentation, whereas indirect presentations of argumentation do indeed pose more problems, especially in the absence of sufficient contextual clues.³¹

The main point I want to make in referring to these examples of empirical research is not that they represent interesting specimens of research, nor that a Speech Act Perspective is crucial to them. Of course, both these statements are true, but other examples of interesting empirical research could be given in which speech acts don't play a role at all. More important is that starting from a Speech Act Perspective it is possible to initiate a coherent set of research projects covering all relevant aspects of empirical problems. A Speech Act Perspective provides the necessary link between the various Estates, and selects the problems calling for empirical research, also determining the order of priorities. As a result, systematic work can be done.

VI The Speech Act Perspective in the Practical Estate

In the Practical Estate, the various findings of the previous Estates are integrated and employed to improve argumentation practice in different contexts and settings. Philosophical and theoretical principles are necessary to formulate an ideal, the results of empirical research tell us to what extent reality is distinct from this ideal, whereas a normative reconstruction can be of help in overcoming the differences. A critical-rationalist philosophy and a pragma-dialectical theory, combined with a resolution-centered reconstruction, lead to a reflective-minded practice. This amounts to the promotion of critical discus-

sions and the stimulation of reflection with regard to argumentation by supplying all sorts of social practices with adequate instruments to produce, interpret, analyse, and evaluate argumentation as part of a critical discussion.

Our philosophical and theoretical starting point also influences the pedagogy of argumentative practice. It contradicts the idea of having a set of instructions to be followed without thinking and without the pretension of offering tailor-made solutions to practical problems. Instead, a "dialectic didactic" is called for, which is characterized by the assumption that a person who wants to improve his argumentative abilities is by no means a *tabula rasa*, but already possesses certain skills and knowledge. Moreover, it is assumed that he is an active discussion partner who reflects upon the advice offered, and, when necessary, responds critically.³²

Reflection should result in greater insight into the problems of argumentation practice. Such insight can only come about if all complications inextricably connected to reality are acknowledged right from the outset and are incorporated into the reflection process. Again, a Speech Act Perspective turns out to be very useful here. This can be explained by comparing the analysis and evaluation of argumentation from a Speech Act Perspective with the analysis and evaluation from a formal logical perspective. Let there be no mistake about it: logic can play an important role in analytical as well as evaluative tasks, but its role should not be exaggerated as most practical textbooks still do.³³

The main advantage of a Speech Act Perspective is that it takes into account all kinds of characteristics of ordinary language usage, such as implicitness and indirectness. In a logical perspective, these are either totally ignored or treated as incidental pitfalls which have to be disposed of as soon as possible. At the best, superficial and *ad hoc* observations are made, serving only as lip service to the requirements of reality. Of course, this comes as no surprise, because one cannot expect to solve practical problems if they are not recognized first in the theory.

By bringing in pragmatic considerations, a Speech Act Perspective does justice to the functionality of language, and introduces also a considerable dose of uncertainty. Analysis and evaluation of argumentation always have an open and conditional character. As a consequence, there are no ready-made procedures possible. The alternative boils down to an attempt to gain as much insight as possible into the communicational and interactional factors that play a part in argumentative discourse. On this basis it will be possible to draw up guidelines which

can improve and facilitate the performance of analytical and evaluative tasks.

The difference between a Speech Act Perspective to the practice of argumentation analysis and evaluation on the one hand, and a logical perspective on the other, can be illustrated by taking the identification of fallacies as an example. In most cases, all that a logical perspective can offer to the analysis of fallacies which doesn't fit the standard definition of fallacies as invalid arguments, is an *ad hoc* explanation which has nothing to do with logical validity. As a consequence, a logically oriented method for detecting fallacies is usually extremely difficult to apply in practice.³⁴

Our pragma-dialectical approach to fallacies brings all kinds of violations of discussion rules into the analysis – not just the "logical" errors. The crucial difference, is that by defining fallacies as possible threats to the resolution of a dispute, it can be explained in many more practical cases why something is a fallacy. Of course, it would be misleading to suggest that the pragma-dialectical discussion rules provide simple tricks that merely have to be learnt by heart for a successful practice. The rules can only be applied to discussions which are designed to resolve differences of opinion. If they are not the case, there are no fallacies in the dialectical sense. However, borderline cases do occur. It is for this reason that the identification of fallacies is always conditional: fallacies are only fallacies if they occur in a discourse which can be regarded as part of a critical discussion.³⁵

Because the language used in discussions is usually implicit, it is not always possible to say with certainty whether or not any of the discussion rules have been broken. This has nothing to do with the analytical instruments or the way they are used: it results directly from the nature of the subject under investigation. In a Speech Act Perspective, the openness of the analysis and evaluation is not treated as a disadvantage, but as a fact of life which should receive the attention it deserves. One cannot solve problems by ignoring them.

VII Conclusion

By way of conclusion I want to refer to van Eemeren's comparison between the Realm of the Study of Argumentation and its five Estates with a country. Among other things, he points to the dangers which arise when the government is unaware of social needs or when it doesn't follow its own rules and regulations. Through this comparison, once more, the importance is shown of keeping close relations between

the Five Estates. Let me add one element to the comparison which can illuminate the crucial role which a Speech Act Perspective can play in the Study of Argumentation.

A common starting point in all areas of the government of a country should be that its inhabitants possess all the characteristic peculiarities and weaknesses ordinary people happen to possess: people are neither saints nor pure sinners. This assumption should imbue not only the constitution and all laws and regulations, but it should also be taken into account in all kinds of economic and social measures. If this condition is not fulfilled, we end up either in Utopia or in a dictatorship. Just as it is necessary to realize that the inhabitants of a country are people of flesh and blood, in all Estates of the Realm of Argumentation the idea should be present that the study of everyday argumentation is about people using ordinary language, which may be implicit, indirect, ambiguous, unclear, et cetera.

Notes

1. When I refer to speech act theory, I mean the standard version developed by John R. Searle in *Speech Acts* (1969) and *Expression and Meaning* (1979).
2. The number of candidates to blame anything on in this respect, is surprisingly small, by the way. There are some speech act theorists who occasionally look at argumentation and there are also some argumentation theorists who occasionally borrow insights from speech act theory, but in general the relations between argumentation theory and speech act theory are just incidental. Both among speech act theorists and among argumentation theorists a systematic approach to argumentation from a speech act perspective is hard to find. Apart from van Eemeren and me, I can think of no other authors than Jackson and Jacobs who have made it their business to explore thoroughly the possibilities of a speech act theoretical approach to the study of everyday argumentation (Jackson and Jacobs 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983).
3. The name *New Dialectic* is chosen to express the difference with both classical dialectic and the New Rhetoric of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1958).

4. Cf. van Eemeren, "Argumentation Studies' Five Estates", in this volume (Ch. 32)
5. Problem-solving validity and conventional validity is explained in Barth and Krabbe (1982: 21-22).
6. This position can be characterized as *utilitarian*. Unlike the pure egoist or hedonist, the utilitarian strives after optimal results for all concerned. Philosophical insights of utilitarian pragmatics and critical-rationalist dialectics conjoin in the conception of reasonableness upheld in our argumentation and discussion theory (cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Rationale for a Pragma-Dialectical Perspective" (1988)).
7. To get conventional validity, it must be clear which speech acts should be performed when and by whom. This has been shown in our ideal model of a critical discussion by characterizing and locating the different types of speech acts which can play a certain, specific role in the resolution of a conflict of opinion. This allows for rule utilitarianism with regard to speech acts in argumentative discussions. This way a dialectical approach motivated from critical rationalism combines with a utilitarian pragmatist approach to language use.
8. This is a simplified version which combines two definitions in van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: 18, 43).
9. The unstated parts of an argumentation can be referred to as "unexpressed premisses" (cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1982 and 1983).
10. Of course, there can be other candidates: explanations, amplifications, elucidations, but certainly not argumentation.
11. Cf. Searle's description of perlocutionary acts (1970: 25).
12. Cf. van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1984: 23-28).
13. In practice, the difference of opinion can be expressed explicitly, but may also remain implicit, in which case the discussion or discursive text is based on the anticipation of a possible difference of opinion.
14. The rules are introduced and discussed in van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: 151-175). A simplified version, specially adapted

to the analysis of fallacies is presented in van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Fallacies in Pragma-Dialectical Perspective" (to be published in *Argumentation*) and *Argumentation, Communication and Fallacies* (1991).

15. Cf. Searle (1979: 1-29).
16. The taxonomy of speech acts is presented in Searle (1979: 1-29). The distribution of the various types of speech acts in the stages of a critical discussion is discussed in van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: 95-118).
17. The rules of the code of conduct are discussed in van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: 151 175).
18. Cf. Hamblin (1970), van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1984: 177-182), van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Kruiger (1987:78-94), Grootendorst (1987).
19. A pragma-dialectical approach to fallacies is discussed in van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Fallacies in pragma-dialectical perspective" (1987a).
20. The conversational maxims are introduced in Grice (1975), the rules for turn-taking are discussed in Levinson (1983) and Edmondson (1981).
21. To give an example, one could refer to the similarities between the starting point in the ideal model that the participants in a critical discussion are striving after the resolution of a dispute on the one hand, and the commonly accepted conversational fact that in ordinary conversation there is a preference for agreement among the interlocutors.
22. Searle does not believe that all speech conditions are specifications of Grice's maxims, because some of them (such as the essential condition and the sincerity condition) are internal to specific kinds of speech acts (1980: 22-23). I do not agree with him on this point.
23. Searle seems to think that conversation analysis has some interesting things to offer to the analysis of conversations, but he also points

out that there are crucial differences between speech act theory and conversation analysis (1986: 7-19).

24. Naturally, other angles of approach besides a dialectical one are also possible. A Freudian psychological analysis would undoubtedly be able to produce yet other interesting results – but there again the same sort of restriction would apply. Things that appear as relevant from one angle remain out of sight when regarded from another. However, one angle of approach need not necessarily preclude another. The same conversation can very well be examined and analysed from different angles at the same time, though it is a good idea to make sure one is keeping the different perspectives separate.

25. Cf. van Eemeren, (1986 and 1987), van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "The analysis and evaluation of discursive texts" (1991).

26. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1982, 1983, 1984) and *Argumentation, Communication and Fallacies* (to be published).

27. The sentence in parentheses refers to the unexpressed premiss in the argumentation.

28. It should be noted, however, that there is an important difference between the reconstruction of the standpoint on the one hand and the reconstruction of the argumentation on the other. In the first case, the speech act does not have two communicative forces: it is, firstly and lastly, a proposal. In the second case, the speech does have two forces: its primary force is assertive ("If we don't take a cab, we will be late for the show – and you don't want to be late"), and its secondary force is directive (asking a question). Only in the second case reference can be made to an *indirect speech act* in the strict sense (cf. Searle 1979: 30-57). There is also a difference in the degree of *conventionalization* between the two cases. A rhetorical question is highly conventionalized, whereas the "indirectness" of the proposal is not. It is only due to a well defined context that it is possible to detect the "indirectness" and find the correct interpretation accordingly. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, *Argumentation, Communication and Fallacies* (1991).

29. Cf. Jackson (1985) and van Eemeren (1986). As a matter of fact, one of Austin's reasons to develop a theory of speech acts refers to

the simplistic dichotomy between truth-functional statements (making sense) and non-truth-functional statements (metaphysical) made by logical positivists. According to Austin, performative utterances ("I hereby declare ...", et cetera) are both non-truth-functional and non-metaphysical. Of course, it would be a serious philosophical setback to return to the age of hard-boiled positivism.

30. The Interaction Principle reflects in its formulation Sperber and Wilson's Principle of Relevance: "Every act of ostensive communication communicates the presumption of its own optimal relevance" (1986: 158). There are important differences, however. First, the Interaction Principle is more general than the Principle of Relevance, second, it is formulated in terms of speech act theory, whereas Sperber and Wilson make it their business to reject speech act theory completely (1986: 243–254).

31. cf. van Eemeren, Grootendorst, and Meuffels, "The skill of Identifying Argumentation" (1989).

32. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Teaching Argumentation Analysis and Critical Thinking in the Netherlands" (1987b).

33. Cf. van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Analyzing Argumentative Discourse" (1990) and "Fallacies in pragma-dialectical perspective" (1987a).

34. Cf. Hamblin (1970), van Eemeren and Grootendorst, "Fallacies in pragma-dialectical perspective" (1987a), and Grootendorst (1987).

35. In case of doubt, it is recommended to apply the strategy of maximal reasonable interpretation, cf. van Eemeren (1987).

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Chapter 34

Structure of Conversational Argument: Pragmatic Bases for the Enthymeme

Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs

Analysis of naturally occurring discourse has become an active arena for the development of communication theory.¹ The principles discovered by discourse analysts provide a substantive framework for understanding diverse conversational phenomena. In this study we display the utility of a discourse analytic perspective by applying its substantive claims to an empirical domain of particular interest for rhetoricians: the domain of everyday argument. We show that the production of conversational argument is a particular realization of general conversational principles. Specifically, we argue that the structure of conversational argument results from the occurrence of disagreement in a rule system built to prefer agreement.² The perspective we take elaborates contemporary argumentation theories in two ways.

First, we view argument as a rule-governed method people use for managing certain conversational events. As such, arguments are collaborative productions organized by conventions of language use in which two cooperative speakers jointly produce the conventional structure.³ We show how the methods of conversational argument organize the ways in which conversationalists *have* arguments (O'Keefe's argument₂), and the kinds of arguments they *make* (O'Keefe's argument₁).⁴

Second, our view offers a replacement for the fashionable but inappropriate identification of argument structure with reasoning process. Arguments are often treated most notably by Brockriede, as containing "mental leaps" from data to claim.⁵ Extending the implication of this assumption, Delia and Willard have submitted that critical models such as logical rules, Toulmin diagrams, and the like ought not to be applied to argument because these rules do not describe the actual

cognitive processes whereby people reason.⁶ All these theorists err by confusing argument practices with the comprehension processes that make them possible. Just as the rules of chess are independent of the planning processes that allow people to play the game, so the rules of argument are independent of the comprehension processes that allow persons to see the relevance of data to claim (and that also allow persons to see the relevance of any statement to some other in coherent discourse).⁷

Our essay has three sections. Section one briefly reviews central principles of conversational organization.⁸ Section two presents a characterization of conversational argument in terms of general principles of conversational organization. Section three elaborates the implications of this characterization for an enduring puzzle: What are enthymemes and why are they the substance of persuasion?

1. Fundamentals of Conversational Organization

Unlike debates or other formal speaking formats, conversation depends for its progress upon local management by participants. The length of one's turn at talk and the order of speaking are not fixed in advance, but are negotiated at each possible point of speaker change within a system of rules for turn construction and turn allocation.⁹ Thus, conversational organization is not simply a matter of coherence within a message, but is a matter of producing order across speakers and across turns at talk.

A basic constructional unit for producing organized conversation is the adjacency pair (e.g., question-answer, request-grant/refusal, boast-appreciation/derision). These pragmatically related pairs of speech acts not only produce sequentially implicated turns, but also provide for structural expansion into broader patterns of turns organized with relevance to a dominant adjacency pair (e.g., arguments, explanations, planning an activity).

The first pair part (FPP) of an adjacency pair establishes a "next turn position" which is expected to be filled by an appropriate second pair part (SPP). The interpretive frame established by issuance of a FPP makes the SPP conditionally relevant on the occurrence of that FPP. Though other acts may be done in the next turn position, the SPP is conditionally relevant in that what these other acts are doing will

be interpreted with reference to the non-occurrence of the expected SPP.

Most adjacency pairs exhibit an important feature, a structural preference for agreement. Structural preference refers to the fact that, of the SPPs that can appropriately combine with a particular FPP, it is usually possible to distinguish one which the FPP is designed to get (the structurally preferred SPP) and one which the FPP is designed to avoid (the structurally dispreferred SPP). For example, the structurally preferred response to a request is a grant; grants are what requests are conventionally designed to get. But refusals, as dispreferred SPPs, also count as relevant responses to requests. The preference for agreement operates on SPPs by creating a general presumption for agreement in the absence of good reason to do otherwise; it operates on FPPs by promoting the production of turns that will get agreement and by suppressing turns which will not.¹⁰

Disagreement, when it does occur, signals a particular sort of interactional trouble: When an FPP is comprehensible, but the preferred SPP is withheld, there must be some substantive reason why the other won't (as opposed to can't) supply the preferred response. Just as explanation and other ways of "filling in" relevant information function to relieve problems of comprehension and understanding – where a preferred response can't be supplied – so argument functions to overcome objections to accepting a turn. Structurally, having arguments (arguments₂) is a special instance of the repair organizations to accepting a turn. Structurally, distinguished from repair in general in that they occur in a context of disagreement. We find, however, that making arguments (arguments₁) can occur outside of having an argument. Such instances occur without repair; disagreement relevant repair is implicated, but not necessarily actualized. The organization of argument in conversation results from the operation of general conversational principles with respect to the regulations of dispreferred SPPs and disagreeable FPPs.

2. A Characterization of Conversational Argument

We begin with concrete instances of talk which natural language users recognize as arguments or as related speech events.¹² From these instances we reconstruct the tacit knowledge by which conversationalists organize such events, and thereby provide a technical description

of their activities. Our empiricist program is based on the belief that the extentionality of natural language concepts ought not be manipulated on the basis of extrinsic considerations. Since conversationalists organize their activities on the basis of these concepts, we object to applying to discourse any concept not shown to be reflexively present in the discourse.

We propose that the class of occurrences which natural language users would identify as arguments may be delimited by two conditions - one functional, the other structural. First, arguments are disagreement relevant speech events; they are characterized by the projection, avoidance, production, or resolution of disagreement. Argument attends to the withholding, or potential withholding, of a preferred SPP and the failure to withdraw or suppress the disagreeable FPP. These episodes range from instances of pure disagreement, in which the participants exchange and recycle incompatible pair parts, to instances in which the basis for the disagreement becomes the substance of the argument. In treating them, we consider how an utterance may become arguable and supportable, i.e., the possible bases for argument. Second, arguments appear as a variety of structural expansions of adjacency pairs. They may involve turn expansions or sequence expansions focusing on either pair part, but they occur within the interpretive frame provided by a dominant adjacency pair.

In the prototypical case, such as (1), argument involves open disagreement between two parties. One party issues a proposal or other FPP, as in 01, which is then rejected, objected to, or countered by the other party, as in 02, and then resupported by the first party, and so on. The turn and sequence expansions elicit or supply objections or support for some aspect of either the disagreeable FPP or the dispreferred SPP, or for some aspect of already supplied objections and support:

- (1) 01 J: Let's get that one.
 02 A: No. I don't like that one. Let's go somewhere else.
 03 J: Shower curtains are all the same.
 04 A: Well yeah. I know. But you might as well get one that looks nice.
 05 J: And probably get one that costs more too.

In contrast to the prototypical form of argument is what Piaget has called primitive argument and quarreling.¹³ Here disagreement becomes

a matter of argument through the simple recycling of opposing turns or by escalation through aggravation of the turns.¹⁴ In (2), turns 03–07 involve this form of argument:

- (2) 01 S: Scott, what are you doing?
02 C: Making coffee.
03 S: No.
04 C: Yes.
05 S: NO!
06 C: YES!
07 S: I'm warning you.
08 C: What?
09 S: It's four-thirty in the morning and I've been waiting an hour and a half for you to come to bed.

Although offering grounds for supporting or objecting to an utterance may be the prototypical argument (it is a necessary condition for *making* an argument), we consider primitive argument to be more fundamental. One can neither make nor have an argument outside of the relevance of the disagreement expressed in primitive argument. The prototypical form of an argument presupposes such a pragmatic relation. However, reasons for extended disagreement need not be stated in order to have a primitive argument.

Though primitive arguments may stand alone, they regularly occur in the environment of more typical forms. Since the preference for agreement restricts disagreement to instances where barriers obstruct agreement, cooperative speakers should be willing to supply evidence of such barriers when they are unwilling to supply a preferred SPP or to back down from a disagreeable FPP. As in 08 of (2), conversationalists can demand such evidence, although they do not always do so. Tied together in these ways, the primitive and prototypical forms represent the range of phenomena we intend to capture by our characterization of argument.

*The Functional Condition:
Ways for a Turn to Be Arguable*

By viewing argument as a method for organizing conversational activity, we find disagreement to be over *actions* rather than propositions. Arguments involve a mutual orientation toward obtaining and providing preferred SPPs, e.g., compliance or assent. Viewing argument as simply

involving opposing propositions misses the "command aspect" of the speech act in which such propositions are expressed. Semantic relations are only one expression of a fundamentally pragmatic organization.¹⁵

We refer to the turn which opens an argument as the *arguable* in order to leave open the set of objects which may become the focus of argument. While any act is potentially arguable – just as any act is potentially expandable – the arguable aspects of a turn may be specified fairly comprehensively. Any turn may become arguable at two levels: the propositional and the performative.¹⁶

These levels represent the sorts of barriers to agreement by which a speech act may be found defective. Treating a turn as arguable in any of the following directions will be heard as standing for or projecting rejection or repair of that turn.

