ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Shifting Legitimation Strategies In The Public Sphere: The Case Of The National Endowment For The Arts

1. Introduction

Public discourse surrounding the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is both perplexing and complex. This discourse is marked as argument and is further characterized by a principle of dissensus (Willard, 1986). The disagreement is increasingly debated publicly (most visibly in the American press and United States (US) congressional hearings) where differing parties oftentimes exchange vitriolic and polarized arguments concerning the legitimacy of the NEA. This battle is often demarcated along political, economic, cultural, and ideological lines, which address the interests of the US government in subsidizing non-profit art. Analysis demonstrates that these arguments address the most powerful and influential groups in the public sphere; accordingly, analysis also uncovers the characteristics of the particular public whose set of knowledge, symbols, and ideas are most legitimate. An understanding of these arguments is informed by Jurgen Habermas's conception of the bourgeois public sphere (1962/1995), further elaborated to include differing and contending publics.

Yet, analysis of the public discourse concerning the NEA indicates that strategic arguments are employed in a manner less indicative the idea of a consensus building process: the idea resting on a "communicative practice…that rests on the intersubjective recognition of criticizable validity claims" (1981, p.17). Instead, the NEA employs a legitimation strategy that shifts its arguments towards the public who hold the most power in the public sphere. The strategy of the arguer to tailor a message to pre-conceived publics also points to a process wherein publics hold and loose legitimacy. In this respect, legitimation tends to mean the process whereby one public's set of symbols, knowledge, and ideas, gains power and influence over another public or other publics. Also inherent in this process is the de-legitimation of the public losing power and influence in the public sphere. I

will show that investigation of the NEA's case is best informed by an emphasis upon such legitimation strategies.

The *American Canvas* report released by the NEA on 16 October 1997 is a policy proposal whose rhetorical nature employs strategic appeals to the most influential and powerful segments of the public sphere. The *American Canvas* is a document widely distributed, free of charge, and described as an "analysis and distillation of the major issues we face in the non-profit arts….[raising] red flags about the current state of the arts in America….[concluding] with challenges and opportunities for everyone in the arts to consider" (Larson, 1997, p.6). The *American Canvas* and other texts indicative of this public issue serve as the main data for this project.

The crux of the disagreement concerns the role of the United States' government funding for the non-profit arts. Currently, for the Fiscal Year (FY) 1998, the NEA received the same budget ($99.5 million) as it did in the two previous fiscal years; however, appropriations have dramatically dropped from an all time high of $175,954,680 in 1992 (NEA Annual Report, 1996) [inflationary adjustments not factored in my account of appropriation figures from FY1966-1996]. NEA appropriation hearings in the U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate for FY 1998 were marked by conflicting motions of re-authorization, phasing out, and termination, and the resulting budget was still 39% less then the amount requested by President Clinton. And although the NEA's total budget accounts for "less than one one hundredth of 1% of the federal budget" (http://arts.endow.gov/Guide/Facts/DidYa2.html, 6/10/1998), these debates are quite impassioned and highly publicized. Many officials and constituents still adhere to the message of the NEA's foundation in 1965; detailing that support for the arts and humanities are "appropriate matters of concern to the national government" (National Foundation of the Arts and the Humanities, 1965). Yet others see no place for the government in the funding of the arts, which represents yet another example of the over-reaching hand of government in a realm which would do fine if left to private sector funding. The issue most central to this paper concerns the NEA's legitimacy among the conflicting artistic "elite" public and the "populist" public. This question will be addressed in detail below. But all these concerns contribute to a legitimation crisis for the NEA. Even if pending appropriation bills are passed reauthorizing the NEA, questioning the NEA's legitimacy has become an annual drama that has pervaded many dimensions of discourse in the public sphere. Examining this public discourse is

critical, for the outcome of these deliberations involve real decisions and real choices, arguably with major cultural and economic implications. Ultimately, they define the role of governmental support for the non-profit arts in American society.

This paper has two main parts. First, I will define and operationalize my inquiry of argument in the public sphere. Second, I will demonstrate how the *American Canvas* represents a strategic shift from an "elite" public towards a "populist" public as indicative of a process of legitimation.