Propositional level. Argument may be concerned with the propositional content of an utterance, with its sense and reference. It involves what is predicated in an utterance, as well as all those attendant propositions that are presupposed or entailed by a speaker in making the utterance.¹⁷ Although the comprehensibility of the propositional content is a prerequisite to argument – it is a matter for explanation, not argument – the *truth* and *consistency* of what is said may be treated by the hearer as obstacles to agreement, prompting argument. Whatever else is being done in the arguable turn is momentarily suspended. For example, in (3),¹⁸ S's warning doesn't receive uptake; instead interaction centers around a presupposition of what is said in 01. And in (4), M's question doesn't get answered because the question presupposes that Mark has a brother – a proposition which becomes the focus of argument. In such circumstances the speech act becomes defective on the grounds that the proposition is defective:

- (3) 01 S: Pam those Spanish people gonna tell on you!
 02 P: They ain't Spanish. They Portariccan.
 03 S: How you know they Portariccan.
 04 P: They TALK Portariccan.

- (4) 01 M: How old is Mark's brother?
 02 S: He don't have a brother.
 03 M: He's gotta have a brother.
 04 S: Nope.
 05 M: Now I *know* that family's got two brothers and two sisters.
 06 S: No. They've got one brother and two sisters.
 07 M: Well now, she *told* me she had two sons and two daughters.

08 S: Not in Mark's family. Now the only other brother I know of - Mark, he told me that he had a brother that died a long time ago.

09 M: Oh. Well, that must be it. The older brother's dead.

Performative level. Any utterance may become arguable on the grounds that the illocutionary properties of the speech acts in the adjacency pair are somehow defective. Conversationalists may assert and deny that the felicity conditions for the valid performance of either the FPP or SPP are satisfied, question their status, or raise facts that support or undermine the standing of such conditions.¹⁹ At this level of argument the truth or consistency of the propositional content is secondary to the appropriateness of the act in question. Though this level of argument includes much of what has traditionally been involved in the analysis of propositions of action, it extends to the act of proposing itself and its relation to what is proposed. For example, a suggestion may be argued with on the grounds of its sincerity - that the issuer doesn't really care if what is suggested benefits the recipient - even though what is said may be true.²⁰ An assertion may prompt argument because the issuer has no right to make the assertion (e.g., because doing so betrays a confidence or says something unflattering about an absent friend).

The felicity conditions for a variety of speech acts have been proposed in the literature.²¹ Although each speech act has its own particular set, generally included are considerations of the right of the speaker to perform the act, the obligation of the recipient to provide the intended response, the sincerity of the speaker, and specific preparatory and justificatory conditions. To this set of conditions we would also add, as regular considerations for any speech act, matters of style and attitude toward the propositional content.

In (5), the sincerity of P in issuing a complaint is the basis for making 01 arguable. In (6), as S and C argue over who should drive the car home from school and who should take the bus, the mutually exclusive character of alternative activities and the relative desirability of those activities are used both to justify the need for the request and to justify not wanting to comply. In (7), the right of B to make the criticism of D and C's drug consumptions in 16 is raised in 17 by comparing such use to B's own cigarette habit:

- (5) 01 P: I don't understand why they - you have to pay tax here. I don't see why they don't just write a letter for you like at Pennsylvania saying that teaching is a requirement so that they sen you your money back.
- 02 S: Well, there's a good reason why they don't do it here, P, and I know you know what it is 'cause I told you what it is before.
- 03 P: Well, uh =
- 04 B: Yeah, why don't you remember?
- 05 P: Uh - uh - I....I must have forgotten. Now what's the reason?
- (6) 01 S: How long are you going to be napping? 'Cause I can stay on campus for a long time =
- 02 C: I don't want to come back on campus. I want to do work.
- 03 S: Wellll, then why don't you take the bus, 'cause I'm going to stay until after five and it'll be dark and I don't want to take the bus then.
- 04 C: Well I don't want to take the bus either.
- 05 S: But I have work to do.
- 06 C: So do I.
(pause)
- 07 S: Allrright (hhhhh) I'll take the bus.
- (7) 01 D: We have eight ounces left. That should last us for a couple of / / days. At least.
- 02 B: Heh yeah, I guess so.
- 03 D: Twenty-four days I would estimate.
- 04 B: Eight *ounces*? I
- 05 D: Sure. We smoke a lid in two or three days..
- 16 B: That's like - that's like drinking eight or nine kegs every week.
- 17 C: Or smoking two packs of cigarettes every day.
- 18 A: EHH-heh-heh-heh-heh.
- 19 B: Yeah. (.) Only I don' smoke two packs // of cigarettes every -
- 20 C: Three? Four?
- 21 B: No. Not nearly that many.

In characterizing the functional conditions for argument we adapt a theory of speech acts to a sequential environment. Disagreement is a pragmatic relation between pair parts. In argument, speech acts have a discourse function of attempting to repair such disagreement. This may involve primitive repair efforts, by simple recycling of turns, or it may involve examination of the conditions of agreement. Arguable turns involve not only the propositional content of speech acts, but their performance as well.

3. The Structural Condition: Disagreement-relevant Expansion

Either or both parts in an adjacency pair may become the arguable which prompts an argument expansion. A recipient of an FPP may treat it as arguable in order to justify an upcoming dispreferred SPP, or to obtain a backdown. An SPP may become arguable in order to obtain a more preferred substitute. Authors of an FPP or SPP may imply the arguability of their own turns by providing unsolicited support for issuing the turn.

These expansions follow the organizational patterns for conversation in general: An adjacency pair may be expanded through adjuncts to either pair part, thereby creating a multiunit turn, or an adjacency pair can be expanded sequentially through presequences, insertion sequences, or postsequences.²² Because these possibilities may be combined and because they may be repetitively and recursively applied, an indefinitely large set of patterns may be generated. Not only may a pair part of the dominant adjacency pair become subject to repeated expansions; any expansion unit may itself become arguable, thereby providing for the possibility of an indefinite regression of criticism and for a refocusing on topics of argument far removed from the original claim.

These several forms of expansion are variously related to the appearance of argument. One important dimension of difference has to do with whether the expansion involves disagreement-based repair or involves the anticipation of such repair. The way in which the properties of structural expansions generate this difference sheds light on relations in everyday conversation among such options as implying or making an argument, avoiding an argument, backing down from an argument, and having an argument.

Within-turn expansion. Any pair part has the potential of being expanded into a multiunit turn by adjuncts which provide support for doing that pair part. For example, dispreferred SPPs are often accompanied by excuses and justifications (see (1) 02). Likewise, requests may be preceded by reasons which justify the imposition ("I've gotta go to the store. Would you take the baby while I'm gone?"). Additionally, such adjuncts may arise when a recipient's failure to produce the preferred response immediately leads an issuer of an FPP to anticipate trouble. In (8), S progressively upgrades her request as each new transition relevance place (marked by asterisks) fails to get compliance:

- (8) 01 S: Where's Keppel? I don't 'spose you'd go get that* // for
 me = *after I // helped you* with your problem.*
 02 ((C grimaces))
 03 C: Heh-heh-heh. HHHHOkay]okay.

These sorts of expansions make or imply arguments in support of the main pair part in order to avoid having an argument. A supported turn may secure agreement or acceptance when an unsupported turn would ordinarily get argument.

Such turns are disagreement-relevant in that their design implies the potential arguability of the pair part. Grice's Quantity Maxim instructs conversationalists to be as informative as necessary for the purposes at hand, but to avoid being more informative than is necessary. When the hearer is being cooperative and is respecting the preference for agreement, providing extra supporting information can give rise to the implicature that the speaker assumes that the pair part is somehow controversial. It also gives rise to the implicature that the speaker is committed to the pair part despite the anticipation of apparent objections. Thus, within-turn expansion exploits the Quantity Maxim by apparently violating it at the level of what is said and requiring the hearer to make these assumptions to see how it is observed at the level of what is implicated.²³

Presequences. Like within-turn expansions, presequences often make or imply arguments to avoid having an argument. They are disagreement-relevant insofar as they are designed to gain prior agreement with propositions that may secure "stock issues" (felicity conditions and propositional content) involved in the potential arguability of the upcoming FPP.

Unlike within-turn expansions, presequences are collaboratively produced. Agreement with a proposition is explicitly sought and not simply presumed as in the within-turn expansion. Thus, the upcoming FPP is usually not uttered when responses in presequences establish probable barriers to agreement.

Although they may be heard with relevance to some indefinite upcoming FPP, presequences are often heard in terms of some specific upcoming FPP and are answered so as to project the likely SPP for that FPP. Recipients may disagree in a presequence in order to forestall the FPP. In (6), this strategy leads C in 02 to pre-empt the upcoming request altogether with a rejection rather than provide an answer to the prerequest, leading S to modify the request. In (9), the answer C provides in 02 to S's prerequest is built to avoid the upcoming request and is then used as a resource for justifying refusal when the request comes anyway:

- (9) (C is in the bathroom, with S outside)
 - 01 S: How long are you going to be?
 - 02 C: Quick = about two minutes.
 - 03 S: Could you hand me that book?
 - 04 C: No.
 - 05 S: Why?
 - 06 C: Just wait! I'll be done in a second.

As (6) suggests, a projected FPP can be abandoned for another when a presequence involves an unfavorable outcome. In (10), rather than offering a challenge to B's beliefs about baptism, A uses the outcome of the presequence to design a challenge on different grounds:

- (10) 01 A: Do you believe that unbaptized babies cannot be saved?
// That if they die, and they aren't
- 02 B: Oh no: We don't believe in infant baptism. That it's - we don't believe it's necessary.
- 03 A: Then what are you - why are you telling me that *my* beliefs are inconsistent because I say that I don't believe that baptism is necessary?

Insertion sequences. Insertion sequences may be placed between any FPP and SPP. Example (11)²⁴ illustrated how this can lead to a multiply-embedded set of insertion sequences. Insertion sequences are designed either to get a backdown from a disagreeable FPP without supplying

the dispreferred SPP or to get modification or support for the FPP so that the preferred SPP can be supplied. In (3), the success of the objection in the insertion sequence leads to a break-off in the main adjacency pair so that no SPP is ever supplied; and, in (4), the eventual success of the objection leads to a backdown in 09.

Argument in insertion sequences occurs by withholding an SPP and, instead, doing one of three things. First, the FPP may be followed by direct objections, as with 02, 08, and 10 of (11), where F and M are deciding what present to take to the hostess of a party:

- (11) 01 F: What about that little ah, thing with the little bulbs in it.
- 02 M: I just gave that to Joani.
- 03 F: Well, we get another one.
- 04 M: Stop down there you mean?
- 05 F: Where, where didcha get it?
- 06 M: At Ralf's.
- 07 F: We'll stop down at Ralf's an get one.
- 08 M: If they have any left a -
- 09 F: And if they don't we'll hafta get something else. She brought us three pounds of coffe/ / e.
- 10 M: Well I'm not going in(.) prancin around Ralf's with my long red dress on and a- an / /d my mink stole.

Labov and Fanshel have argued that an objection to a request counts as a refusal until the objection is contradicted.²⁵ This is not quite correct. Objections are not the same as refusals: They are themselves first pair parts to embedded sequences, not second pair parts to requests. But an objection has the practical force of a refusal because – directly or implicitly – it undermines the validity of the request, reversing the presumption established by the issuance of the request. Objecting to an objection accomplishes a similar reversal, reinstating the conditional relevance of an acceptance of the request. The relation between refusals and objections is one of pragmatic entailment: An unrefuted objection entails that the request will not be granted, while a solved objection does not entail acceptance of the request; solving an objection, or objecting to an objection, merely re-opens consideration of the request.

A second way argument occurs in insertion sequences is through the use of questions and challenges. Labov and Fanshel have noted that

such questions imply conditions under which a recipient will agree with an FPP.²⁶ In (11), 04 is of this type. This type of insertion also frequently appears as an apparent clarification question calling for explanation or support prior to production of any SPP, as in (12):

- (12) 01 L: Can you be up by ten tomorrow?
02 J: Ohh man. I dunno. Why?
03 L: Uh, cause Larry has to come with the van in the morning rather than in the afternoon.
04 J: Oh. Tch (pause) hhhhh I guess so. I'll try anyway.

In these instances, arguments are implied to avoid having an argument.

Third, arguments may be made as a way of supporting an upcoming challenge. Bleiberg and Churchill have called these types of sequences "confrontations."²⁷ In (13),²⁸ after a first challenge fails a prison guard inserts a confrontation sequence (06-09) within a type of presequence identified by Nofsinger²⁹ as a demand ticket-acceptance:

- (13) 01 P: Hey, stupid.
02 G: ((silence))
03 P: You with the glasses, stupid.
04 G: What did you call me?
05 P: I called you stupid.
06 G: What are you doing tonight at 11 o'clock?
07 P: ((puzzled)) I ain't doin' anything. I'm gonna be right here.
08 G: (pause) Well, while you're locked up here in the joint,
I'm going out the front gate and have a couple of beers.
And you're calling me stupid?
09 P: (pause) ((laughter))
10 G: What did you want?

The disagreement-relevance of all three types of insertion sequences is evidenced by the finding of Tims, Swart, and Kidd that turns intervening between request and response increase the likelihood of eventual disagreement.³⁰

Postsequences. Arguments in postsequence position are generally attempts to accomplish one of two things. First, they may be designed to get a backdown from a disagreeable pair part by recycling the other pair part, as in (2), or by eliciting or providing objections and support,

as in (1) (see also (5) 01-05, and (9) for gradations in between these). In instances of the latter sort, conversationalists have arguments by making arguments. This type of repair may also occur as a way of upgrading an SPP whose sincerity is otherwise uncertain, as in (14):

- (14) 01 A: If you have time, why don't you get the car washed too when you get the gas.
- 02 B: But I gotta go to the grocery store and I gotta do laundry and I got/ / classes.
- 03 A: Yea:h, but it'll only take about five minutes to do that.
- 04 B: Ohh O::kay.
- 05 A: It's not really that much time.
- 06 B: Okay.
- 07 A: It's awfully dirty.
- 08 B: *Oka:y!* I'll do it when I get the gas.

Second, persons may imply arguments in postsequence position as a way of mitigating the force of one of the pair parts that has already been accepted or allowed. In (15), A pre-empts an upcoming question, "Is it okay that I didn't get my paper in on time?" with "I got it okay" in 02. In 03, A implies an argument in defense of leaving the paper under the door ("I couldn't make it to class") as well as explaining why A is asking. In (16),³¹ T initiates a presequence designed to get agreement with a reason for rescheduling T and S's tennis match. In 03, "Shi:t" indicates that T would have liked to have played but expected S not to want to. In 04, S implies an argument in support of his judgment that it was too late:

- (15) 01 A: Did you find my paper under your door?
- 02 B: Oh yeah. I got it okay.
- 03 A: I couldn't make it to class in the morning so I wasn't sure you'd get it in time.
- 04 B: Yeah it's cool. Don't worry about it.

- (16) 01 T: Is it too late?
- 02 S: Yeah
- 03 T: Shi:t
- 04 S: I can't take the whole morning off = ohh (pause)
- 05 T: Tch, well (pause) okay then (pause) we try again next week huh?
- 06 S: Yeah.

In providing an account, these sorts of expansions imply that something else could have legitimately been done. They are typically heard as polite; they are offered without solicitation and thus suggest that the other has agreed with an FPP, as in (15), or has allowed an SPP, as in (16), where it would have been reasonable to do otherwise. In (15), B could have waited for the upcoming question and then supplied a disagreeable SPP, e.g., "No it's not okay. You flunk." In (16), T could have phrased the question to prefer the opposite response, e.g., "Can you still make it?" Thus, these types of expansions also exploit the Quantity Maxim by providing apparently unnecessary justification, but in an environment of agreement.³²

4. Enthymemes in Conversation

Arguments made in conversation are generally incomplete when compared to critical models. That is, they do not always, or even often, explicitly link two premises with a conclusion. Moreover, they are not uniform in this respect: Some conversational arguments are much more incomplete than others.

This fact is noteworthy for its parallel discovery in treatments of monologic argument. Bitzer has argued that formal invalidity or incompleteness is not a defining feature of rhetorical arguments, but is, rather, a predictable consequence of essential features of the speaker-hearer relationship. Whatever it is that distinguishes rhetorical argument from other discursive events operates not only on monologic forms (as Bitzer suggests in his distinction between rhetoric and dialectic) but on dialogic forms as well.³³

Our analysis provides for a neat solution to the problem of defining the enthymeme in conversation, though at present we can make no broad claims for its generalizability to monologic argument: Conversationalists usually produce arguments which are minimally sufficient to gain agreement. In conversation, how much support or what kind of support will be given for proposals and assertions is not determined in advance (since, in principle, which turns will get argument can't be specified in advance); instead, recipients and authors of arguable turns jointly work out the amount and kind of support required to get agreement. The apparent exceptions to this are those presequences and expanded turns which "make" arguments. In these circumstances, as in monologues, speakers have anticipated specific objections and

built their turns to avoid them. In dialogue, this reflects the operation of the preference for agreement (under which speakers are supposed to avoid producing turns with which recipients must disagree). But in these instances, too, recipients still have the prerogative of agreeing or doing something else once the proposal or assertion gets done. Thus successful arguments in conversation depend upon negotiating the required amount of support or justification.

Recipients of assertions, proposals, and other arguable turns generally decide when and in what way they will disagree, and it is this fact that is central to understanding enthymemes in conversation. Enthymemes are arguments in which the support is matched to the questions and objections of the recipient.

Such a view of enthymemes in dialogue is only a small step removed from Bitzer's definition of monologic enthymemes: He considers enthymemes to be characterized by premises supplied by the audience, while we consider them to be constructed from questions asked or objections raised by the audience. In both views, the speaker leaves unmentioned the taken-for-granted aspects of an assertion or proposal and leaves unsupported those aspects which get immediate assent. The defining feature of the enthymeme, for Bitzer and for us, is that it is tailored to the barriers to agreement expressed by the audience or expected by the speaker. We differ from Bitzer in that from our point of view agreement is reached not because the audience "supplies" the unstated premises for a claim, but because the audience doesn't object to the claim.

Having defined enthymemes as arguments matched to the questions and objections of the recipient, we are in a position to explain the sense in which enthymemes are social productions and the reason why they often appear incomplete or truncated. A recipient committed to skepticism has resources for forcing the author of an arguable turn to spell out fully the basis for making an assertion or proposal. By a series of appropriate repair initiators, the skeptic can elicit or supply each of the elements necessary to complete the argument. Toulmin relied on his readers' tacit knowledge of these resources in presenting his theory of argument: To lead the reader to intuitive understanding of the distinctions among his various concepts, he identified each with a characteristic question used to elicit it (e.g., for data, "What have you got to go on?").³⁴ Employing each of these questions in turn

will reveal the data, warrant, and backing for the arguable claim, as in the following hypothetical sequence³⁵:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| (H) claim | A: Food prices will be going down soon. |
| | B: What makes you say that? |
| data | A: We had a bumper crop this year. |
| | B: So? |
| warrant | A: Well, prices just go down when there's a big crop. |
| | B: How do you know that? |
| backing | A: Like we learned in econ class, supply is inversely related to price. |
| reservation | B: Well, I still won't believe it 'til I see it, because I read that wholesalers are going to take a bigger profit this year. |

The example above departs in one overwhelmingly important respect from most naturally occurring arguments: It was constructed in deliberate violation of the preference for agreement. Under ordinary conditions, participants do not search for possible gaps in their partners' utterances. They agree with turns unless they have good reasons to disagree.³⁶ Likewise, they accept the relevance of data supplied in response to challenges unless they are quite unable to construct any bridge between the initial claim and the data. The preference for agreement operates not only to limit the incidence of argument, but also to limit each particular argument. That is, the pressure toward agreement, renewed with each successive repair to the arguable, generates a tendency toward sequence truncation.

Enthymemes can be considered a special instance of Grice's Quantity Maxim: Be as informative as necessary for the purposes of agreement, but avoid being more informative than is necessary. The rules of conversational turn-taking allow conversationalists to work out together the level of exposition necessary for their practical and communicative purposes. Because recipients of turns always have the opportunity to ask for clarification, repetition, or elaboration in the next turn, an under-informative turn can always be cycled through the repair organization before getting a response. Although the possibility of speaker change at each possible turn ending (transition relevance place) imposes practical limits on being overly informative, no mechanism is available for repairing such a mistake once it has occurred. This asymmetry in repair possibilities means that the two kinds of Quantity

Maxim errors - saying too much and saying too little - are not equally serious, the latter being repairable in the next turn and the former being, at best, only partially repairable. The difference in the possibilities for repair creates a preference for underjustification, as compared with overjustification, when the speaker has no special reason to believe objections or disagreement will occur.

A slight modification of the Quantity Maxim - informativeness consisting of support or justification for some proposal or assertion - gives rise to precisely the organizing principle offered here as a definition of the enthymeme. An interesting feature of the subsumption of the enthymeme under the Quantity Maxim is that argument has been characterized (for quite independent reasons) as a subclass of the repair organization. As we point out, argument, can be properly regarded as repair. Enthymemes are not built the way they are for reasons of economy (i.e., merely to avoid the unnecessary); their method of construction optimally exploits the rules of turn-taking so as to respect the preference for agreement.

Giving too much support for an assertion or proposal is not merely pointless, but positively detrimental. Giving more support than is necessary increases the number of places where disagreement may occur - and does so without improving prospects for agreement. Reliance on other-initiated repair localizes disagreement, i.e., limits it to objections raised spontaneously by the recipient.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, we have done two things. First, we have presented a brief descriptive account of conversationally produced argument, providing a classification of the way in which an utterance can give rise to argument and an examination of organizational patterns that result from actual or expected disagreement. Second, we have argued that the methods by which arguments get produced account for the properties of the enthymeme in conversation. The form and function of enthymemes reflect their embeddedness in collaborative conversational structures.

Although we do not claim to have presented a comprehensive theory of argument, we do believe that our observations illustrate the utility of a discourse analytic approach to communication. The apparent

unruliness of naturally occurring arguments can be handled by a small number of organizational structures that are both orderly and rational. We have given a systematic, formal account for a set of phenomena that some have considered to be inaccessible to formal analysis. Most important, however, the beginnings made here may provide new headway toward solving a theoretical problem long-recognized as a central question for the field of rhetoric and communication.

Appendix

Proposed Structural Descriptions for Selected Examples

Comparison of these structural descriptions with examples used in the text may help to clarify the commentary. Examples were selected to illustrate theoretically important organizational features such as presequences, multiple embeddings, breakdowns, and the like. Utterances and pairs of utterances appearing rightward are subordinate to the utterances or pairs that form their sequence boundaries. Pairs within the same column form a series. Functional descriptions of utterances are given in parentheses beside the structural characterizations; these generally correspond to commonsense interpretations of the point of an utterance:

(1)	SUGGESTION	01	FPP
	REJECTION + REASON	02	SPP+ADJ
	SUGGESTION (COUNTER)		FPP
	OBJECTION ¹	03	FPP
	INSERT		
	DENIAL ₁	04	SPP
	OBJECTION ₂	05	FPP
(2)	QUESTION	01	FPP
	(PRE)		
	ANSWER	02	SPP
	REQUEST	03	FPP
	REFUSAL	04	SPP
	REQUEST (RECYCLE)	05	FPP
	REFUSAL (RECYCLE)	06	SPP
	REQUEST (RECYCLE)	07	FPP

	REPAIR INITIATOR	08	FPP
	INSERT		
	REASON-REPAIR	09	SPP
(4)	QUESTION	01	FPP
	OBJECTION	02	FPP
	OBJECTION	03	
	DENIAL	04	
	OBJECTION (RECYCLE)	05	FPP
	DENIAL (RECYCLE)	06	SPP
	REASON (RECYCLE)	07	+ADJ
	DENIAL (RECYCLE)	08	SPP
	OBJECTION (BACKDOWN)		FPP
	ACCEPTANCE (BACKDOWN)	09	SPP
(6)	QUESTION (PRE)	01	FPP
	REFUSAL (PRE-EMPT)	02	SPP
	REQUEST	03	FPP
	OBJECTION	04	FPP
	OBJECTION	05	
	OBJECTION	06	SPP
	OFFER (BACKDOWN)	07	FPP
(11)	SUGGESTION	01	FPP
	OBJECTION	02	FPP
	SOLUTION	03	SPP
	QUESTION ₁	04	
	QUESTION ₂	05	
	ANSWER ₂	06	SPP
	ANSWER ₁	07	FPP
	OBJECTION	08	SPP
	SOLUTION	09	SPP
	OBJECTION	10	FPP
(13)	SUMMONS	01	FPP
	SILENCE	02	...
	SUMMONS (RECYCLE)	03	FPP
	REPAIR INITIATOR	04	FPP
	INSERT		
	ANSWER-REPAIR	05	SPP
	QUESTION	06	FPP
(PRE)	ANSWER ₁	07	SPP
	ANSWER ₂	08	SPP
	REPAIR INITIATOR		FPP

	INSERT			
	BACKDOWN	09		SPP
(14)	ANSWER (TO SUMMONS)	10	SPP	
	REQUEST	01	FPP	
	OBJECTION	02	FPP	
	INSERT			
	DENIAL	03	SPP	
	GRANT	04	SPP	
	REASON (RECYCLE)	05	+ADJ	
	GRANT (RECYCLE)	06	SPP	
	REASON (RECYCLE)	07	+ADJ	
	GRANT (RECYCLE)	08	SPP+SPP	

Notes

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1. Scott Jacobs, "Recent Advances in Discourse Analysis," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, in press.
2. Hereafter we shall use "argument" to refer to "conversational argument."
3. Although contemporary theorists, such as Bitzer, have recognized that audiences collaborate in the production of arguments, they have limited audience contributions to the covert and cognitive. See Lloyd F. Bitzer, "Aristotle's Enthymeme Revisited," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 45 (1959), 399-408.
4. Daniel J. O'Keefe, "Two Concepts of Argument," *Journal of the American Forensic Association*, 13 (Winter 1977), 121-28.
5. Wayne Brockriede, "Where is Argument?" *Journal of American Forensic Association* 11 (Spring 1975), 179-82. He defines argument as "a process whereby people reason their way from one set of problematic ideas to the choice of another" (p.180). See, also, Wayne Brockriede and Douglas Ehninger, "Toulmin on Argument: An

Interpretation and Application," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 46 (1960), 44-53. They talk about "the mental 'leap' involved in advancing from data to claim" (p. 45).

6. Jesse G. Delia, "The Logic Fallacy, Cognitive Theory, and the Enthymeme: A Search for the Foundations of Reasoned Discourse," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 56 (1970), 140-48; Charles Arthur Willard, "On the Utility of Descriptive Diagrams for the Analysis and Criticism of Arguments," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1976), 308-19.
7. The movement from data to claim is a subset of those comprehension processes that Herbert Clark has called "Bridging," in *Thinking: Readings in Cognitive Science*, ed. P.N. Johnson-Laird and P.C. Wason (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), pp. 411-20; Herbert H. Clark and Susan E. Haviland, "Comprehension and the Given-New Contract," in *Discourse Production and Comprehension*, Discourse Processes: Advances in Research and Theory, Vol. I, ed. Roy O. Freedle (Norwood, N.J.: Ablex, 1977), pp. 1-40; and Susan E. Haviland and Herbert H. Clark, "What's New? Acquiring New Information as a Process in Comprehension," *Journal of Verbal Learning and Verbal Behavior*, 13(1974), 512-21.
8. A detailed discussion appears in Sally Jackson and Scott Jacobs, "Adjacency Pairs and the Sequential Description of Arguments," paper presented at the 1978 Speech Communication Association Convention, Minneapolis, Minn.
9. Harvey Sacks, Emanuel A. Schegloff, and Gail Jefferson, "A Simplest Systematics for the Organization of Turn-Taking for Conversation," *Language*, 50 (1974), 696-735.
10. The preference for agreement is discussed by Anita Pomerantz, "Second Assessments: A Study of Some Features of Agreements/Disagreements," Diss. California at Irvine 1975, ch. V.
11. Emanuel A. Schegloff, Gail Jefferson, and Harvey Sacks, "The Preference for Self-Correction in the Organization of Repair in Conversation," *Language*, 53 (1977), 361-82.
12. Examples (2), (4), (5), (6), (7), (8), (9), (10), (12), and (15) are instances of naturally occurring conversation, transcribed from tape recordings or from immediate memory. Examples (1) and (14) were

obtained by having married couples re-enact recent episodes after having discussed the circumstances of the episode with the interviewer (Jacobs) and the rechecking for authenticity. These particular examples were selected from a larger pool on the basis of naturalness in performance, evaluations of authenticity by the couples upon rechecking, and agreement by the couples about the episode prior to re-enactment. Other examples were taken from transcripts supplied by other researchers and credit is provided in footnotes.

All instances are rough transcriptions. Prosodic features, timing, etc. are indicated only to provide the sense of what was said; they are stage directions to the reader, not technical descriptions of the talk. Spelling in some instances is usual rather than phonetic to increase readability. Transcription notation is explained in Sacks, Schegloff, and Jefferson and in Jim Schelein, ed., *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction* (New York: Academic Press, 1978), pp. xi-xvi. Structural descriptions of some examples are provided in the Appendix.

13. Jean Piaget, *The Language and Thought of the Child*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1959), pp. 65-70. Examples of such arguments can also be found in Donald Brenneis and Laura Lein, "You Fruitehead": A Sociolinguistic Approach to Children's Dispute Settlement," in *Child Discourse*, ed. Susan Ervin-Tripp and Claudia Mitchell-Kernan (New York: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 49-66.
14. See William Labov and David Fanshel, *Therapeutic Discourse: Psychotherapy as Conversation* (New York: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 84-85.
15. Paul Watzlawick, Janet Helmick Beavin, and Don D. Jackson, *Pragmatics of Human Communication: A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes* (New York: Norton, 1967), pp. 51-54.
16. The distinction corresponds to that made by Searle between propositional content and the act in which it is expressed. John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language* (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1969), pp. 29 *passim*.
17. These distinctions are discussed in Ruth M. Kempson, *Semantic Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1977), esp. Ch. 9, pp. 138-59.

18. Example taken from Marjorie Goodwin, "Aspects of the Social Organization of Children's Arguments: Some Procedures and Resources for Restructuring Positions," unpublished manuscript, Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania.
19. This has been documented for request expansions by children in Catherine Garvey, "Requests and Responses in Children's Speech," *Journal of Child Language*, 2 (1975), 41-63.
20. Argument ad hominem, generally thought to be illegitimate, can in this context be seen as rationally grounded. Matters of the speaker's knowledge, intention, sincerity, character, and the like have their place in determining the felicity of an act's performance.
21. The notion of felicity conditions is discussed in detail by Searle, Ch. 3; by Labov and Fanshel, Ch. 3; and by J.L. Austin in *How to Do Things with Words*, The William James Lectures, Harvard University, 1955, ed. J.O. Urmson and Marina Sbisà, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1975), esp. Lectures II and III. Some universal conditions are suggested by Jürgen Habermas, *Communication and the Evolution of Society*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon, 1979), Ch. 1.
22. See Emanuel A. Schegloff, "Identification and Recognition in Telephone Conversation Openings," in *Everyday Language: Studies in Social Interaction*, ed. David Sudnow (New York: Free Press, 1972), pp. 76-79; and Gail Jefferson and Jim Schenkein, "Some Sequential Negotiations in Conversation: Unexpanded and Expanded Action Sequences," in *Studies in the Organization of Conversational Interaction*, ed. Jim Schenkein (New York: Academic Press, 1978), pp. 160-63.
23. H.P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," in *Syntax and Semantics, Vol. 3: Speech Acts*, ed. Peter Cole and Jerry L. Morgan (New York: Academic Press, 1975), pp. 52-53. Arguments in all of the sequential positions imply their disagreement-relevance by apparently violating the Relevance Maxim as well.
24. Transcript supplied by E. Schegloff.
25. Labov and Fanshel, pp. 87-88.
26. Ibid., pp. 91-92.

27. Susan Bleiberg and Lindsey Churchill, "Notes on Confrontation in Conversation," *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 4 (1975), 273-78.
28. Cast into transcript format from journalistic report: William Recktenwald, "Working the Cells Where Three Died," *Chicago Tribune*, 30 Oct. 1978, p. 11, cols. 4-5.
29. Robert E. Nofsinger, Jr., "The Demand Ticket: A Conversational Device for Getting the Floor," *Speech Monographs*, 42 (1975), 1-9.
30. Albert R. Tims, Jr., Christopher Swart, and Robert F. Kidd, "Factors Affecting Pre-Decisional Communication Behavior After Helping Requests," *Human Communication Research*, 2 (Spring 1976), 271-80.
31. Transcript supplied by Tim Anderson, Department of Sociology, Boston University.
32. Similar types of "facework" are discussed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson, "Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena," in *Questions and Politeness: Strategies in Social Interaction*, ed. Esther N. Goody (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1978), esp. pp. 66-83.
33. Bitzer argues that, "The interaction between speaker and audience must have a different form in rhetoric, however, because continuous discourse by the speaker does not allow him to obtain premises from his audience through question and answer" (p. 408).
34. Stephen Edelston Toulmin, *The Uses of Argument* (London: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1958), p. 98. See also Brockriede and Ehninger, p. 44.
35. Argument adapted in part from Rudolph F. Verderber, *The Challenge of Effective Speaking*, 3rd ed. (Belmont, Ca.: Wadsworth, 1976), p. 188.
36. As debate coach Charles A. Willard has pointed out to us, debaters often transfer a "debate set" to informal conversation. We assume that other people also do this, for any number of reasons. We would note, however, that such a style is "marked" for its contentiousness and propensity to provoke petty squabbling. It is a form of interaction

noticeable to naive actors precisely because of its ruleviolating character.

Introduction: Argument in Everyday Contexts

As early as 1917, Yost directs attention to the entire social situation in which argumentation appears. More recently, the three papers in this section suggest the diversity of everyday interactions in which argument plays an important role. The first two examine dyadic interactions with different types of interactants. Benoit describes the rules for winning arguments among preschool children, while Canary and Sillars display argument structures in the interactions of satisfied and dissatisfied married couples. Gouran articulates the function of arguments in group interactions and critically assesses prior research efforts.

Although the papers as a group celebrate variety, there are some common themes. Each of the authors address the definition of argument by considering its function and character. Benoit implies that the primary purpose for arguing between preschool children is to emerge the victor. Her view of argument embraces O'Keefe's concept of argument₂, having an argument, and thus includes consideration of interactional strategies that include yet extend beyond reason giving. Canary and Sillars define interpersonal argument as convergence seeking discourse, establishing consensus about social realities. Argument structures reflect differences in the development of argubables, reason-using and reason-giving statements. Gouran's definition of argument is quite comparable. He identifies arguments as claims supporting a position to provide a basis for choice among alternatives. Establishing consensus for a particular choice in a group is akin to the convergence seeking discourse of married couples. The authors of these two papers also share a focus on the development of reasons across interactions. They each explicitly acknowledge the ambiguity of the concept of argument and urge scholars to disentangle the concept from related terms. Canary and Sillars distinguish between conflict and argument, indicating that argument is an instance of reasoning while conflict strategies concern more general decisions regarding engagement or avoidance; further arguments may occur outside of conflict episodes. Gouran laments the looseness of the concept of argument and recommends that distinctions be drawn from terms like opinion, assertion, and value judgment.

These authors consider or explicitly adopt a view of argument as social practice. This view posits that arguments are a socially recognized phenomenon and are negotiated through interactions. Benoit demonstrates the collaborative production of rules for winning arguments among preschool children. Gouran directs researchers to examine the same question in groups, asking how requirements for arguments are negotiated among group members. Canary and Sillars claim that satisfied couples are more successful in jointly negotiating an argument, for they produce more convergent structures.

Each of the papers establishes a connection between arguments and outcomes. Benoit is interested in the final outcome of winning or losing and accounts for these results by means of referencing the rules children negotiate between themselves. Although Canary and Sillars are reluctant to claim that arguments cause satisfaction or dissatisfaction for married couples, they demonstrate that the ways in which couples argue reflect their degree of satisfaction. Gouran reviews research on the nature of arguments in effective and ineffective groups and encourages additional work on this question. A relationship between arguments and outcomes establishes that arguments do matter in everyday interactions.

Additional readings are available on each of these types of everyday interactions. On children's arguments, O'Keefe and Benoit (1982) emphasize that the acquisition of conversational skills is linked to the ability to produce arguments. Haslett (1983) suggests that children's conflict episodes become more complex with age. Sillars and Pike (1983) report findings contrary to their expectations that satisfied married couples would exhibit more reciprocity for positive statements and less reciprocity for negative statements in conflicts. Recent readings on arguments in group interactions include Meyers and Seibold's (1986) evaluation of cognitive and interactional perspectives on argument. They advocate a "structuralist" account of group argument. *Argument and critical practices* (1987) includes six papers on arguments and groups; these papers consider a variety of topics such as causes of argument avoidance and group leaders as arguers.

Argument is also important to other types of everyday interaction that could not be included within this book. For example, Adelsward (1988) considers the arguments generated to present a particular image in job interviews and there are a collection of papers exploring the function of argument in negotiation in *Argument and critical practice* (1987).

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Chapter 35

The Use of Argument by Preschool Children: the Emergent Production of Rules for Winning Arguments

Pamela J. Benoit

Arguments are common in the interactions of young children (Bronson, 1975; O'Keefe & Benoit, forthcoming). The disagreements of preverbal children are characterized by the use of physical force to attain desired ends. With the development of language, social norms stipulate that disagreements are settled through verbal interactions. Haslett (1980) illustrates that children with only rudimentary verbal strategies are quite aware of this norm:

(1) (Kathy and Karen were fighting and screaming)

Tchr: Well, tell her to give it back.

(More screams)

Kathy: Give it back! Words! (p.8.)

The ability to resolve opposition through interaction is a social skill deserving attention. This paper analyzes the emergent production of rules for winning arguments in children's discourse. Section I provides a discussion of definitions and assumptions regarding argumentative interactions while Section II elaborates rules for winning arguments.

I

This section elucidates the perspective underlying the analysis provided in Section II. A generic characteristic approach is taken in defining argument as instances of overt opposition which exhibit a competitive-

cooperative balance. The relationship between argument₁ and argument₂ is drawn with reference to the focus of this paper. Arguments are characterized as emergent productions and the rules for assessing winning and losing are seen as collaborative efforts. Finally, an attempt is made to glean information relevant to the nature of such rules from previous research on children's arguments.

It has been argued previously that a generic characteristic approach to the analysis of children's argument is preferably because it can best account for the entire spectrum of arguments produced.¹ Arguments label diverse sets of behaviors and are accomplished through a myriad of strategies. Yet, there are commonalities which allow us to group these phenomena. Two generic characteristics of argument are presented: overt opposition and the competitive-cooperative balance.²

Arguments occur when overt opposition is displayed between interactants. Opposition is generated when an interactant refuses to satisfy the wants of his/her conversational partner. Such opposition takes a variety of forms. For example, a child may make an assertion about the nature of an object while his partner/her refuses to confirm that definition of the situation:

(2) A: That's a truck. Firetruck

 B: Nope.

Or, a child may seek a particular action while his/her partner refuses to accept the request:

(3) A: Give me that

 B: No. It's mine.

Opposition defines the relationship between interactants. Overt opposition is a rejection of an interactant's definition of the situation and creates a strong demand to resolve the dispute in a manner in which face saving can occur.

The second feature of argument is competitive-cooperative balance. Argumentative interactions are intensely competitive because they are the means of saving face once opposition has occurred. Winning

an argument allows the disputed party to reassert his/her definition of the situation and emerge unscathed by the encounter. Losing the argument disrupts the orderly acceptance of situational definitions which normally operate between interactants and hence reduces the losing interactant's ability to assert his/her own needs. And yet, argumentative interactions are also cooperative endeavors³ (Jackson & Jacobs, 1979; Lein & Brenneis, 1979; O'Keefe & Benoit, 1982). Interactants observe the rules of turn-taking, they collaborate in the development of coherent discourse within the argument by utilizing formal, structural, and topical connections, and they collaborate in defining the rules by which arguments are evaluated. Interactive arguments are "having arguments" and they cannot be entered into unless there is cooperative agreement on the rules by which conversants play the game.

The focus of this analysis is on "having arguments" or argument₂ (O'Keefe, 1977). This sense of argument attempts to display the nature of the interaction as the focus of inquiry. Argument₁, which is accomplished through the speech act of "making arguments," can be isolated from the interaction and analyzed apart from the argumentative transaction (O'Keefe, 1980). While the distinction between argument₁ and argument₂ suggests different research questions, it should not be assumed that they are wholly independent. Argument₁, accomplished through the speech act of "making arguments," is found in argumentative interactions (argument₂).

Consider the following example from the protocols:

(4) R: We goin' back in the gym yet? ((whining))

K: No we ain't goin' back in the gym.

R: We can wait til (they) come out.

K: Nope. When they come out then it'll be
lunchtime.