2. Theoretical foundations

This study addresses the following question: What happens when the elite audience, made of the public once deemed most knowledgeable to decide policy, ceases to hold influence in the public sphere? In the past, the NEA warranted many of its policies based on artistic merits arising from decisions beholden to the artists most apt to make such judgments. Yet increasingly these artists have been charged as being representative of an elite public. As we shall see, in this case the NEA constructs a normative argument that shifts towards that public whose influence or knowledge is – at least perceived to be – more influential, or more legitimate. Commentors have long observed that publics vary in degrees of deliberative importance, and special emphasis has been placed upon the process by which particular publics are left out of the dominant public discourse (Fraser, 1992, Spivak, 1988). Interestingly, the *American Canvas* reports that the neglected audience is not some subaltern public or even a minoritarian one. Analysis of this case, shows that it is the very majoritarian or "populist" public, that the NEA itself states has been excluded by an elite public. The notion of exclusion can be defined here as the process wherein one group's symbolic meaning system overpowers that of another group through legitimation and de-legitimation. I will demonstrate below that the NEA shifts from tailoring its policy decisions and arguments with deference to the aforementioned "elite" public, and instead moves to embrace a hitherto neglected "populist" public. This shift in the NEA's argument reveals the very legitimation of the knowledge of the populist public, or more precisely, the successful de-legitimation of the knowledge base of the elite public. A more legitimate public holds greater of influence over others. The characteristics of these publics are revealed through identification of argumentation strategies in the public sphere, from institutions like the NEA who seek to ensure their own legitimation.

By classifying policy-orientated deliberative messages as public argument, this study assumes a pluralistic and representative view of democracy in America. Discourse in the public sphere is argumentatively structured, where reasons are tailored to a specific public (or publics) within the public sphere. This public possesses agency in the affairs of the state. While this notion of the public sphere relies on the ideal of a pluralistic democracy, the very notion of pluralism assumes different and differing publics within that sphere, some of which compete with the bourgeois public. Nancy Fraser upholds that "virtually contemporaneous with the bourgeois public there arose a host of competing counterpublics….there were competing publics from the start, not just in the elate nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as Habermas implies. Moreover, not only were there always a plurality of competing publics, but the relations between bourgeois publics and other publics were always conflictual (Fraser, 1996, p.116).

I argue that this investigation of the NEA, as with similar cases, involves an inspection of arguments played out in the public sphere (in a massified and encompassing sense); furthermore, I suggest that any such inquiry should utilize the concept of legitimation, which involves power relations and exclusionary strategies. The idea that the public sphere embodies publics and that such publics posses an exclusionary function are notions already seen in Habermas (1962/1992): "an analysis of the exclusionary aspects of established public spheres is particularly revealing in this respect, the critique of that which has been excluded from the public sphere and from my analysis of it too: gender, ethnicity, class, popular culture" (1992, p.466). This project's framework employs the process of legitimation to explain exclusionary as well as inclusionary, argument strategies.

In this respect, legitimation strategies necessarily invoke an emphasis on power relations. Yet, I would like to the displace primary assumption that such an emphasis is associated with a process which conjures up images of symbolic violence and ruthless power struggles. This legitimation process, while agnostic in nature and rooted in power relations, need not contain negative connotations. A legitimation processes in the public sphere based on concepts of power relations and strategic arguments is informed by Foucault's point:

"The idea that there could exist a state of communication that would allow games of truth to circulate freely, without any constraints or coercive effects, seems utopian to me. This is precisely a failure to see that power relations, if by that one means *strategies by which individuals try to direct and control the conduct of*

others. The problem, then, is not to try to dissolve them in the utopia of completely transparent communication but to acquire the rules of law, the management techniques, and also the morality, the *ethos,* the practice of the self, that will allow us to play these games with as little domination as possible" (Foucault, 1994, p.298) [emphasis added].

The strategies uncovered in the arguments of the NEA (themselves legitimizing in nature) reveal characteristics of the publics they draw upon for support.

3. Case analysis

There are particulars to the case of the NEA that deserve some brief attention. First, why has such a vehement debate been stirred by an investment that amounts to less than $0.38 per year for each American? What is at stake here is the legitimation of a type of knowledge held by contending publics within the public sphere. The current political climate in the elected legislature of the United States is heavily influenced by the Republicans, which may seem like the most pressing public for the NEA. Yet I hold that the NEA's legitimation strategy is directed towards the larger, "populist" American constituency, 57% of which support government support for the arts as reported by the NEA (NEA, 1998).