An analysis of this episode which adopts the second sense of argument would suggest that R's initial statement, although formed as a question, functions as a request to return to the gym. K indicates overt opposition by refusing the request. The request is modified when R suggests that action on the request can be postponed. K refuses the request

even in this form but suggests a reason for his refusal. The use of reason giving which cannot be rebutted by R, serves as the termination of the argument. Within the argument sequence, an example of argument₁ can be isolated and analyzed in the first sense of argument. K's last statement "Nope. When they come out then it'll be lunchtime" offers a reason for his implied conclusion, "We can't go in the gym even if we wait until they come out." The essence of an argument₁ is a reason, rationale, or justification for a conclusion. This argument₁ can be removed from the interaction and be tested for adequacy of the data (Is it the case that there is not time to return to the gym before lunch?), relevancy (Is the claim that no time will remain relevant to the issue: Should we return to the gym?), or cogency (Is the claim that they will be playing in the gym until lunch a sound reason for not returning to the gym?). So, this interaction illustrates having an argument and a particular turn provides an instance of making an argument. This distinction has been drawn because it will be apparent later in the paper that emergent rules for evaluating arguments rely on two types of criteria: those which are largely interactional in nature and can't be isolated from the interaction, and those which are more typically identified with argument₁, in the sense that there is a reason, rationale or justification provided by the interactant. While it is possible to isolate the latter from the interaction, it is the purpose of this paper to analyze the occurrence of such arguments within their interactive context.

It has been suggested here that interactive arguments are characterized by overt opposition and a balance between competition and cooperation. They are collaboratively developed on a turn-by-turn basis. With each turn, the interactant may win, lose, or draw. The ultimate intent of the interactant is to prevail over his/her opponent and hence restore his/her own social equilibrium. Winning an argument is not equivalent to the cessation of overt opposition for an argument may precede to a draw and terminate:

(5) A: Give me that pig.

 B: Nope.

 A: You wanna give me that pig?

 B: Nope.

A: Let's play with these blocks.

Rather, an interactant wins an argument when agreement is procured or the claim creating the disagreement is withdrawn. The means by which agreement or withdrawal are secured are defined within each argument. So, the rules of the game are articulated and agreed upon by the interactants during the course of the argument.

A judgment that an argument has been won, lost, or drawn is based upon a collaboratively developed criteria. Collaboration is exhibited by an orderly sequence of turns in which a criteria is proffered and accepted through the production of a corresponding response or an implicit acceptance of the criteria (indicated by agreement or withdrawal of a criteria). The negotiation can be initiated by either interactant. A criteria may be advanced when the disagreement is initiated:

(6) A: I'm stronger than you are.

B: I'm ten times stronger than you.

C: I'm fifty times stronger than you.

In this instance, B (the disputant) offers the criterion of progression by formulating an utterance which is an intensification of the opponent's claim. This criterion asserts that the interactant who is able to produce the terminal intensification is the winner of that argument. The collaboration is evidenced as A accepts the criterion by producing a corresponding progression. An alternate structure occurs when the criterion is advanced by the disputed party following an initial assertion-denial pair:

(7) A: I'm stronger than you are.

B: Nope.

A: I'm so stronger. I can lift up a house.

B: Well, I can lift up the whole world.

These instances illustrate criteria which are readily accepted by the disputing parties. Yet, there are arguments where proffered criteria

are rejected and alternates must be negotiated. While the argument continues on a content level, it is simultaneously a dispute over the rules of the game:

- (8) ((The preceding arguments concerns sharing the puzzle pieces))

C: I beatin you. ((at getting the puzzle pieces back in))

D: Uh. Ok. But I get this. ((another puzzle piece))

C: See I beat you.

D: I beat you up. I-I you better say yes ok?

C: Yes. Ok.

C attempts to win the argument by claiming competence over her opponent, (i.e., the interactant who can accomplish the task in the shortest period of time is the winner). D appears uninterested in this criterion in his turn but C readvances the criterion. In the last turn, D suggests an alternate criterion of intimidation (i.e., the interactant who can successfully threaten their opponent into agreement wins the argument) which is implicitly accepted by C in her agreement to "say yes."

Argumentative interactions contain topical coherence and are internally organized by the emergent production of rules. Structural units within interactions are referred to as rounds. A round is initiated when collaboration on a criterion occurs and is terminated when one of the interactants fails to meet the stipulations which have been agreed upon. At the conclusion of a round, opposition can cease (example 9), a second round can be initiated utilizing a different criteria (example 10), or a second round can be initiated utilizing the same criteria but with application to different content (example 11).

- (9) R: You want to hug each other (a little)?

K: Shut up.

R: You don't.

K: You know what? I went to bed at nine -
at ten o'clock.

(10) A: We don't have no books ... So we can't read a book.

D: Heres-here's some books right here.

A: I know but I don't wanna cause Pam won't
let us.

P: Yeah. You can read a book. If you want. It doesn't
matter.

(11) K: (You just a big cry baby)

J: You look. When your mother get ugly-ugly. You'll
be a cry baby.

K: I know you a cry baby. I said you gonna be a cry baby.

J: You I-I don't. I don't know who you're talkin to. You
know you're talking to

K: I don't know who you're talking about either.

J: I don't know who you're talking to neither.

So, argumentative interactions or sequences can be composed of one or more rounds. When a series of rounds are played out, it may be possible to speculate that an additional criterion is superimposed to judge the winner of the entire interaction (i.e., Is the winner of the interaction the conversant who wins the most rounds? Is the winner of the interaction the conversant who wins the rounds containing the most important arguments?)

Albeit, an analysis of the data on children's arguments does not provide support for such speculation. Interactants are concerned with winning the round at hand and assessments of wins and losses over the course of the sequence are not apparent.⁴

Thus far, a definition of argument has been provided which suggests two generic characteristics of arguments as interaction: overt opposition and the competitive-cooperative balance. It has been indicated that this inquiring is firmly rooted in the second sense of argument (argument₂) although it is claimed that argument₁ as articulated through the speech act of "making arguments" is found within interactive arguments. Arguments are emergent productions; they are developed turn by turn. The rules which determine a winning or losing argument are collaboratively built as the interaction unfolds. Interactions are partitioned off into rounds - where a rule is agreed upon and enforced until there is a losing party. It has been established that arguments are regulated by rules, but what is the nature of these rules in children's discourse?

In an examination of the role of discourse in children's arguments, O'Keefe and Benoit 1982) articulate the position that rules for winning arguments are collaboratively developed by interactants as the argumentative interaction emerges. Brenneis and Lein (1977) and Lein and Brenneis (1979) suggest an analytical schemata for describing patterns of moves within children's arguments. Argument sequences are seen as arrangements of content and stylistic features into patterns of 1) repetition (A: I'm the strongest, B: I'm the strongest); 2) inversion (A: Hey, give me that pencil, B: No); or 3) escalation (a: I sock you in your nose, B: I sock you in the mouth) (1979, pp. 300-301). Content categories found in arguments are threats, bribes, insults, flattery, commands, moral persuasions, simple assertion, negating or contradictory assertion, denials, affirmations, supportive assertions, demands for evidence, and non-word vocal signals. Stylistic categories include volume, accent, speed, and intonation. Content and stylistic patterns are coded for white American, black American, and Fiji Indian children and cross cultural comparisons are made. Haslett (1980) adopts the same schemata and compares content categories for two, three, four, and five years olds. This developmental analysis concludes that verbal strategies for dispute settlement increase in variety and complexity. While the studies are descriptive of argumentative patterns, they provide only suggestive evidence of the rules which are articulated during an interaction to win arguments. The best example of this is the pattern of escalation which is identified by Lein and Brenneis but is not articulated as a criterion for winning arguments.⁵ Benoit (1981) develops a system for coding strategies in children's arguments which is similar to the content categories illustrated by Lein and Brenneis (1979). In addition, an interactive analysis is applied which displays the escalation

and de-escalation of an argument sequence. This is an initial attempt to evaluate winning and losing arguments over the course of an interaction. But, this analysis is not rooted in the assumptions that rules are cooperatively built by interactants and that the organization of the interaction is prescribed by the rules. It is, therefore, the case that the nature of such rules have not been explicated. It is the intent of Section II to undertake this task.

II

The interactions of preschool children in naturally-occurring and experimentally-structured situations were used as a data base for this analysis. Eight hours of naturalistic data were collected while the experimental data were collected from approximately twelve dyads interacting for 15 minutes each. The experimental situation manipulated age [6 dyads were younger (2-4 years) interactants and 6 dyads were older (5 years) interactants] and activity (provision of an object of play or free play).⁶ Instances of arguments were isolated and rules for winning arguments were derived by examining the collaboration of the interactants and the progression of the argument. Similar instances were grouped, labeled, and explicated to produce the following schemata of rules regulating the assessment of arguments.

Rules of Progression

The rule of progression states:

When interactants have collaborated to engage in a series of mounting turns, the winner of the round is the interactant able to produce the terminal intensification at the turn switch.

An explication of the rule elaborates production rules for collaboration and decision rules which specify sufficient conditions for winning the argument round.

The rule of progression is operative when an interactant produces an utterance which is an intensification of a previous turn. Intensification is accomplished through two devices:

Type 1. Interactants claim that they possess a greater quality, quantity, amount, or degree than their opponent in each successive turn.

(12) Joey: Alright. I can lift up this school. What can you lift up?

Ann: I can lift up your whole family. I bet you can't lift that up with one finger.

Joey: I can lift the whole world up with just one finger ... finger.

Ann: Well I can lift up the whole universe. So why don't you be quiet about that?

Joey: Yeah. You too. I can ...

(Lein & Brenneis, 1979, p. 310)

(13) John: My muscle's bigger than your muscles.

Mary: My muscle's ten bigger than yours. Yours ain't nothing but jello. You ain't got no muscles.

John: Girls don't have muscles. Girls don't have muscles.

Mary: I got some.

(Lein & Brenneis, 1979, p. 303).

(14) Da: Look. Look at her money Dervis.

De: Wow.

Da: And you - you only got one quarter.

De: And I got more money in my pocket. And its real money. Now you see this? ((puts money on table)) That is real money. That is not no fake money.

Da: Well that's more money she got.

De: That isn't real money. That is fake money.

Type 2. Interactants direct increasingly offensive, intimidating, or challenging utterances at their opponent in each successive turn. Type 2 intensifications are frequently exhibited in threat and insult exchanges.

(15) K: ... What's this thing? ((points to numbers on the board))
I know what. Nobody knows that.

J: It's scribbles written.

K: It ain't. It ain't scribbles writing.

J: I bet you can't do this. Write your name.

K: Yeah. Can you do this? ((write on the board))

J: Well. You can't write cursive.

(16) Your mother got on sneakers!

Your mother wear high-heeled sneakers to church!

Your mother wear high-heeled sneakers to come out
and play on the basketball court.

(Labov, 1972), p. 163)

(17) J: ((K pretends to hit J)) You do it and I'll knock you
in the side.

K: You think your stronger boy than me?

J: You won't do it to me.

K: I'll knock you up there boy ((to the ceiling))

Conversants collaboratively define the judgment rules as the interaction emerges. When the progression rule is adopted, collaboration is exhibited by a corresponding turn. In each of the examples above, both

interactants intensify utterances and by doing so, signal their acceptance of this criterion.

When progression has been proffered and accepted, the rule prescribes that the winner is the last conversant who is able to produce an intensification when it is his/her turn. A series of decision rules are implied and require explicit articulation in the form of decision rules.

1. The interactant must produce the intensification at the time of the turn switch.

Conversation is a rapidly paced activity that demands appropriate conversational turns at each turn switch. A turn switch occurs when a conversant relinquishes the floor to another interactant. In progression, the interactant is obligated to produce an intensification when it is his turn. An extended hesitation or an inappropriate response at the turn switch are sufficient reason for losing the round (see example 12).

2. The interactant must produce a unique intensification.

Repetition of a previous utterance is not enough to win an argument. If both interactants resort to repetition, the result is a draw. If one interactant is forced to utilize repetition while his opponent creates a novel intensification, the round is lost.

(18) Mary: You need to take your exercise every day.

John: You need to take your exercise every week.

Mary: You need to take your exercise every day.

John: You need to take your exercise every year.
(Lein and Brenneis, 1979, p. 312)

3. The types of intensification are not interchangeable within rounds.

When the device for intensification shifts, it signals the end of a round and the beginning of a second round in which interactants may collaborate to employ the rule of progression once more. The interactant who produced the last device in the first round is the winner of that

round (see example 11). A second round can then proceed with another intensification device.

4. Intensifications can be rejected if they are treated as ludicrous by the interactants.

Particularly in fantasy play, the mounting claims of interactants sometimes become fanciful and unrealistic. These assertions can be accepted as interactants mutually construct fantasies or they can be rejected for claiming the ridiculous. When the latter occurs, the intensification is discounted and the interactant loses the round.

- (19) Ann: I could lift up a boulder with one toenail.
Joey: I could lift up a boulder with nothing ((laughter))
Ann: How could you lift it up with nothing? It would come down and smash your head open ... open ...
Joey: I could lift it up with a little teeny wittle piece of dirt ... with my finger under it.

(Lein and Brenneis, 1979, p. 312)

Interactants who choose the criterion of progression must be able to create an appropriate intensification in the heat of an argument and continue to endure longer than their opponent. The device of progression is accomplished through the emergence of interaction and is dependent upon stylistic features of talk.

Rules of Equivalence

The rule of equivalence states:

When interactants have collaborated to engage in a series of turns with semantically equivalent items, the winner of the round is the interactant able to produce the terminal equivalence at the turn switch.

The rule of equivalence is similar to the children's game of "categories" in which players name a category (e.g., fruit, flowers) and each must

name an item within that genre. The winner of the game is the player who can continue naming items when his opponents can no longer participate. Semantically equivalent items do not escalate the interaction as in progression; rather, they are comparable in both force and class. Collaboration on the criterion of equivalence is displayed by a corresponding utterance.

- (20) Rai Kumar: I'll knock you into the mango tree.
 Dil Dutt: I'll knock you into the orange tree.
 Raj Kumar: I'll knock you into the lichi tree.
 Dil Dutt: I'll knock you into the tomaird tree.
 (Lein & Brenneis, 1979, p. 303)
- (21) De: You need a blue face Danielle.
 Da: Ya Ya Ya. You-your face.
 De: Your face is yellow.
 Da: Unhuh. Your-your face is black. Ooose
 ((disparaging)) Your--that's your face.
 De: Your-your face is pink.
 Da: Your-your face is uh blue.
 De: Your-your face is red.
- (22) Di: I'll kill your neck.
 Si: I'll kill your bones.
 Di: Ooh! ((unintelligible)) I-I'll
 Si: And then I'll kill your jaw.
 Di: Ooh! I'll kill your boobs.

Si: Oooh! Oh!

The decision rules for enacting equivalence are similar to those discussed earlier:

1. The interactant must produce the equivalence at the time of the turn switch. It is argued that arguments do not wait for interactants. Turns must be produced at the turn switch. Failure to do so results in a loss of the round.

(23) Tim: You're skinny.

Tom: You're skinny.

Tim: You're scrawny.

Tom: You're ... I don't know.

(Lein & Brenneis, p. 304).

2. The interactant must produce a unique equivalence to win the argument.

The observance of this rule is apparent in the examples provided. In each instance, a novel item is produced by the conversant. Repetition of an item does not allow an interactant to surpass his opponent.

3. The interactant must produce an utterance which contains an item within the genre which has been collaboratively agreed upon by the interactants.

The rule of equivalence prescribes that utterances contain semantically equivalent items. Interactants agree upon this regulation and settle upon a particular genre for the course of the round. An interactant who fails to select an item within that genre, is seen as the loser of the round. In this case, the conversants settle upon animals as the genre but JJ introduces a discordant item:

(24) JL: My mother bring me some pig. And a cow.

JJ: Unhuh. My mother bring me that ((pig)).

JL: Unhuh. My mother bring me some of that ((horse)).

JJ: So? My momma bring me a walkie talkie.

JL: No.

The interactants who agree to apply the rules of equivalence have in some ways opted for a simpler device than that of progression. This rule does not obligate conversants to escalate each utterance; yet, the selection of the genre influences the difficulty of playing the game. Producing an utterance within an expansive genre (e.g., parts of the body) is easier to execute than within a limited category (e.g., brothers who can beat you up). Equivalence is a stylistic device bound within the interaction and constructed with the emergence of each turn.

Rules of Documentation

The rule of documentation indicates:

When interactants have initiated an argument round with an assertion-denial sequence, the interactant who is able to produce an accepted documentation upon demand for a claim is the winner of the round.

Underlying the rule of documentation is the presumption that "he who asserts must prove." An assertion-denial pair leads only to a draw between interactants; both hold contrary positions but neither is in a position of strength. To tip the balance, a conversant may opt to proffer documentation as a criterion. Interactants exhibit collaboration on this rule when a challenge for documentation is issued and a response is provided or when evidence is supplied in support of a claim and it is acknowledged by an opponent. In each case, the legitimacy of the rule is established and the stipulations prescribed by the rule are executed.

Documentation for claims occurs in two forms in the children's arguments.

Type 1. The interactant provides physical support for a disputed claim.

- (25) John: Girls don't have muscles. Girls don't have muscles.
- Mary: I got some.
- John: Where they at?
- Mary: On my arms right here.
- John: There ain't nothin' but bones.
- Mary: You got fat meat on your arms cause you're fat.
- (26) JL: You ain't fix.
- JJ: I got it. I fix that.
- JL: Unhuh. You can't fix that.
- JJ: I done. See?
- JL: You got to fix that.
- (27) C: Lug lug a ling go ma ma ring ((telephone ring))
- D: You don't have a telephone.
- C: Yes I do.
- D: Where is it?
- C: Right here.
- D: Unhuh.
- C: Unhuh.
- D: Unhuh. That is a telephone. I had it.
- C: See? This a telephone. ((points to another piece))

Type 2. The interactant suggests that a source supports the disputed claim.

(28) A: Your daddy cook it.

M: Unhuh.

A: Your daddy cook it. My momma say your daddy cook it.

(29) ((The argument concerns whether the children should read the book. Amy argues.))

A: I know but I don't wanna cause Pam won't let us.

If the documentation is accepted, the interactant supplying such proof of his assertion wins the argument. However, documentation may be rejected by an opponent. The rules which regulate such rejection specify that a relevant reason must be provided which can then become the subject of argument. A rejection of evidence without reason does not diminish the strength of such proof and the interactant providing the documentation is the winner of the round. When an accepted reason for rejecting the evidence is presented by an opponent, the evidence is discarded and the interactant initiating the rejection wins the argument round. It might be assumed that the rejection of documentation would return the conversants to the initial stage of contrary positions and a judgment of a draw, but this is not the case. The rejection signals the inability of the interactant to prove his assertion and hence is judged as a loss. In this example, the first child demands proof that there are big blocks left in the box, De documents through physical support by searching for a block and finally presenting it to her opponent. The physical proof is rejected by a reason (that the block does not belong to the set because it does not have a hole). The reason is accepted and the child presenting the rejection is seen as the winner of the round:

(30) Da: No big one. ((no big blocks left in the box))

De: Unhum. I see if in there.

Da: Where?

- De: In there.
- Da: Where?
- De: Shhhhh. ((looks through the box and brings a block out))
- Da: Nope.
- De: It's yellow. ((looks through and brings out a yellow block))
- Da: That--that go to somethin--somethin else ((the yellow block doesn't have a hole in it))
- De: Yeah.

From this description, three production rules can be articulated:

1. The interactant must be able to produce documentation in the turn following the demand from an opponent.
2. The documentation must be relevant to the claim and provide support by physically providing the assertion or providing a source which will corroborate the claim.
3. Documentation can be successfully rejected by an interactant by providing a relevant reason. An accepted rejection is sufficient cause to win the round.

The rule of documentation occurs in discourse where interactants have established their opposition with an assertion-denial sequence and in instances in which physical support or evidence from a source can be garnered to support a claim. Documentation must be relevant to the claim, produced upon demand from the opponent, and accepted unless an appropriate reason is given for rejection. Documentation is a logical criterion for assessing arguments. It is used in "making an argument" as well as functioning within "having an argument."

Rules of Reason Giving

The rule of reason giving suggests:

When interactants have initiated an argument with an assertion-denial sequence, the interactant able to produce an accepted reason for a claim is the winner of the round.

The rule of reason giving is quite similar to the rule of documentation. Both are forms of support for assertions and are thus found in arguments which have been initiated by assertion-denial sequences. In each instance, the support may be offered within the denial or may follow the initial sequence. Both are dependent upon logical criterion and can also be analyzed as phenomena outside the context of the interaction (argument₁).

The distinction between the rules is the essence of the support. The rule of documentation utilizes external proof while the rule of reason giving offers a rationalization or explanation which justifies the claim. For particular arguments, one type of support may be more readily available than another. If the claim is that a telephone exists, it may be easier to provide physical support (e.g., the telephone) for the claim than to argue the reason why a telephone would exist in the room (e.g., This is an office. Offices typically have telephones. Therefore, there is a telephone in the room). On the other hand, if the dispute centers around the action that interactants should engage in, it is more likely that a justification will be offered. (e.g., We should play outside because it is more fun).

Interactants must collaborate in the development of this criterion before reason giving will have any impact upon the argument. In this excerpt, the child offers a reason to stay in the playroom but the adult supervisor does not cooperatively negotiate for the acceptance of this criterion. As a result, the reason does not matter and the child is forced to leave the playroom:

- (31) A-Mr: Ok. Ebony come on over here.
E: I'm make play with these and I make play with these.
Mr: Come on Ebony. Come on. Put that down.
E: I'm make play with these ((E leaves with Mr))

Collaboration upon this rule is exhibited in the talk when a reason is proffered and acknowledged (examples 32 and 33) or when the interactants confirm the criterion by focusing upon reasons as the topic of talk (example 34).

- (32) D: Do you want to take those animals off?
S: No. No.
D: Yeah.
S: No.
D: Yeah.
S: They might get us (Don't get em) ((remains seated))
- (33) K: Here go my bank. I brought me some bank. A bank.
Da: That ain't no (bank).
K: What? Ohoh. Here go my bank.
Da: Here's some black milk.
K: Hey. this ain't milk.
Da: This ain't no bank either ((Da laughs))
- (34) R: We goin back in the gym yet?
K: No we ain't goin back in the gym.
R: We can wait til (they) come out.
K: Nope. When they come out then it'll be lunchtime.

The conversant supplying an accepted reason is the winner of the round. If a reason is rejected, it must be accompanied by a counter reason (see example 34) or a rationale which challenges the reason. If the rejection is accepted, the interactant arguing the rejection is viewed as the winner.

The production rules based upon this description indicate:

1. The reason must be relevant to the claim and provide support through a rationalization or explanation which justifies the claim.
2. Reason giving can be successfully rejected if a relevant counter reason is offered or a reason is challenged. A sufficient rejection is cause for winning the round.

Rules of Intimidation

The rule of intimidation states:

When interactants are compelled to collaboratively accept intimidation as a criterion, the interactant able to elicit agreement or withdrawal from an opponent wins the argument.

Intimidation is the verbal equivalent of physical force. It presumes that agreement, no matter how it is obtained, is binding upon the opponent and that silence (withdrawal) from the fray is implicit consent. Intimidation is enacted cooperatively when interactants are compelled to accept it as a criterion. Cooperation, in this sense, does not mean that both interactants are pleased at the outcome. Rather, it means that it has been accepted and the consequences prescribed by the rules are recognized.

Intimidation is accomplished through threats and insults. Intimidation must meet the following conditions to be compelling:

1. The interactant must perceive that his opponent is capable and willing to execute the threats.
2. The interactant must perceive that the possible consequences of the threat are more damaging than the effect of losing the round.
3. The interactant must perceive that his opponent would win the round if the rule of progression were adopted and reciprocal threats or insults were issued or reciprocal threats

or insults would not meet the compelling conditions listed above.

These conditions suggest that interactants do not willingly collaborate in the acceptance of the rule of intimidation unless they are coerced to do so.

- (35) D: I beat you up. I-I you better say yes ok?
D: Yes. Ok.
- (36) ((Chris and Charisse are arguing about whether Ebony should be allowed to play))
Ch: I don't want to talk to you. You ain't my friend.
C: Charisse come here. Come here.
Ch: No.
C: I not gonna play with Ebily.

This section has displayed a number of rules that are utilized by children to assign winner or loser status to interactants in argumentative encounters: progression, escalation, documentation, reason giving, and intimidation. Decision rules are included which influence the application of the rules. The criteria are collaboratively developed by interactants as the argument round unfolds. Although arguments exhibit overt opposition and conversants must compete to assert their own definition of reality, they are inherently cooperative endeavors. To play the game, conversants must agree on the rules. Arguments are rule governed and socially organized events.

The acquisition of verbal means for dispute settlement and the development of interactional skills for executing the rules are important in the development of communication competence.

Notes

1. It is argued in O'Keefe and Benoit (1982) that three other strategies for defining argument exist in the literature: discourse genre, structural, and paradigm case. Each restricts the instances which would be coded as argument. The generic characteristic approach is suggested as an alternative which allows inquiry into the broadest range of instances of argument.
2. Overt proposition is the only characteristic advanced by O'Keefe and Benoit (1982).
3. This does not claim that every argument is characterized by cooperation at all the levels indicated. In fact, arguments in this sample indicate that collaboration does not always occur on the rules for evaluating arguments. Arguments are sometimes so brief that collaboration does not occur. In other instances, interactants appear to argue within a vacuum, utilizing their own criteria rather than developing an agreed upon set of rules. It must be noted, however, that these instances are infrequent.
4. However, this does not suggest that a position taken in an earlier round lacks influence on the course of the argumentative interaction.
5. Escalation is similar to the criterion of progression.
6. The transcripts were originally produced as data for a dissertation on coherence production (Benoit, 1979). Both naturalistic and experimentally structured encounters were transcribed. Unless otherwise noted, the examples provided in the text are taken from these protocols.
7. The text details rules for winning argument rounds. But, there are also rules for bringing arguments to a draw. In this data base, two are apparent:

Rules of Defensive Maneuvering:

When it becomes apparent to an interactant that he/she will lose the argument round, collaboration in shifting the opponent from an offensive to a defensive position leads to a draw.

C: You wasn't in here.
M: Yes I was. Yes I was.
C: I didn't see you.
M: You wasn't.
C: I was.
M: You wasn't.
C: Unhuh ((louder)) You saw me play with Amy. Den you said
we's rich honey. (Didn't you Michael?)
M: Uh. Yeah. I said that. Y'all said, I said poop stank.

Rules of Co-optation:

When it becomes apparent to an interactant that he/she is unable to defend his assertion and will lose the round, collaboration in coopting the position of an opponent leads to a draw. Co-optation occurs when an arguer takes the position of the opponent and claims it.

- ** T: Board.
D: No.
T: I did. That is a (board). Huh?
D: That's not a (board). That's Pam's. That's a recorder.
T: Like I said that's not a board.
D: You -- Didn't you say it?
T: And I record it back these toys.
D: Good. That's
- ** D: Not me either ((did not get Easter candy))
G: Yes you did.
D: Not you.
G: Umhum.
D: Why?
G: Because I don't get none.

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Chapter 36

Argument in Satisfied and Dissatisfied Married Couples

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The authors wish to extend their appreciation to Brent Brossmann and Shannon LoVette for their assistance with data coding, and to Anthony Blair for comments he made on an earlier version of this paper. Portions of this chapter are reported in Joseph Wenzel (Ed.), *Argument and social practices: Proceeding of the fifth SCA/AFA summer conference on argumentation* (pp. 475-483). Annandale, VA: Speech Communication Association.

In a variety of ways, researchers of marital communication have investigated the association between how couples interact and marital satisfaction (see, for example, Gottman, 1979; Rausch, Barry, Hertel, & Swain, 1974; Sillars & Weisberg, 1987). Although little of this research directly concerns argumentation practices, tangential evidence indicates the partners' argumentation behaviors are substantially tied to marital satisfaction. For example, Krueger (1983) noted in a case study that one highly adjusted couple engaged in positive, supportive responses and focused on issues rather than personal attacks when making decisions. Gottmann (1979) reported several studies revealing that distressed couples expressed higher rates of disagreement, had more "cross-complaining" sequences (i.e., alternative complaints), and had fewer "validation" sequences (i.e., complaints followed by agreement) than did nondistressed couples (pp. 105-168). In some contexts, communication within distressed and nondistressed married couples is characterized by a strong tendency to reciprocate negative feelings and statements, leading to escalation of conflict (Gottman, 1979; Pike & Sillars, 1985; Ting-Toomey, 1983). For example, Ting-Toomey (1983) found that dissatisfied couples reciprocated confrontation and responded to confrontations and complaints with defensive communication. In other episodes, dissatisfied couples may engage

in attack-withdrawl patterns of conflict, where escalation alternates with conflict avoidance (Rausch et al., 1974; Pike & Sillars, 1985).

Students could glean from these studies general information about the links between argument and marital satisfaction. However, such information would lack coherence in terms of (1) a conceptualization of argument, and (2) an operational definition of argument. In addition, conflict research has only a partial bearing on the study of interpersonal argumentation because conflict and interpersonal argument behaviors are not identical, although they share similarities. Conflict and interpersonal argument both typically involve strategic interaction behaviors and degrees of cooperation and competition (see Benoit & Benoit, 1987). However, at least two properties distinguish interpersonal conflict from argument.

First, conflict tactics are related to general strategies of engagement versus avoidance of conflict, while argument moves are specific instances of reasoning. This is an important distinction because one conflict interaction can be observed at two levels -as strategy and as argument (see also Poole, Seibold, & McPhee, 1985). For example, the statement "You're exaggerating" represents a confrontive form of engagement as well as an argument-related objection to the partner's previous statement. This distinction also places some of interpersonal argument within the broader context of conflict, which is consistent with those who seek to identify the generic characteristics of interpersonal argument (e.g., Trapp, 1983; Trapp, Hoff & Chandler, 1987).

Second, not all interpersonal argument occurs in conflict episodes. Much of interpersonal argument entails offering reasons when the participants do not perceive incompatible goals (a necessary condition for interpersonal conflict). For example, interpersonal arguments may be *jointly* produced by couples when discussing daily events, when saving the partner from an embarrassing predicament, or even when rehearsing accounts to be given. Jointly producing arguments can also occur during group decision-making when one side "teams up" against the other side (Canary, Brossmann, & Seibold, 1987; Seibold, Poole, McPhee, Tanita, & Canary, 1981). Hence, while the research on marital conflict suggests that marital satisfaction is linked to argumentation behaviors, the nature and processes involved in the satisfaction-argumentation link are not clear, partially because interpersonal conflict and argument are not identical communication behaviors.

Marital satisfaction is the product of many complex factors, including the characteristics of the relationship (e.g., commitment, trust), attributional processes of the individuals within the relationship, and the nature and perceived importance of the issues that are in disagreement. How marital couples communicate represents only one issue that might lead to satisfaction. Hence, we cannot presume that "ideal" ways to manage interpersonal arguments will necessarily lead to satisfaction with the relationship (or the partner). Conflict and argument behaviors are also probably interpreted by episodic standards of competence before they affect relational characteristics and satisfaction (Canary & Cupach, 1988). We hold that the manner in which couples argue *reflects* their degree of marital satisfaction.

Recent advances in the study of interpersonal argument, as chronicled in this volume, the Alta summer conference proceedings, and other recent research (see, for example, Benoit & O'Keefe, 1982; Burleson, 1981; Cox, Willard, & Walker, 1985; Hample, 1980, 1981, 1985; Jackson & Jacobs, 1980; Jacobs and Jackson, 1981, 1982; Meyers & Seibold, 1986; van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1984; Wenzel, 1987; Zarefsky, Sillars, & Rhodes, 1983; Ziegelmüller & Rhodes, 1981), strongly suggest that more can be done to examine the link between marital satisfaction and argumentation. The purpose of this study, then, is to examine satisfied and dissatisfied marital couples' arguments. More precisely, relying on conceptual and operational definitions specifically developed for interpersonal and small group applications, we wish to assess differences in argument types (or structures) and argument sequences (act-to-act lag probabilities). Before research questions and hypotheses are offered, a review of the assumptions that guided this investigation is warranted.

1. Research Assumptions

First, we define argument as convergence-seeking discourse, borrowing this functional notion from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969). By convergence, we mean that ideas are being refined by at least two persons who are in a process of generating and then evaluating and eliminating ideas (Scheidel, 1986). Using this sense of *convergence-seeking* as a peculiar property of argument implies that interpersonal argument serves an epistemic function in creating and comparing social realities (see also Willard, 1983). Again by implication, argument contexts are broadly defined, since convergence may sought from

a number of "targets", including one other person (the focus of this study), group members making a decision, persons attending a public speech, or an imagined audience (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969).

Second, we view argument primarily as a *social* practice and value examinations of socially constructed argument over individual cognitive deliberations (see also Meyers & Seibold, 1987a, 1987b; c.f., Hample, 1981). Evidence has revealed that arguments constructed by individuals are altered by interpersonal interaction. Meyers and Seibold (1987a), for example, found little association between cognitive and socially produced arguments in terms of argument number, content, or effectiveness. Such discrepancies suggest that argument practices in interpersonal contexts may be qualitatively different from their preformulations. Hence, this research focuses on the process of *arguing* instead of on how individuals construct arguments (Trapp et al., 1987).

Third, we adopt Jackson and Jacobs' observations that interpersonal argument can be traced in ordinary conversation, that actors perceive coherent sequences of argument episodes, and that the analysis of everyday argument involves the use of *arguablys*, or initial points of possible contention (1980; Jacobs & Jackson, 1981, 1982, 1983). We extend the definition of *arguablys* to include reason-using and reason-giving statements. Yet, argument as convergence-seeking and Jackson and Jacobs' notion of argument as disagreement-relevant repair are separate concepts. While our notion of convergence-seeking is based on how persons associate and dissociate themselves to gain adherence to ideas, Jackson and Jacobs' (1980) concept of argument as a "method for organizing conversational activity" includes a wider range of behaviors that applies to actors' perceived attempts at regulating conversation.

While argument seeks convergence, there are instances where the targets of convergence are not in the immediate interaction context, which may prevent the performance of a "preferred pair part" (see Jackson & Jacobs, 1980; Jacobs & Jackson 1981, 1982). For example, public debates, legal disputes, and group coalitions do not sanction a preference for agreement between advocates. Accordingly, although most conversational argument probably involves a preference for agreement, one person might disagree with another to persuade a third party or to save face. Broermann and Canary (1990), for example, found that interpersonal arguments on the TV program *Nightline*

are not trying to reach convergence with one another as much as with the TV audience.

Fourth, we hold that arguments exist at two interdependent levels: arguments as *structures*, or as rules and resources for establishing reasons; and arguments as *systems*, or as products of structures that modify or reify those structures (see also Meyers, 1987; Poole, Seibold, & McPhee, 1985; Seibold & Meyers, 1987, for comprehensive accounts of these concepts). Under this view, there is a *duality of structures* that bridges process with product; that is, one cannot consider the product of interaction apart from its process. One implication of this assumption is that the identification of routinely enacted structures is important for understanding the organization of social action. Hence, this research has focused on identifying argument structures (Canary et al., 1987; Meyers, 1987). These argument structures provide a sense of the process of arguing, since the structures are composed of actions taken to support a point and are not logical abstractions of argument forms (Blair, 1987; see examples below).

Fifth, this research presumes that an application of a grammar appropriate to interpersonal argument is more informative than the use of schemes not specifically designed for such analyses (Seibold et al., 1981). Accordingly, one goal of this research program has been to develop and to refine a coding scheme for interpersonal and small group interaction to identify naturally occurring argument behaviors. Three coding schemes were originally derived based on three popular models of argument (i.e., Toulmin's, Perelman's, and Jackson & Jacobs'; see Seibold et al., 1981). Next, Canary, Ratledge, and Seibold (1982) contrasted the coding schemes against criteria that would reveal the empirical shortcomings of each scheme. For example, one criterion was *relational anomaly*; under this criterion, a relationship between codes is found when none is hypothesized. Canary et al. (1982) noted those features that led to empirical weakness as well as those elements that "fit" the data, and they presented a new coding scheme that sought to avoid the weakness and utilize the strengths of the previous systems. Seibold, Canary, and Ratledge (1983) examined the new coding scheme from a structural view. Finally, several authors (Canary et al., 1987; Meyers, 1987; Ratledge, 1986) revised the coding scheme to make it more theoretically and empirically applicable to conversational behaviors. The coding scheme used in this study, reported in Table 1 below, is taken from Canary et al. (1987). Additionally, *agreement* was included as a new category for this study. In terms of the coding

table 1 *Argument Coding Scheme***I AGREEMENT**

1. *AGMT*: *Agreement*. Statements that indicate agreement

II ARGUABLES*Potential Arguables*

2. *ASRT*: *Assertions*. Statements of fact or opinion.
3. *PROP*: *Propositions*. Statements that call for support, action, or conference.

Reason-Using Arguables

4. *ELAB*: *Elaborations*. Statements that defend other statements by providing evidence or other support.
5. *RESP*: *Responses*. Statements that defend arguables that are met with disagreement.

Reason-Giving Arguables

6. *AMPL*: *Amplifications*. Statements that explain or expound on other statements in order to establish the relevance of the argument through inference.
7. *JUST*: *Justifications*. Statements that offer validity of a previous or upcoming statement by citing a rule of logic (that is to provide a standard whereby arguments are weighed.)

III PROMPTORS

8. *OBJC*: *Objections*. Statements that deny the truth or accuracy of an arguable.
9. *CHAL*: *Challenges*. Statements that offer problems or questions that must be solved if agreement is to be reached on an arguable.

IV DELIMITORS

10. *FRAM*: *Frames*. These statements provide a context for and/or qualify arguables.
11. *F/SE*: *Forestall/Secure*. Statements to forestall refutation by securing common ground. They establish past and future disarguables.
12. *F/RE*: *Forestall/Remove*. Statements to forestall refutation by removing possible objections. They disestablish past or future arguables.

V NON-ARGUABLES

13. *NARG*: *Non-Argument*: Statements that have no clear function of argument and/or cannot be categorized above.
14. *: An asterisk plus a turn number indicates that the thought turn is completed elsewhere.

scheme presented in Table 1, argument structures are enacted when two or more argument-relevant codes are combined; undeveloped argubles are those moves that are not combined with another. For example, Canary et al. (1987) observed four major argument structures used in decision-making groups: *simple*, wherein one statement supports another; *compound*, wherein a simple argument structure is used and then part of that simple structure is extended, embedded within another structure, or is presented in parallel to another argument; *eroded*, wherein arguments decay due to the communicator's delivery failure or another person dissembling the argument before it is completed; and *convergent*, wherein two or more persons jointly produce an argument. The following is an example of two simple arguments concerning the topic of communication (turns 1-2 and 3-5):

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	W: Um, I don't think that communication can solve everything.	ASRT
2	But, it can certainly help a lot of things that could grow into a potential larger problem	ELAB
3	Uh, I know, I guess married people right now, who do have a communication problem.	ASRT
4	And I can see what it does to their marriage.	ELAB
5	And I would never want it to do those things to mine.	AMPL

This example illustrates how ideas can be developed using a simple progression. The following indicates how ideas are developed in a more complex manner, constituting an extended compound argument. This example concerns lack of affection:

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	W: Yeah. It probably has	AGMT
2	You've probably summed it up there,	ELAB
3	because, uh, I think that you show affection in lot of ways,	F/SE
4	but you're just not physically affectionate.	AMPL
5	So I think that's the temperament I wish we could work out.	PROP
6	But, we'll have to work on that a bit.	ELAB(5)

- 7 Because we have to talk, we have to
talk about these more.

AMPL

In this example, turns 1-2 constitute a simple argument; turns 3 offers common ground that prevents disagreement before the amplification is made in turn 4; turns 5-7 then develop an argument that extends the previous points by proposing a course of action. The following eroded argument was offered in response to the partner's desire to have sex:

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1 W:	Well, after we disagree on that I sure don't feel much like it anymore	CHAL
2 H:	Well, I know	AGMT
3	but I worry even if I feel like it if I want to because, you know, I feel that you'll just think I doing it just...	NARG

Although we might speculate what the conclusion of turn 3 was (and although the *communicators* might understand the conclusion), there are too many possible conclusions (including reversal of thought) to adduce only one. Hence, this structure as enacted is incomplete, and is therefore seen as an eroded argument. As this example demonstrates, persons may dissemble their own arguments. In addition, the partner may prevent the completion of an argument structure through interruption, objection, and the like.

Convergent arguments occur when one person uses the previous statements of another to make a point. The following example concerns household responsibilities. Convergence is seen when the wife offers turn 6 to support the husband's assertion in turn 4.

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1 W:	I don't think I know of any couples who experience this problem.	ASRT
2	Most couples that I know kind of work it out between themselves,	ELAB
3	and are happy with whatever they come up with, you know.	AMPL
4 H:	If there is problem it's worked out daily.	ASRT

5 W: Yeah AGMT
6 It's not a long term kind of thing. ELAB (4)

Canary et al. (1978) found that consensus groups were more likely than dissensus groups to use some type of argument structure as opposed to offering argubles that are not connected to other argubles. Consensus groups also used a greater percentage of convergent arguments, but engaged in proportionally fewer compound arguments. The greater use of convergence by the consensus groups was important because convergence structures imply that issues are being synthesized. The authors interpreted the finding that consensus groups used fewer compound structures as an indication that the dissensus groups did not focus on one issue at a time, but were haphazard in their discussion of the issues.

2. Hypotheses Concerning Structures and Sequences

Given these research assumptions, we analyze how married couples perform their arguments in two ways. First, we hypothesize that satisfied and dissatisfied couples differ in their use of argument structures. Consistent with previous research, we expect that satisfied couples enact a larger percentage of argument structures than dissatisfied couples do. Dissatisfied couples appear more likely to break off arguments (Pike & Sillars, 1985) or shift focus on issues (Gottman, 1979), thereby producing a greater number of isolated complaints and assertions. In addition, we anticipate that satisfied couples (as opposed to dissatisfied couples) enact a greater percentage of simple and convergent arguments and that satisfied couples enact a smaller percentage of compound arguments. Simple and convergent structures both represent forms of collaboration we associate with satisfied marriages. Simple argument structures indicate the development of one issue at a time. Convergent arguments reveal spontaneous agreement on premises. In contrast, compound arguments involve the development of more than one point and are typically produced in an effort to improve an imperfect argument.