Also involved here are issues of traditional class structures, and culture wars. Even with the blurring of the distinction between high culture and popular culture (Gans, 1974, 1992 (in Smith & Berman)), these issues are manifest in the discourse analyzed below. A lengthy discussion on these issues is not appropriate here; suffice it to say that they problematize any sort of neat categorization of which public actually exists or which is being addressed in the public sphere.

One might also ask what texts "count" as discourse within the public sphere? My study doesn't embrace sharp distinctions between the state and public sphere of discourse; my use of the *American Canvas* (essentially a government publication) as this project's text is illustrative of this point. While the American Canvas report maintains a governmental ethos, it also includes (and was heavily informed by) discussions of the *American Canvas* forums: six privately-funded forums in regional cities across American which invited diverse participants, "first on the community level, then on the National level" (NEA, 1997), to discuss strategies for its legitimation. These forums were meant to facilitate the national discussion on the state of the arts and the NEA (Larson, 1997), and an overview of the regional forums appears in the *American Canvas*'s appendix.

In the same respect, I will also include the National Foundation on the Arts and

Humanities Act of 1965 (which instituted the NEA) to be a text "in" the public sphere. Not only were many voices from the public sphere influential in the struggle to establish the Act (Larson, 1983; Mulcahy & Wyszomirski, 1995)), but it is of public record and access; furthermore, the act is often cited and referred to in arguments concerning the NEA. In fact, the NEA has avidly produced "official" statements (arguments) – such as the *American Canvas,* press releases, and a web site – in the public sphere via diverse media to gardener support, especially in these times of crisis.

The aforementioned state documents serve as texts in the public sphere of discourse as do a newspaper articles and editorials, video programs, Internet transmissions, and talk. In this regard my notion of the public sphere is broadly inclusive. Katz, Kim, & Wyatt argue that "theories of the public sphere assume that the press, political conversation, and public opinion are all elements of a single system" (1997, p.6) and that "media, conversation, opinion formation, and political action should not – indeed cannot – be disconnected from each other (p.2).

The "common interest" of the public sphere at hand is in the government role in the non-profit arts, or simply, taxing citizens to subsidize the NEA. But the message or (more precisely) the argument is highly stylized and inherently strategic, directed to conceptions of an ideal public. Scrutiny of the *American Canvas*, as the main text, demonstrates that the public being primarily addressed is that which holds the most legitimacy in terms of power and influence in the public sphere. This analysis will always refer to the *American Canvas,* yet a comprehensive reading of the report's 194 pages might not elicit a startling response. The report taken holistically might not seem to be much different in substance than National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities Act of 1965 which sought to "promote progress and scholarship in the humanities and the arts in the United States" (20 U.S.C 951, P.L. 89-209, 1965). But the particulars within the report do signal the shift towards a particular public as part of a legitimation strategy.

A good starting point is the reactions to the *American Canvas* in the American press. The first major response to the *American Canvas* was actually a preemptive one by the *New York Times* (the report was "leaked" three days prior to its national release). The front page headline reads "Study Says Elitist Attitude Reduces Support for the Arts," the article is titled "Study cites gulf between artists, public" (Miller, 1997). Miller states that the "report holds artists

themselves partly responsible for the growing alienation it sees between the public and the arts – a gap that made recent cuts in government arts spending possible" (Miller, 1997). This public is what I will call the "populist" public and the artists represent an "elite" public. This language infers that the populist public is an entity that holds power and influence over government spending decisions. It also suggests that the populist public holds more influence over the arts than the arts community, or the elite public, involved with the NEA.