Second, it is possible to use the hierarchy implied in the coding scheme (Table 1) to note whether couples' act-to-act sequences involve the development or refutation of previous points. Given that couples reciprocate responses (Burggraf & Sillars, 1987) and that non-clinical couples are more likely than clinical couples to reciprocate agreement

but are less likely to reciprocate disagreement (Gottman, 1979), we hypothesize that satisfied couples will permit, and may even assist, one another to develop their arguments without refutation. The smooth progression of argument development can be observed in act-to-act sequences (that is, matching each argument-relevant behavior with the next argument-relevant behavior). Using the coding scheme in Table 1, development would be immediately evident in two types of sequences - *primary* and *secondary* development sequences. A primary development sequence would occur when an agreement or a potential arguable (i.e., assertion or proposition) is immediately followed by support of the initial statement. In the following example, turn 2 develops turn 1, and turn 4 develops turn 3. In addition, the development of turn 4 by turn 5 is seen as a secondary level development (see below).

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	W: I guess, there probably are a lot of couples who don't do a lot together.	ASRT
2	I know some couples who always go their separate ways,	ELAB
3	which I don't think is a good thing to do.	ASRT
4	We do things together.	ELAB
5	Of course, there are things we don't.	ELAB (4)

Secondary development sequences occur when reason-using or reason-giving argubles are in turn developed, indicating that persons are offering several forms of support for their points. Accordingly, an elaboration, amplification, or justification that is immediately followed by another elaboration, amplification, or justification is said to operationalize a secondary development sequence. This process is depicted in the following example:

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	H: Yes, I'm sure that there have been times when people have come home from work and been grouchy	ELAB
2	and this has caused a disagreement or an argument.	AMPL
3	I know there have been several times when I've come home, yes, why I would, several	

- times, when I've been tired. ELAB
- 4 And before I can relax a little I have snapped a few replies or things of this nature. AMPL
- 5 But, there's never been a big disagreement about things. ASRT

In this example, turns 2-4 each develop the preceding turns. Note, however, that the assertion in turn 5, which represents a change of point more than an elaboration of turn 4, is not developed. Clearly, it is possible for persons to use secondary development sequences without relying on primary development and it is possible to enact primary development sequences without using secondary development.

We also hypothesize that satisfied couples are less likely than their counterparts to refute one another's ideas. As with development sequences, refutational sequences can be enacted at the primary or secondary levels. A *primary refutation* sequence occurs when one person's response or promptor (i.e., promptors are comprised of objections or challenges; see Table 1) is countered immediately with a response, objection, or challenge. *Secondary refutation* sequences occur when couples' arguments involve some type of disagreement followed by development of the response, objection, or challenge. An example of both primary and secondary refutation sequences is found in the following conversation of a dissatisfied couple. Here, the wife attempts to have her husband admit that they do not communicate well with each other:

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1 W:	That's a big problem too.	ASRT
2	We don't have better communication probably at all.	ELAB
3 H:	I would disagree.	OBJC (1)
4	I think we totally communicate with each other all the time.	ELAB (3)
5	If I have a problem I tell you.	ELAB
6 W:	You do?	OBJC (5)
7 H:	Uh huh (Consent)	RESP (6)
8 W:	You don't seem to tell me.	CHAL (7)
9	How come when I want to talk about something you get all upset about it?	ELAB (7)
10 H:	Because you have your mind made up before you even discuss it with me.	RESP (9)

- 11 W: In other words, we don't communicate. CHAL (10)
12 H: Call it what you want to call it. RESP (11)

In this segment, there are clear primary refutations in turns 3, 7, 8, 10, 11 and 12. These turns simply object to or otherwise deny the validity of the partner's immediately preceding statement. Secondary refutation sequences can be found in turns 4 and 9, wherein elaborations of the objection are presented. The following study examines these hypotheses using conversations in satisfied and dissatisfied marital dyads.

3. Method

Sample

The data reported in Sillars et al. (1983) were reanalyzed for this study. The purpose of the earlier study was to examine how conflict tactics and paralanguage differ among relational types. This data is also particularly appropriate for argument analyses. Forty married couples, who were contacted through extension courses for public school teachers, participated in the study. The average age was 33 years for males ($SD = 8.2$) and 31 for females ($SD = 7.5$). The couples had an average of 1.3 children ($SD = 1.3$) and had been married for an average of 8.3 years ($SD = 1.2$).

Couples were given a packet of materials to take home and were instructed to discuss ten potential marital problems. For example, couples discussed pressures or problems at work that have affected the relationship, disagreements about spending money, lack of communication, and the like (see Sillars et al., 1983). These topics were printed on index cards and presented in random order. Couples were requested to discuss each issue, whether the issue was a problem in their relationship, and the reasons for each problem. They were instructed to discuss one problem at a time and to skip any issues that were too sensitive. The couples also completed Spanier's measure of relational satisfaction, among other instruments. Summing dyadic scores, the range of scores varies from 60 (lowest) to 95 (highest).

The following criteria were applied for selection of the couples' transcripts for this study. First, given the general research purpose, the couples had to be either clearly satisfied or dissatisfied with their marriage. Hence, couples were trichotomized into highly satisfied,

moderately satisfied, and dissatisfied groups. Satisfied couples were operationally defined as those with satisfaction scores above 85 and dissatisfied couples were defined as those with satisfaction scores below 75. Second, to assess argument interactions, both partners had to partake extensively in the conversation. Third, the couples had to complete the conversational protocol. Fourth, the tapes had to be clearly heard for transcription purposes. Fifth, the couples had to take the session seriously, with minimal reference to the procedure. Given the criteria, nine satisfied and eleven dissatisfied couples' transcripts were selected.

Thought turns (Hatfield & Wieder-Hatfield, 1978) served as the unit of behavior. Over 4,000 thought turns were identified and coded using the categories in Table 1. Four of the transcripts (680 turns) were independently coded for reliability purposes. Intercoder agreement for thought turns was 90.6%. Intercoder reliability was computed using Cohen's (1960) kappa, a measure of agreement beyond agreements reached due to chance selection of categories. The average k was .47 for fourteen categories, ranging from .39 to .58 for the four groups. For seven categories (i.e., Agreement; Potential, Reason-Using, and Reason-Giving Arguables; Promptors; Delimitors; and Non-Arguments) the average k was .49, ranging from .41 to .60. For five categories (i.e., Agreement, Arguables, Promptors, Delimitors, and Non-Arguments) average k was .73, with a range of .53 to .89. Because the coefficients represent agreement beyond those due to chance, and due to the relatively abstract nature of the categories, these estimates were considered acceptable. Additionally, codes were combined to remove differences between coders. Finally, the lead author demarcated underdeveloped arguables versus argument structures and labeled each structures as a type of *simple, compound, eroded, or convergent*. An average of 52.4 and 55.5 argument structures were found for satisfied and dissatisfied couples, respectively.

4. Results

Argument Structures

We hypothesized that satisfied couples would have a larger percentage of developed arguments (versus developed arguables). Moreover, it was hypothesized that satisfied couples would have a greater percentage of convergent arguments and a smaller percentage of compound structures. Table 2 presents the summary statistics for each couple's

Table 2
Percentage of Undeveloped Arguablys and Argument Structures

		Argument Structures										
Couple	N	Undeveloped	Simple	Compound	Eroded	Convergent						
			Ext	Emd	Par	T	Del	Dis	T	Agr	Col	T
1	75	.09	.62	.28	.04	.35	.00	.00	.00	.03	.00	.03
2	40	.05	.58	.18	.00	.35	.03	.00	.00	.13	.03	.17
3	35	.26	.73	.08	.00	.12	.00	.00	.00	.15	.00	.15
4	68	.13	.48	.05	.00	.00	.05	.00	.05	.17	.25	.42
5	21	.05	.58	.11	.00	.11	.05	.00	.05	.16	.11	.26
6	52	.16	.37	.12	.00	.14	.00	.19	.19	.02	.28	.30
7a	23	.00	.70	.17	.09	.26	.00	.00	.00	.13	.00	.13
7b	120	.35	.41	.09	.03	.00	.12	.04	.21	.24	.06	.17
9	38	.08	.37	.03	.00	.00	.03	.11	.11	.23	.03	.34
(M)	52.4	.17	.54	.12	.02	.16	.03	.06	.09	.10	.13	.23
10a	119	.20	.38	.07	.03	.01	.11	.21	.08	.29	.16	.05
10b	64	.19	.44	.19	.08	.00	.27	.02	.06	.08	.12	.10
12	19	.00	.32	.42	.16	.00	.58	.05	.00	.05	.05	.05
13	66	.33	.43	.18	.05	.02	.25	.05	.14	.19	.09	.05
14	25	.00	.20	.56	.16	.00	.72	.00	.00	.00	.08	.00
15a	55	.62	.43	.05	.00	.00	.05	.10	.00	.10	.19	.24
15b	38	.21	.47	.23	.13	.00	.37	.00	.03	.03	.13	.00
17	36	.11	.22	.31	.00	.00	.31	.03	.13	.16	.03	.28
18	44	.11	.36	.36	.18	.05	.59	.03	.00	.03	.00	.03
19	60	.27	.39	.14	.07	.00	.21	.09	.18	.27	.09	.05
20	84	.71	.71	.13	.00	.13	.04	.04	.04	.08	.00	.08
(M)	55.5	.25	.44	.24	.08	.01	.33	.06	.06	.12	.09	.08

Note. Percentage of argument structures do not include undeveloped arguablys. Couples are ranked according to their satisfaction scores (couples 1-9 are satisfied; couples 10a to 20 are dissatisfied). Argument subcategories are abbreviated as follows: Ext = Extended; Emd = Embedded; Par = Parallel; Del = Delivery Failure; Dis = Dissembled; Agr = Agreed; Col = Collaborative Argument; T = Total (for each structure).

proportional use of undeveloped argubables and various argument structures. A statistic that assesses the degree of systematic differences between percentages (i.e., z-test) was computed, using the dyad (not the language sample) as the unit of analysis (see Hamilton & Hunter, 1985).

Satisfied dyads had a smaller percentage of undeveloped argubables as expected (17% for satisfied and 25% for dissatisfied couples; $z = 1.79$; $p < .05$; one-tailed). This means that satisfied couples had a larger percentage (versus dissatisfied couples) of argument moves that combined with other moves to comprise a type of argument structure. Second, as we expected, satisfied couples had a greater percentage of convergent arguments than did dissatisfied couples (23% versus 17%), although the z-test did not reach the critical value associated with the standard alpha level ($z = 1.46$; $p = .05$; one-tailed). Third, satisfied couples had a significantly greater percentage of simple arguments (54% versus 44 % for dissatisfied couples; $z = 1.99$; $p > .05$; one-tailed). This means that satisfied couples tended to focus on the development or refutation of one idea at a time than did dissatisfied couples.

Fourth, as hypothesized, dissatisfied couples had a significantly greater percentage of compound argument structure (33% versus 16% for satisfied couples; $z = 3.95$; $p > .05$; one-tailed). This indicates that dissatisfied couples made proportionally more arguments that involved the development of more than one point than did satisfied couples. Table 2 reveals that the difference is due to extended and embedded argument structures. While dissatisfied couples had a greater percentage of eroded structures (12% versus 9% for satisfied couples), the difference was not significant ($z = -.86$; $p > .05$; two-tailed). In sum, satisfied couples (versus dissatisfied couples) had a greater percentage of argument structures given all coded argubables, engaged in a greater percentage of simple arguments, and had a smaller percentage of compound arguments. Percentages differed as expected for convergent arguments, although these results were not statistically significant.

One reason why convergent arguments did not differ as we anticipated is that dissatisfied couples sometimes used convergent arguments to refute the partner. In other words, an argument structure that implies the mutual accomplishment of reason-building is used to establish the primacy of one's position over the other's. For example, the following convergent structure was performed by a dissatisfied couple.

Note how the husband completes the wife's statement (turns 2-3) to make a point. (The issue is irritability and depression).

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	W: That's where our problems come in right?	PROP
2	Because I always come home...	(*3)
3	H: and bitch, bitch, bitch!	ELAB

Beyond these findings, Table 2 was helpful in detecting a range of behaviors that exemplify each structure. For example, couple 7 b (a satisfied couple) had 35% undeveloped argubles and 24% eroded arguments, behaviors more typical of dissatisfied couples. An examination of the transcripts revealed that a series of questions and answers (PROPs and ASRTs) degenerated into challenges and objections, and several interruptions. Table 2 also indicates that couples 12 and 18 had about 60% compound structures and couple 14 had 72% compound structures, while each of these dyads enacted few convergent arguments. The transcripts evidenced that many of the compound arguments involved complexities that, on the surface, appear unnecessary. For example, consider the following embedded argument between a dissatisfied couple. Here, the wife offers a parenthetical argument (turns 2-6 that complicates the issue, leading to a justification in turn 5 (which apparently is given in lieu of the dissembled justification implied in turn 3) and an elaboration of the justification in turn 6. Finally, turn 11 is offered, but does not seem to be relevant to her point.

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	W: I don't resent your backpacking	ASRT
2	I did it at one time	ELAB
3	a little more, when I started thinking that that was a sign we weren't - we should.	NARG
4	Everything we had to do together.	AMPL
5	But, then after, then I was really a lot more immature about my own time,	JUST
6	and didn't use it well.	ELAB
7	Now it's nice when you're away,	ASRT
8	because I have time to do things and to read	ELAB
9	So, it doesn't bother me when you do that.	AMPL
10	I don't - what do you think about parting?	PROP

11 You know, we don't have any problems
mutually going to parties and stuff like that. ELAB

Argument Sequences

The second research issue concerns how couples developed and refuted their arguments. It was hypothesized that satisfied couples would enact primary and secondary sequences that enable them to develop their preceding points. In contrast, it was hypothesized that dissatisfied couples would have significant primary and secondary refutation sequences, but not primary and secondary development sequences (see discussion above). To test these expectations, lag sequential analyses were computed for each of the four sequences (primary and secondary development and refutation).

To test these expectations, all lags ($N = 1,849$ and $2,013$) from satisfied and dissatisfied couples were used in each of the four analyses. Lags were computed using Allison and Liker's (1982) method, correcting for sampling error. The results were also transformed into point biserial correlations to indicate the valance and strength of each sequence (see Morely, 1987).

Table 3 reports the lag sequential analyses. Regarding *primary development*, five satisfied couples and one dissatisfied couple had significant positive sequences and correlations. One satisfied and two dissatisfied couples had "significant" negative sequences and correlations, a bit different from what we expected (which is why "significant" is in quotes – the tests are one-tailed). Table 3 reveals that the five most satisfied couples had significant and positive primary development sequences. Two satisfied and one dissatisfied couple had significant positive *secondary development* sequences. However, this dissatisfied couple (# 19) also had a significant negative primary development lag, indicating that they did not develop their points as much as develop other elaborations, etc. One satisfied and two dissatisfied couples had negative secondary development sequences. But, the satisfied couple also had a significant positive primary development lag, indicating that they quickly developed their points and then proceeded to new issues.

Regarding *primary refutation*, one satisfied and six dissatisfied couples had significant and positive sequences. These sequences represent ongoing reciprocation of refutation without support. The one satisfied

Table 3
Lag Analysis for Arguable Sequences

Couple	N	Development Sequences				Refutational Sequences			
		Primary		Secondary		Primary		Secondary	
		z	p	z	p	z	p	z	p
1	325	2.87	.16	5.30	.29	-.9	.01	.06	.01
2	166	2.48	.19	-2.24	-.17	.17	.01	.88	.07
3	86	4.01	.43	.55	.06	.00	.00	.00	.00
4	275	1.86	.11	-.03	-.00	.18	.08	-2.61	-.16
5	90	-1.07	-.11	2.41	.22	1.41	.15	-.78	-.08
6	18	31.10	.08	-1.37	-.11	.64	.05	-.57	-.04
7a	107	3.07	.30	-1.04	-.10	-.20	-.02	1.06	.10
7b	428	-1.86	.09	1.43	.07	7.44	.36	.49	.02
9	189	-.04	-.03	.02	.00	1.37	.10	-.62	-.05
10a	426	-2.60	-.13	-.90	-.04	4.16	.20	.67	.03
10b	226	.24	.02	-2.61	-.17	1.91	.13	-.89	-.06
12	87	.00	.00	-.49	-.05	-.22	-.02	1.24	.13
13	174	.51	.05	1.10	.08	3.90	.30	-1.42	-.11
14	137	1.91	.16	-2.69	-.23	-.44	-.04	1.58	.14
15a	110	.45	.04	.45	.04	3.80	.29	-.80	-.08
15b	151	-1.26	-.10	.94	.07	-.34	-.03	.59	.05
17	168	.69	.05	-.73	-.06	4.11	.32	-.64	-.05
18	247	.54	.03	-.64	-.04	-.40	-.03	5.67	.33
19	167	-3.02	-.23	2.43	.19	.46	.04	.43	.03
20	120	.67	.06	-.46	.00	3.46	.32	.01	.00

Note. lags are significant at the .05 alpha level when z-value > 1.65; one-tailed test; p refers to the point biserial correlation between the criterion and the second behavior. Couples are ranked according to their satisfaction scores (couples 1-9 are satisfied; couples 10a to 20 are dissatisfied).

couple with a positive lag occurred with the couple (# 7 b) who also was the only satisfied couple with a significant negative primary refutation lag. This was the same couple whose conversation degenerated from a question-answer mode to a challenge and counter-challenge mode (and most of the latter concerned one issue, money). Thus, it appears that couple 7b's conversation might have been atypically and negatively charged (i.e., their conversations usually do not degenerate). Only one dissatisfied couple (# 17) had a positive lag for *secondary refutation*, revealing that, with this couple, support for ideas was reserved for refuting other's points instead of the development of points. One satisfied couple (34) had a negative secondary refutation lag. This couple also had a positive primary development lag. Analysis of the transcript showed that this couple mostly used agreements or potential argubles in response to refutational statements, evidencing acceptance of the other's views or an unwillingness to counter. For example:

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1	W: But I don't - again I think that we've worked through that	AMPL
2	H: Except for the T.V.!	OBJC
3	W: Except for the T.V.!	AGMT
4	We still have problems with the T.V. Yeah, yeah.	ELAB

5. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the link between interpersonal argument and marital satisfaction. Within the context our research assumptions, hypotheses were generated that proposed differences between satisfied and dissatisfied couples in their use of argument structures and sequences. This section interprets these findings and suggests avenues for future research.

Findings

First, the findings generally support our expectations. Satisfied couples had a greater percentage of developed argument structures over undeveloped argubles than did dissatisfied couples. Of the argument structures, satisfied couples engaged in a greater percentage of simple structures and a slightly greater percentage of convergent arguments.

Dissatisfied couples had a greater percentage of compound arguments and a slightly greater percentage of eroded arguments. In addition, most satisfied couples developed one another's points. In contrast, six of ten dissatisfied couples were involved in primary refutation sequences and one other dissatisfied couple used secondary refutation sequences.

Second, these analyses offer complementary methods for portraying dyadic argument behaviors. For example, couple #1 used simple (65%) and compound (35%) structures and also had substantial primary and secondary development sequences. By comparison, couple #4 (another satisfied couple) had 48% simple structures and 42% convergent structures, which are reinforced by the positive primary development and negative secondary refutation sequences. Accordingly, the argument profile that emerges for couple #1 indicates that they developed their arguments systematically, whether they made one or more points. Their arguments were also rather "clean" - that is, progressions from one behavior to the next did not interrupt the development of their thoughts. (Such was not the case for several of the dissatisfied couples.) Couple #4 also utilized simple structures and primary development sequences, but they also adopted points to jointly construct arguments, preserving their justifications for that purpose (and not for refutations).

A different picture emerges when observing the argument practices of dissatisfied couples. For example, one dissatisfied couple (#12) relied on compound arguments (58%) and primary refutation sequences. This indicates that the couple extended or embedded their own points and met one another's objections and challenges with immediate counter-responses. This couple might even serve as the prototype that represents dissatisfied couples' argument behavior. To sum, the combination of structures and sequences provides a useful method for sketching marital couples' argument profiles.

Third, the finding that dissatisfied couples relied more on compound structures should be addressed. Some might assume that extending and embedding arguments demonstrates skill at arguing. However, there are several reasons why compound arguments may not represent competent performance of interpersonal argument. One explanation is that dissatisfied couples may be stagnated, avoiding the open discussion of several issues that trouble their relationship (Knapp, 1984). Thus, the present inability to develop one thought at a time reflects the lack of previous discussion about the issue. Accordingly, the couple

may have trouble managing their conversations. When confronted with the task of discussing common conflict issues, then, these couples might contaminate issues by introducing other unresolved issues, being confused about their own feelings on these issues, or suffering at a relational level from an atrophy of skills at communicating with one another in a coherent manner. A second interpretation is that dissatisfied couples do not disclose their positions out of fear of negative consequences for such disclosure. Accordingly, participants in dissatisfied dyads present equivocal positions (many were observed), aim to suppress others' discussion of various points (out of fear of what may be revealed), or experience anxiety of what the other thinks. Further research is needed to assess actors' emotions associated with the performance of argument structures.

Dissatisfied couples also reciprocated disagreement and personal attacks, a finding consistent with previous research (Burggraf & Sillars, 1987; Gottman, 1979; Ting-Toomey, 1983). Moreover, the severity of the disagreements and the importance of the issues point to genuinely unhappy persons. It was clear to us that dissatisfied couples' dysfunctional arguments involve undeveloped, often degrading responses as well as compounded structures. It is possible that the audience for the members of the dissatisfied couples was not each other, but some external audience (e.g., a friend or relative, a counselor, the researcher). In this vein, it is possible that dissatisfied partners make points to seek convergence with others outside, but not within the relationship; satisfied couples seek convergence more with one another than with those outside the relationship. Future research is warranted to assess where convergence is sought and how such differences affect argument behavior.

Fourth, at times satisfied and dissatisfied couples used the same structures. But, the transcripts reveal that the satisfied couples interacted integratively (i.e., with mutual concern and cooperation), while dissatisfied couples used a distributive orientation (i.e., with individual goals as primary and in competition with the partner). This integrative and distributive distinction is clearest in the use of convergent argument. While satisfied couples adopted and adapted others' views in order to develop the other's point, dissatisfied couples often utilized their partners' points in order to defeat him/her. For example, the wife in couple #13 seeks more attention from her husband:

<i>Turn</i>	<i>Message</i>	<i>Code</i>
1 W:	But a woman needs lot of attention and affection,	ASRT
2	and you - some of you men don't seem to understand it.	ELAB
3 H:	Oh, I understand	AGMT
4	I given you attention and affection a lot,	ASRT
5	more than a lot of husbands I know.	ELAB
6	They go off and leave - their husbands leave their wives sitting at home	ELAB
7	and go there chasing other women and drinking	ELAB
8	and don't come home until two or three o' clock in the morning	ELAB
9	And I don't do that.	AMPL
10	That ought to be good for something	JUST

6. Future directions

In the future, we hope to analyze more conversations to elaborate how argument structures and sequences can inform our understanding of how couples manage their interpersonal problems. One avenue for future research involves a comparison of romantic dyad's arguments (e.g., dating vs. married) to observe potential differences in structures and sequences. Such comparisons would provide some evidence that bears on how argument practices develop over the course of relationships.

Second, it seems useful to study the distinctions between interpersonal argument and conflict. We hope to bridge argument structures and sequences to conflict content, perhaps by referring to themes in conflict (see Sillars, Weisberg, Burggraf & Wilson, 1987). By linking argument to content themes, the nature of relationally functional versus dysfunctional problem-solving may be understood better. In addition, the question of what constitutes a conflict tactic and what comprises an argument move needs to be examined for increased understanding of strategic communication in general, and interpersonal argument in particular.

Finally, structural and sequential analyses merit further consideration, given that they index the process of interpersonal argument. More

specifically, different sequence types and lag numbers could be investigated to obtain a more complete picture of the process of interpersonal argument. In addition to analyzing more kinds of argument structures and sequences, we hope to assess the links between structures and sequences and outcomes. In particular, interpersonal argument behaviors can be associated with assessments of communicator competence and relational characteristics (for example, commitment). Such research could help clarify how argument structures and sequences are linked to relational quality.

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Chapter 37

A Critical Summary of Research on the Role of Argument in Decision-Making Groups

Dennis S. Gouran

Although argument as a concept has long been acknowledged for its relevance to interaction in small groups, attention to its general functions and role has been rather limited in research.¹ In fact, only recently has argument begun to attract more than scattered attention. One can speculate as to the reasons for this discrepancy between the acknowledged importance of argument and the paucity of inquiry into its role. Whatever the factors responsible for the inconsistency, it is clear that the period of neglect is coming to an end.² An examination of what we presently know, therefore, may be useful in charting possible alternative futures. The purpose of this essay is to engage in such stock-taking and to identify some directions in which continued study of argument in decision-making groups may profitably move.

Reviewing past research on the role of argument in groups is to discover a variety of perspectives on a theme. As the following select summaries will reveal, argument has been viewed both as an instrument and as a process. It has been examined as a source of influence and as an obstacle to progress. It has been conceived as symptomatic of the personal style of individual group members - as a characteristic of one's communicative style. And it has been studied as inferences that groups draw upon in reaching decisions. Such differences in perspective complicate our ability to synthesize research findings. On the other hand, the diversity in point of view contributes to one's appreciation for argument's conceptual richness.

For purposes of this essay, I have grouped prior research into four categories: argument as disagreement, argument as a behavioral predisposition, argument as a developmental process, and argument as collectively shared inferences. As is true of any classificational scheme, the content entered does not always conform perfectly to the characteristics of the categories employed, and depending on one's

focus, some of the studies reviewed could easily fit more than one category. I have, therefore, used the criterion of reasonable similarity as opposed to mutual exclusivity as the organizing principle. Following the review of research, the essay offers a critical assessment and presents some prospects for subsequent inquiry suggested by the assessment.

1. Historical Perspectives

Argument as Disagreement

In the early 1950s, Asch reported a series of studies in which individuals in groups were subjected to pressure by coached majorities who reported perceptual experiences at odd with those of naive group members.³ This pioneering work led to numerous other investigations of normative and informational social influence.⁴ One landmark study emerging from this line of inquiry was conducted by Schacter.⁵ In his research, Schacter investigated the effects of disagreement with a majority discussing a human relations problem and discovered that persistence in a deviant position, no matter how defensible, often resulted in rejection of the antagonistically related group member.

Other scholars with the same general interest produced data different from Schacter's. Harnack, for instance, found that an organized minority (organized in respect to the arguments and evidence backing them) can lead a majority to an initially unacceptable position.⁶ A similar conclusion is implicit in research by Valentine and Fisher and Bradley et al.⁷ The findings in both cases indicate that the manner in which arguments are developed and presented, as well as their content, influences the position a group will ultimately endorse. Additionally, it appears as if the relationships among group members of differing persuasions are contingent on how their conflicts are resolved. When Deutsch and Krauss studied individuals in a conflict situation, solution-centered arguments facilitated the management and resolution of conflict.⁸ When argument involved the exercise of power, however, it functioned as an obstacle to effective problem-solving.

Janis's work with the concept of groupthink underscores the vitally important role that argument as disagreement can play in decision-making discussions.⁹ It was, according to Janis, the absence of counter-argument and challenge in discussions of several foreign policy

decisions he reviews that laid the foundation for inappropriate actions. Other incidents of comparable misdiagnosis and subsequent misadventure include our response to the *Mayaguez* seizure, the controversial swine flue vaccination program, and the Watergate cover-up.¹⁰ In each case, disagreement with positions endorsed by the majority could have led to a different outcome.

Argument as a Behavioral Predisposition

One's propensity for argument, apart from the instrument itself, has also been a focus of interest in some research on decision-making groups. As a behavioral inclination, one typically finds the term *argumentativeness* as the object of interest. The investigation of this quality has shown a relationship to several different outcomes. Of these, the ones most frequently examined are opinion formation and change and leadership emergence. The term carries with it many negative connotations; however, there is nothing about the quality of being argumentative that necessarily implies negativity.

In early research on one's propensity for argument, reflective thinking ability was linked to influence on group decisions and their quality.¹¹ One of my own studies revealed that argumentativeness when manifest in factually based claims and procedurally oriented suggestions promoted consensus in initially divided groups discussing questions of policy.¹² Similar findings were uncovered in controlled investigations by Hill, Knutson, and Knutson and Kowitz.¹³

Some of the most recent scholarship concerned with opinion formation and change has concentrated on argumentative tendencies characteristic of the members of decision-making groups that experience polarization. Alderton detected a strong connection between the types of arguments produced by group members varied in respect to locus of control and the direction in which they polarize. Whereas externalizers produce arguments reflecting impersonal attributions of the causes for socially proscribed behavior and, hence, shift toward leniency in their recommendations of appropriate penalties, internalizing group members appear to advance more arguments assigning personal causes as responsible for such behavior and, thereby, shift accordingly in the direction of severe sanctions.¹⁴ These data were consistent with those acquired in an earlier study by Alderton and in subsequent research by Alderton and Frey.¹⁵ In both cases, group members' loci of control were correlated with the types of arguments produced and the direction of shift in discussions of deviant behavior.

In addition to its influence on opinion formation and change, the propensity of the individual for argument has proved to be related to leadership emergence in decision-making groups. An oft cited case study by Geier revealed a negative relationship between argumentativeness and ascendancy to positions of authority in initially leaderless group discussions.¹⁶ Supportive of this relationship were later investigations by Russell and Lumsden, both of whom discovered that individuals expressing high levels of disagreement had a substantially reduced probability of being acknowledged as leaders by other group members.¹⁷

What appeared to be developing as a consistently negative relationship between argumentativeness and one's chances for selection as a group leader was thrown into question when Sharf examined rhetorical processes related to leadership emergence and noted that its likelihood depends on the type of argumentative behavior a discussion participant exhibits.¹⁸ Those who contribute most to the fashioning as a group's rhetorical vision are more likely to be acknowledged leaders. Schultz has also examined the argumentativeness/leadership emergence relationship.¹⁹ In line with the implications of Scharf's research, Schultz ascertained that the manner in which argumentativeness is displayed and the functions it serves are important determinants of its relationship to one's being acknowledged for his or her leadership. In those studies showing a negative relationship, the types of arguments being advanced were seldom of a constructive variety.

Argument as a Developmental Process

A third approach to the study of argument has been to view it as a developmental process, that is, as a continuously evolving claim or set of claims. This perspective seems to have been inspired in part by a more general interest in the sequential analysis of social interaction. The impetus is understandable in light of the recurrent tendencies of groups to pass through various phases of conflict and conflict resolution.²⁰ Scheidel and Crowell were apparently the first researchers in Speech Communication to adopt a developmental view of argument.²¹ Although they did not use the term *argument* as such, the characteristics of what they refer to as "thought units" suggest the sort of assertion that advances a claim. The pattern of ideational development identified by those investigators has argument as claim evolving in terms of initiation, clarification, acceptance, further clarification, substantiation, acceptance, and further substantiation.

Following the lead of Scheidel and Crowell, other researchers began finding a regular stage in decision-making discussions characterized by argument.²² Unfortunately, as this body of inquiry continued to unfold, investigators became less and less focused on particular types of utterances and instead turned their attention to determining the relative predictability of all manner of communicative behavior in groups. In the past few years, however, a handful of studies has returned to a more limited view of the development of arguments.

Drawing on the work of Anthony Giddens, Siebold et al. examined argument in groups from a structuration perspective.²³ Working with conceptual schemes taken from discussions of argument by Toulmin, Perelman, and Jacobs and Jackson, this team of researchers was able to map the process by which arguments develop and either gain acceptance or lose force in shaping a group's consensus. Specifically, "[W]inning" arguments subsumed others' reservations and evolved fairly substantive claim, data, warrant linkages, whereas "losing" arguments evidenced subtle but significant claim changes in the face of refutational and social pressure, little indication of data for claims, and too many diversions from the line of reasoning attempted.²⁴

Hirokawa and Pace took a somewhat different tack and examined arguments in relation to the effectiveness of decision-making groups.²⁵ Their analysis revealed a much more rigorous assessment of arguments by members of effective groups, whereas ineffective groups tended to accept arguments uncritically as well as to advance them with little or no supporting information. These findings parallel those of Seibold et al.; in respect to what constitutes a winning vs. losing argument and those in a study by Pace showing that opinion shifts are a function of how well related arguments are developed.²⁶

As a reaction to research by Bishop and Meyers suggesting that the mere number of arguments advanced in a discussion accounts for decisional shifts, Alderton and Frey tested a developmental explanation.²⁷ Their position was that it is the reaction to argument that accounts for decisional shifts. The emergence of a strong negative correlation between favorable reactions to minority arguments and the degree of polarization evidenced in decision-making groups and the presence of a marginally significant positive correlation between unfavorable reactions to minority arguments and polarization were partially supportive of Alderton and Frey's expectations.

Argument as Collectively Shared Inferences

The final group of studies to be reviewed are closely linked to those in the preceding section of this essay. In the present case, however, argument has been specifically defined as inference, that is, as a claim that goes beyond the data on which it is based. With the possible exception of the study by Seibold et al., this distinction has not been explicit in the previously cited research. Instead the concept appears to subsume any claim that can be advanced in support of a position on an issue.

The current line of research, it seems safe to say, is in its infancy and was largely stimulated by the appearance of Nisbett and Ross's 1980 publication of *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings of Social Judgment*.²⁸ Prior to the release of this volume, however, two studies had been done which suggested that group decisions are based on inferences that are collectively shared and affected by certain informational qualities as well as the predispositions of the members. Thompson et al. manipulated the vividness of evidence in a mock trial involving defendants of "good" and "bad" character.²⁹ In the case of the defendant of good character, more inferences of guilt were made when the prosecution evidence was vivid. When defense evidence was the more vivid, information favored inferences of probable innocence. In another investigation, Davis et al. produced evidence establishing that a general belief in the guilt or innocence of individuals accused of rape leads to judgments in a specific case that are congruent with jurors' pre-deliberative biases.³⁰

Recent inquiry has begun to probe the communicative characteristics associated with the functions of inferences in decision-making groups. In one instance, several of my former students and I examined the interaction of groups differing in the severity of penalties recommended for high and low status actors who had committed either an act of manslaughter or assault and battery. In the discussions of both cases, group members inferred that the behavior of low status actors was due to personal factors to a much greater extent than they did when considering an individual of high status.³¹ In addition, in the discussions involving the case of manslaughter, groups more frequently made inferences about the probable circumstantial influences responsible for the high status actor's behavior than they did when accounting for the behavior of the low status actor. This relationship was further supported in a study with Andrews showing a correlation of nearly .70 between the attribution of personal responsibility and

the severity of the penalty deemed appropriate for instances of student misconduct.³²

The work summarized by Nisbett and Ross, along with Wyer and Carlston's model of person memory, provides a basis for suspecting that the impact of inferences on social judgments is developmental and that when a group acts inappropriately, such behavior can be traced to the interaction of the members and their reactions to choice-related inferences.³³ This suspicion received some support in an analysis of six laboratory groups discussing cases of student violations of university regulations.³⁴ Of 80 case-related inferences made in those discussions, only one was challenged. In the remaining instances, the inference was either reinforced, extended, or followed by another inference. In a further examination of the Watergate transcripts, I discovered a similar pattern.³⁵ In nearly every case involving inferences bearing on the wisdom of the cover-up strategy, there was reinforcement of the judgment expressed, furtherance of the inference, or a conspicuous absence of challenge.

The patterns identified in these last two investigations were examined more systematically in two controlled studies involving differences in the communicative behavior of effective and ineffective decision-making groups. Mason found that effective groups make fewer inferences than ineffective groups and that when they occur, the members of effective groups are less likely to reinforce them.³⁶ In a similar investigation, Martz reported not only less reinforcement of inferences by members of effective groups, but the presence of corrective influences as well.³⁷

2. Assessment

Despite the diversity of interest represented in the body of research reviewed in this essay, it should be clear that argument does play a significant role, both in contributing to the outcomes that decision-making groups achieve and in influencing relationships that develop among their members. It should also be clear that the effects of argument cannot be described in any uniform, easily generalizable way. The contingencies determining how argument functions are too numerous to permit such description. On the other hand, it does seem appropriate to conclude from the review of previous scholarship that the manner in which arguments are advanced, the foundation on which they rest, and the responses to them all have measurable consequences for the performance of decision-making groups. This observation

applies whether one is viewing argument as the expression of disagreement, as a behavioral inclination, as the development of positions on issues, or as a communicative process in which inferences become collectively shared.

Even though the several distinctive approaches to the study of argument in past research on decision-making in groups lead one more or less to the same general conclusion, this volume of scholarship is not without its problems. At the most fundamental level, conceptual looseness prevents one from making unequivocal statements about the functions of argument in decision-making groups. Additionally, it is not always clear how argument differs from other concepts, such as opinion, assertion, value judgment, and persuasive appeal. Many of those investigating argument fail to provide an operational definition of the concept, let alone a theoretical description.³⁸ The problem of conceptual overlap is not inherently undesirable. Rather, it is the failure to conceive of argument consistently as choice-related that obfuscates conclusions about the role it plays. In the absence of some consistent focus on the consequences argument is expected to have in contributing to the choices that decision-making groups ultimately endorse, the reason for its study loses significance.

Of all the criticisms that could be made of research on argument in decision-making groups, possibly the most crucial has to do with the failure of researchers to provide adequate descriptions of the conditions under which argument, in principle, will function in particular ways. This is not to suggest that all past research has been theory-free. In most instances, those investigators testing hypotheses have identified some premise or set of premises suggesting what would be found.³⁹ My concern lies more with the absence of any appreciable effort to embed specific hypotheses in a larger discussion of how argument may be linked to other aspects of decisional processes, for example, a group's authority structure, the perceived importance of the question to be resolved, and the potential consequences of choosing inappropriately.

The history of research on argument in decision-making groups is one of fragmentation. Some investigators have been interested in how arguments develop. Others have been concerned with the responses they elicit. Still others have concentrated on the relationship of argument to outcomes, such as the quality of decisions reached, patterns of influence, and affective responses to the experience of decision-making. Argument has even been conceived as an outcome itself. While each of these interests has been instructive, it would appear that more insights could be gleaned and better understandings developed

if we could somehow merge the separate strands of inquiry into a more encompassing view.

An approach along the lines suggested might begin with a particular and restricted view of argument, for example, a claim representing support for a position on an issue that provides a basis for choice.⁴⁰ If accepted, the claim favors a given choice. If rejected, it provides a basis for alternative choice. Such claims could either be of a factual nature (that is, referring to what is true or probable) or entail the advancement of value judgments (focusing on matters of propriety and morality). Within this frame of reference, an argument may be viewed as either a point of departure or a destination. Whatever the case, interest would lie in determining what characteristics of argument and the communicative environment in which it arises contribute to acceptance or rejection of the essential claim(s) it embodies. Acceptance and rejection tendencies could then be more systematically related to the choices groups make, the members' reactions to them, patterns of influence, and any affective states that develop as a consequence of them.

The approach I am describing presumes an overall process of choice that will characterize most groups. This is not to suggest, however, that the uniformity characteristic of the general process is also likely to be manifest at more microscopic levels of analysis. On the contrary, this view clearly implies specific manifestations of almost infinite variety. The purpose of research would be to account for this variety. If we think of decisions as a product of the acceptance and rejection of arguments supporting positions on issues, what we need to know is how communication serves to create differences in the relative acceptability of arguments and how the chances for acceptance and rejection are affected by other elements in a decision-making group's environment.

Not many of the studies cited in this essay have examined argument in relation to particular choices groups make.⁴¹ Among those that have, moreover, only the one by Seibold et al. has revealed an effort to describe the relationship in terms of the larger logical structure and social environment in which arguments serve as a basis for choice.⁴² These investigators established that how an argument develops communicatively determines its acceptability and that the level of acceptability relates directly to the choices decision-making groups come to support. Their analysis is very much in line with suggestions by Leff and Hewes and, more recently by, Enos for rhetorically based approaches to the analysis of argument in group decision-making discussions.⁴³ Although the data were drawn from a very limited

sample, the research nonetheless provides an excellent model for others to follow.

3. Suggestions for Future Inquiry

Subscription to the view of argument as claims providing bases for choice opens a large number of possibilities for future research. For instance, if we begin with the assumption that group decisions reflect those positions on issues, the arguments in support of which group members find most acceptable, then it is possible to ask how arguments become acceptable. More specifically, what informational requirements do group members demand that an argument must satisfy, and how do these requirements vary as a function of the group's composition and structure? Does the presence of counterargument affect the acceptability of arguments, and if so, does the manner in which counterarguments are presented bear on the degree of acceptability? Does the mere expression of reservations influence acceptance or redefine the informational requirements a group imposes on arguments?

Another line of inquiry that may be profitably explored has to do with the relative weight different arguments have in shaping decisions. For any set of arguments that group members find acceptable, how many actually enter into the final choice? Do arguments vary in weight, and are there discrepancies between apparent weight and actual impact on group decisions? Are some arguments decisive, sufficient alone to determine a group's choice? If so, what sorts of task characteristics and psychological attributes of the group members invest these arguments concatenated, or are choices constrained by the relative primacy and recency of the arguments related to them? Do arguments have sleeper effects? That is, do some arguments that are initially rejected later find their way into decisions reached, and do initially acceptable arguments lose their force as bases for choice?

Research on the weight of argument suggests furthering our investigations of effective and ineffective decision-making groups. As I mentioned previously, several studies have already been done and have produced promising results.⁴⁴ Much more could be done, however. In my investigations of the Watergate transcripts, simple agreement with inferences appeared to have the same impact on their acceptability as one would expect from factually based support.⁴⁵ Do ineffective decision-making groups typically treat shared opinions as if they were factual evidence? Do they tend to discount or even ignore such evidence when it is presented? How is disagreement managed in ineffective

groups as opposed to effective ones? Do authority figures encourage agreement with their inferences by the manner in which they call for discussion, and does the encouragement increase the likelihood of a group's choosing unwisely or inappropriately? Is the function of argument in ineffective decision-making groups simply to make authority figures' wishes known? Do effective decision-making groups do a better job of keeping arguments issue-oriented than their ineffective counterparts?

We know far too little about the affective states to which arguments in decision-making groups contribute. It is clear that disagreement can be threatening and conflict-producing, but are logically well structured arguments in any sense threatening to some group members, and if so, under what circumstances? When there is a strongly preferred position? When they give credibility to intuitively objectionable positions? When they appear to be at odds with acknowledged values of the group members? Are arguments, even if not intended, construed as personal attacks? Does argument stimulate competitiveness to the point that it induces a desire to "win" a discussion that supplants the need for rational choice? Is argument viewed as inconsistent with the objectives of decision-making discussions, and if so, does such a perception of inconsistency lead to emotional reactions that can destroy a group's cohesiveness and sense of purpose and, hence, its ability to choose?

The preceding suggestions are by no means exhaustive. I trust, however, that they are sufficiently illustrative of the range of possibilities that exist for expanding our knowledge of the role of argument in group decision-making. More important than any specific suggestion, in my judgment, is the frame of reference. By clarifying the concept of argument and by viewing it as an instrument of choice in decision-making groups rather than as something that merely occurs, we are much more apt to develop meaningful and integrated descriptions of the interplay between the cognitive and affective factors that influence and shape the decisions that groups make. So conceived, the concept of argument can play a vital role in generating interesting questions, the answers to which will take us far beyond what we presently know about decision-making in general.

Notes

1. A. Graig Baird, for example, as far back as 1927, recognized that argument was crucial to making informed choices in public discussion. See *Public Discussion and Debate* (Boston: Ginn, 1927).

2. It may be that the pedagogical practice in which discussion was treated as a form of exploration of solutions to problems, as opposed to the advocacy of preferred alternatives contributed to inattention. It may also be the case that since group researchers in Speech Communication followed the model of Social Psychology, a concern with personal factors resulted in neglect of communicative activities. As more scholarship began focusing on the content of interaction in the 1960s and 1970s, however, the observation that argument (especially conceived as the expression of disagreement) can substantially affect problem-solving processes and the relationships among those who engage in them. In the past ten years, there appears to be substantially more interest in argument as an aspect of group decision-making than ever before.

3. See Solomon E. Asch, "Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments," in *Groups, Leadership, and Men*, ed. Harold Guetzkow (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Press, 1951), pp. 177-90.

4. One of the classic studies in this area was Morton Deutsch and Harold B. Gerard's "A Study of Normative and Informational Social Influences upon Individual Judgment," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 51 (1955), 629-36.

5. Stanley S. Schacter, "Deviation, Rejection, and Communication," *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 46 (1951), 190-207.

6. R. Victor Harnack, "A study of the Effects of an Organized Minority upon a Group Discussion," *Journal of Communication*, 13 (1963), 12-24.

7. Kristin Valentine and B. Aubrey Fisher, "An Interaction Analysis of Innovative Deviance in Small Groups," *Speech Monographs*, 41 (1974), 413-20; Patricia Hayes Bradley et al., "Dissent in Small Groups," *Journal of Communication*, 26 (Autumn, 1976), 155-59.

8. Morton Deutsch and Robert Krauss, "Studies of Interpersonal Bargaining," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 1 (1962), 52-76.
9. Irving L. Janis, *Groupthink*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1982).
10. See Theodore J. Lowie, "Presidential Power: Restoring the Balance," *Political Science Quarterly*, 100 (1985), 192; Chris Argyris, "Making the Undiscussable and Its Undiscussability Discussable," *Public Administration Review*, 40 (1980), 205-13; Dennis S. Gouran, "The Watergate Cover-up: Its Dynamics and Its Implications," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1976), 176-86. See also Courtright's laboratory investigation of groupthink. Ineffective discussions in this study were also characterized by an absence of disagreement. John A. Courtright, "A Laboratory Investigation of Groupthink," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978), 229-46.
11. See H. Charles Pyron and Harry Sharp, Jr., "A Quantitative Study of Reflective Thinking and Performance in Problem-Solving Discussion," *Journal of Communication*, 31 (1963), 46-53; H. Charles Pyron, "An Experimental Study of the Role of Reflective Thinking in Business and Professional Conferences and Discussions," *Speech Monographs*, 31 (1964), 157-61; Harry Sharp, Jr. and Joyce Millikan, "The Reflective Thinking Ability and the Product of Problem-Solving Discussion," *Speech Monographs*, 31 (1964), 124-27.
12. Dennis S. Gouran, "Variables Related to Consensus in Group Discussions of Questions of Policy," *Speech Monographs*, 36 (1969), 387-91.
13. See Timothy A. Hill, "An Experimental Study of the Relationship Between Opinionated Leadership and Small Group Consensus," *Communication Monographs*, 43 (1976), 246-57; Thomas J. Knutson, "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Orientation Behavior on Small Group Consensus," *Speech Monographs*, 39 (1972), 159-65; Thomas J. Knutson and Albert C. Kowitz, "Effects of Information Types and Level of Orientation on Consensus-Achievement in Substantive and Affective Small-Group Conflict," *Central States Speech Journal*, 28 (1977), 54-63.

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16. John G. Geier, "A Trait Approach to the Study of Leadership," *Journal of Communication*, 17 (1967), 316-23.
17. Hugh C. Russell, "An Investigation of Leadership Maintenance Behavior," Diss. Indiana University 1970; Gay Lumsden, "An Experimental Study of the Effects of Verbal Agreement on Leadership Maintenance in Problem-Solving Discussion," *Central States Speech Journal*, 25 (1974), 270-76.
18. Barbara F. Sharf, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Leadership Emergence in Small Groups," *Communication Monographs*, 45 (1978), 156-72.
19. See Beatrice Schultz, "Characteristics of Emergent Leaders of Continuing Problem-Solving Groups," *Journal of Psychology*, 88 (1974), 167-73; "Communicative Correlates of Perceived Leaders," *Small Group Behavior*, 11 (1980), 175-91; "Argumentativeness: Its Effect in Group Decision-Making and Its Role in Leadership Perception," *Communication Quarterly*, 30 (1982), 368-75.
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21. Thomas M. Scheidel and Laura Crowell, "Idea Development in Small Discussion Groups," *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 50 (1964), 140-45.
22. See B. Aubrey Fisher, "Decision Emergence: Phases in Group Decision-Making," *Speech Monographs*, 37 (1970), 53-66; James W. Chesebro et al., "The Small Group Technique of the Radical

- Revolutionary: A Synthetic Study of Consciousness Raising," *Speech Monographs*, 41(1974), 136-46; Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, "Phases of Conflict in Small Group Development: A Markov Analysis," *Human Communication Research*, 1 (1975), 195-212.
23. David R. Seibold et al., "Argument, Group Influence, and Decision Outcome," in *Dimensions of Argument: Proceedings of the Second Summer Conference on Argumentation*, ed. George Ziegelmüller and Jack Rhodes (Annandale, Virginia: Speech Communication Association, 1981), pp. 663-92.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 684.
25. Randy Y. Hirokawa and Roger Pace, "A Descriptive Investigation of the Possible Communication-Based Reasons for Effective and Ineffective Group Decision Making," *Communication Monographs*, 50 (1983), 363-79.
26. Roger C. Pace, "Group Discussion as a Rhetorical Process: The Influence of the Small Group Setting on the Process of Accedance," paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Washington D.C., 1983.
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28. See Richard Nisbett and Lee Ross, *Human Inference: Strategies and Shortcomings of Social Judgment* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1980).
29. Cited by Nisbett and Ross, p. 52.
30. James H. Davis et al., "Bias in Social Decisions by Individuals and Groups," in *Dynamics of Group Decisions*, ed. James H. Davis et al. (Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1978), pp. 32-52.
31. Dennis S. Gouran et al., "Social Deviance and Occupational Status: Group Assessment of Penalties," *Small Group Behavior*, 15 (1984), 63-86.

32. Dennis S. Gouran and Patricia Hayes Andrews, "Determinants of Punitive Responses to Socially Proscribed Behavior," *Small Group Behavior*, 15 (1984), 525-44.
33. Nisbett and Ross, op cit.; Robert S. Wyer, Jr. and Donald E. Carlston, *Social Cognition, Inference, and Attribution*, (Hillsdale, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1979).
34. Dennis S. Gouran, "Communicative Influences on Inferential Judgments in Decision-Making Groups: A Descriptive Analysis," in *Argument in Transition: Proceedings of the Third Summer Conference on Argumentation* (Annandale, Virginia: Speech Communication Association, 1983), pp. 667-84.
35. Dennis S. Gouran, "Communicative Influences on Decisions to Continue the Watergate Cover-up: The Failure of Collective Judgment," *Central States Speech Journal*, 35 (1984), 260-68.
36. Gail E. Mason, "An Empirical Investigation of Inferential and Related Communicative Processes Distinguishing Effective and Ineffective Decision-Making Groups," Diss. Indiana University 1984.
37. Amy E. Martz, "An Investigation of the Relationship Between Verbalized Inferential Errors and Group Decision-Making Effectiveness," paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago, 1984.
38. In fairness, I should point out that several of the investigators whose work has been cited have made no overt claim to be studying argument. When one reviews the types of communicative behaviors on which they have focused, however, the generally appear to fit within the family of concepts for which argument is an appropriate label.
39. Still most of the studies reviewed in this essay have been exploratory.
40. This definition allows for the inclusion of other concepts that some would find distinctive. The unifying characteristic, however, is the stipulation that the types of claims in question provide bases for choice. Different types of utterances can all serve this function.

41. Exceptions are the studies by Alderton (1982), Alderton and Frey, Gouran et al., and Seibold et al.
42. Seibold et al.
43. Michael C. Leff and Dean E. Hewes, "Topical Invention and Group Communication: Towards a Sociology of Inference," in Ziegelmüller and Rhodes, op cit., pp. 770-89; Richard L. Enos, "Classical Rhetoric and Group Decision Making: A Relationship Warranting Further Inquiry," *Small Group Behavior*, 16 (1985), 235-244.
44. See Hirokawa and Pace; Martz; Mason.
45. Gouran, op cit.

VI

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Although we imposed some limitations on the type of material reprinted, the book is successful in conveying the breadth of the field of argumentation. We've tried to represent important theoretical advances while providing key historical background. We've highlighted the issues of form, the grounding of arguments, and the focus on argument as a human experience. In the introduction, we directed your attention to themes that recur throughout the essays. In some cases, these represent points of unresolved controversy, while in others they reflect an agreement about central questions despite differences in perspectives adopted to answer those questions. We explained that authors display different perspectives on central issues in the study of argument, authors from various perspectives focus on the issue of argument structure, controversy surrounds the location of argument (people vs. texts), orientations vary in their emphasis on individual and social concerns, and authors from disparate perspectives agree on the importance of examining day to day argumentation. The purpose of this conclusion is three-fold: (1) to reiterate the importance of argumentation, (2) to reflect on the developments in argumentation theory and research over the last ten years, and (3) to project future trends in the study of argumentation.

1. The Importance of Argumentation

Argumentation is important because it occurs in many contexts, serves important functions, and provides a point of intersection for scholars in the Communication discipline as well as scholars from across diverse disciplines. First, it is important because it happens in so many different contexts. It is clearly a recurrent feature of the human experience. Argument occurs in each of the levels of the hierarchy of communication contexts. At an intrapersonal level, individuals engage in argumentation with the self. When you tell yourself that you'd better start working or you'll never get a project done, you enact intrapersonal argumentation. When you think about the merits of buying a car, you're asserting claims and examining evidence. Ar-

gements are abundant at the interpersonal level. Individuals argue with their bosses, roommates, friends, romantic partners, and children. In peer interactions among 1 and 2 year olds, Bronson (1975) found that 40–50% of their interactions were disagreements. Benoit and Benoit (1987) report that individuals record about 7 arguments per week in diaries and that college students argue most with romantic partners, roommates, and friends. Arguments occur in the small group setting. A city council argues about how it will allocate the budget (Moore, 1981). A small group working on a project for a class argues about the best way to proceed. Arguments occur in the public setting. Political candidates engage in debates. An officer of the local Parent Teacher Association argues that members should participate in the fund raiser. Arguments occur in the organizational setting. Employees argue for new contracts with additional benefits. The executives of the public relations division of a large company argue about the most effective strategies for handling an environmental crisis. Arguments occur in the mass communication context. Newspaper editorials argue for cutting waste in government, particular political candidates, or reducing taxes. Television programs argue for increased funding for AIDS research, a condemnation of the Vietnam War, or a rejection of the Star Wars plan. Argumentation is significant because it permeates the contexts that are inherent in the human experience.

A second reason that argumentation is important is that it performs vital functions. Hample has asserted that the primary function of arguments is to "enable people to control their environment" (Hample, 1983, p.565.). A need or an uncertainty prompts arguments in order to alter the environment. Several subsidiary purposes provide elaboration of this function.

Arguments are used for the purpose of persuasion. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) indicate that arguments are aimed at gaining the adherence of the mind. Benoit (see Ch. 27) demonstrates that cognitive arguments mediate attitude change and correlate more highly with persuasion than the recall of message content. Argumentation is viewed as instrumental in resolving disputes in the New Dialectic of van Eemeren and Grootendorst (see Ch. 29–33). Jackson and Jacobs (see Ch. 34) characterize arguments as disagreement regulation events. In a description of the functions of arguments in groups, Hirokawa and Scheerhorn (1985) identify several that are subsumed by the purpose of persuasion, including advocacy, discovery, and the clarification of reasons.

Arguments define and manage relationships between people. Benoit (in press) and Trapp illustrate that arguments are often about the

nature of the relationship between the arguers. Relational norms and rules are negotiated through the process of arguing. In groups, arguments are used to unify by solidifying group consensus, manage relationships by establishing either positive or negative interpersonal relationships within the group, and to establish the decision making norms and procedures of the group (Hirokawa & Scheerhorn, 1985).

Arguments also function in personal development. By using arguments rather than "coercive correction", arguers are able to achieve "personhood" (see Ehninger, Ch. 8). Similarly, van Eemeren and Grootendorst (see Ch. 29-33) believe that use of the ideal discussion model and adherence to the code of conduct will produce reflective-minded individuals.

Although this brief description of the functions of argument is not meant to be comprehensive, it does suggest that arguments have important roles in the lives of arguers. Arguments are used to persuade, define and manage relationships, and achieve personal development. In essence, they give individuals the power to control their environments to achieve a variety of needs.

Finally, the study of argumentation is important because it provides a point of intersection for scholars in the Communication discipline as well as across disciplines. In Communication, theorists interested in compliance gaining, information processing, meaning, and language have examined argumentation. Scholars using quantitative, qualitative, and critical methods have directed their attention to the study of arguments. And, communication theorists with interests in different contexts of communication have shared an interest in argument. In addition, philosophers, linguists, and logicians have focused on the topic of argumentation. Thus, argumentation is an underlying theme that connects scholars in the Communication discipline and establishes commonalities across disciplines.

2. Developments in the Study of Argumentation

In the last ten years, the study of argumentation has changed dramatically. There are four developments we'd like to highlight here: (1) a widening interest in the study of argumentation, (2) a growing acceptance of diverse methods for studying argumentation, (3) an expanding concept of argument beyond the public sphere, and (4) a dissatisfaction with formal logic that is being replaced by alternative ways of examining argument structure.

Scholarly activity concerning argumentation is lively. In June 1986, the first International Conference on Argumentation was held at the University of Amsterdam. This conference gathered scholars from 23 countries and several disciplines. The proceedings (*Argumentation: Across the Lines of Discipline; Argumentation: Perspectives and Approaches; Argumentation: Analysis and Practice*) are evidence of the vitality and diversity of the study of argumentation. At this conference, the International Society for the Study of Argumentation was formed. *Argumentation*, a new international journal, began publishing issues in 1987. The *Journal of the American Forensic Association* has been retitled *Argumentation and Advocacy: Journal of the American Forensic Association* to reflect an increased theoretical component. Biennial conferences on argumentation have been sponsored by the Speech Communication Association and the American Forensic Association since 1979. Several of the essays reprinted in this book are from the proceedings of those conferences. Special issues of the *Western Journal of Speech Communication* and *Speaker and Gavel* have been devoted to argumentation.

As scholars from diverse perspectives examine argumentation, there has been an increase in the number of questions being posed. The diversity of questions asked has caused an increased acceptance of different methods designed to answer such questions. Research utilizing quantitative, qualitative, and critical methods is represented in the journals, books, and proceedings concerning argumentation. And within these methods, there is great diversity. For example, research utilizing linguistic analysis, participant observation, discourse analysis, dialectical reconstruction, rhetorical criticism, experimental manipulations, and mathematical modelling can be found.

The concept of argument has been expanded beyond the public sphere. Arguments are found in all kinds of locations. The most dramatic widening has been the move to include interpersonal argument and several of the leading essays concerning this topic have been included in this book. But, the scope of argument is continually being expanded to include an even wider range of phenomena like arguments in groups, in persuasive encounters, negotiation/arbitration situations, or among individuals that are not public figures, like the elderly and children.

Last, formal logic is beginning to be replaced by alternative ways of examining argument structure. The criticisms of formal logic began early with the publication of Toulmin's (1958) *The Uses of Argument* and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's (1969) *The New Rhetoric*. By sometime in the 1970's a dissatisfaction with formal logic had occurred.

More recently, controversy has occurred about the value of any abstracted structure and Willard (see Ch. 13) has contended that arguments must be examined within their context. Since arguments can be identified by form, alternative ways of examining argument structure have been pursued. For example, the work on conversational argument details the structural properties of argument but has been diligent to include contextual information. And, informal logicians have rejected formal logic but continued to examine argument structure (see the simple and linked atomic argument patterns in Blair, Ch 19).

3. Future Trends in the Study of Argumentation

Projecting future trends in the study of argumentation is difficult because they are based solely on the speculation that certain recent ideas will flourish. Given this qualification, we believe four developments are imminent. We foresee (1) an increased interest in argument in ordinary settings and an integration of argumentation and contextual theories of communication, (2) an expanded interest in cognition and argument, (3) the development of field theory, and (4) the expanded influence of European philosophers.

Work on interpersonal argument is just beginning and has the capacity to draw the interest of researchers concerned with interpersonal processes. As this begins to occur, an integration of argumentation and interpersonal theory will become more systematic. We believe that theoretical concepts like attribution and relational stages will be investigated in relationship to interpersonal arguments. Work on arguments in other contexts (like groups and organizations) will expand and theoretical concepts from group and organizational theory will be integrated with the study of argumentation. With a trend toward examining arguments in ordinary settings firmly established, scholars interested in contexts will begin to see that argumentation is relevant to their interests.

Second, we expect to witness an increase in interest in cognition and argument. There are some scholars currently working in this area (see Section II) but the field has been dominated by those who exclude mental reasoning processes from the domain of argumentation. As cognitive theories of communication become more prevalent (Planalp & Hewes, 1982; Craig, 1979) the number of scholars pursuing an interest in cognition and argument should also increase and the domain of argumentation will be expanded.

The time is ripe for the development of field theory. It is commonly accepted that contexts impact on arguments. The concept of argument fields recognizes that the standards for evaluating arguments and the nature of arguments vary by field. Up to this point, developments in field theory have been disappointing. We believe this will change because much effort has been made to clarify conceptual confusion (see Ch. 29-34) and research applications are just beginning to compare and contrast multiple fields (Dunbar, 1986, Benoit & Lindsey, 1986). An examination of multiple fields is necessary to demonstrate that the concept of fields affects arguments and to build theories about argument in different kinds of fields.

We predict that European philosophers will have increasing influence on argumentation theorists. We've already looked to Perelman and Habermas (see the Fall 1979 issue of the *Journal of the American Forensic Association*). This influence will probably be introduced first by argumentation scholars adopting critical methods since European philosophers are being embraced by rhetorical critics. For example, Williams (1988) contends that argument scholars should draw on the work of Derrida to develop a critical and philosophic perspective that reflects the complexity of the nuclear world.

In editing this book, we feel that we gained more of an appreciation for the breadth and vitality of the study of argumentation. We hope this is conveyed to readers. The future promises to be exciting as interesting questions are plentiful and alternative approaches are abundant.

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