NEA employs self-critique in the *American Canvas* largely through voices like Alberto Duron, an attorney and "cultural activist" speaking at an *American Canvas* forum in Los Angeles. He argued that the "arts establishment" and its "institutions must be opened up to the communities which they claim to serve but don't" (qtd. in Larson, 1997, p.76). Could this self-critique be a strategy giving credence to the de-legitimation arguments usually associated with the conservative right? Bruce Handy of the TIME magazine sardonically adds that the *American Canvas* "accuses the arts world, and by implication the NEA, of elitism and a disregard for key American values.… the zany twist is that the report isn't the work of Newt Gingrich or Jesse Helms; it's the loving handiwork of the NEA itself" (1997). From the *American Canvas*:

"The arts community itself bears a measure of responsibility for the marginalization of the nonprofit culture. In the course of its justifiable concern with professionalization, institution-building, and experimentation during the 60s and 70s, for example, the arts community neglected those aspects of participation, democratization, and popularization that might have helped sustain the arts when the political climate turned sour" (Larson,1997, p.14).

Various factions of the political spectrum such as the conservative Heritage Foundation (1997) have continually attacked the NEA. But the key here is that these views of dissatisfaction with the NEA are now being equated with the "public" (Miller, 1997) and this populist public's "communities" (Duron qtd. in Larson, 1997). A populist public viewed as a majority who are dissatisfied with tax money spend on the arts, or any government agency in a democracy – spells crisis for the NEA (Netzer, 1978). And more importantly for this paper, a public gaining legitimacy over another requires a shift in appeal.

The *American Canvas* tries to examine this populist public: "Failing to acknowledge their own expressive activities as part of the full spectrum of the arts, many of these Americans are apt to look with suspicion at an "arts world" that seems alternately intimidating, incomprehensible, expensive, alien, and,

thanks to the generally poor job that the mass media have done in covering the arts, often disreputable" (Larson, 1997). The NEA attempts to fix this image by tailoring its argument to the newly conceived populist public and not the artistic elite public, the latter being those who are thought to be most knowledgeable about the arts. The strategic shift employed in this message reveals both the more powerful legitimacy of this populist public and the less powerful elite public.
Again Duron is quoted saying "What's happened to the public arts funding is in no small measure the fault of the arts institutions and the individuals who run them…… critics in congress and elsewhere would never have been able to galvanize large segments of the public if it were not for the vulnerability of the arts community brought on by its isolation and intransigence" (1997, Duron qtd, in Larson, p.77). The arts community, now conceived of as the elite public is struggling against the populist public at large.

Pulitzer Prize winning playwright Tony Kushner (himself referenced in the report) downplays the cultural implications of the art's elitism. Rather, he focuses on the new economic arguments forwarded by the NEA; "essentially the ideological capitulation in evidence has been performed on economic, rather than cultural grounds" (Kushner, 1997). Kushner focuses on an admitted sound-bite from the report calling for a "reexamination of the structural underpinnings of the nonprofit arts and for speculation on the development of a new support system: *one based less on traditional charitable practices and more on the exchange of goods and services*" (Larson, 1997, p.12). For Kushner, this "appalling" stance on art as economic or exchange value is nothing less than a concession to "barbarism" (1997). Economic justifications for establishing sponsorships of the arts as an "essential function of the modern state" are well known (Galbraith, 1973, p.282). However, when economic considerations dictate art's *content* Kushner insists that the line to barbarism has been crossed. Previous arguments which insisted on funding for the NEA based on aesthetic grounds and on artistic freedom (State of the Art), are now touted by the NEA as being elitist and isolationist. Bruce Handy of TIME observes that strings are inevitably attached to governmental support "when you take money from the government, you subject yourself to the mercies of the political process – which is open, as the recent history of the NEA (not to mention history, period) proves, to philistines and worse" (1997). Carrol Dadisman of the Tallahassee Democrat adds "one point is clear: In both government and the private sector today, economic considerations are eclipsing artistic merit in determining levels of financial support for the arts"

(1997).

To summarize and simplify this rhetorical situation: the NEA faces dissensus and crisis; the NEA has traditionally appealed its arguments to the audience of an elite (artistic) public; the *American Canvas* criticizes this public as being, in part, responsible for the decline in NEA's funding, resonating with arguments de-legitimizing the NEA; the NEA attempts a normative strategy by appealing to (and empathizing with) the populist public deemed more powerful to legitimate the NEA, yet a public seen by some to lack the knowledge in deliberations concerning artistic merit.

4. Problematizing the NEA's strategy: Publics in conflict

While this recent case makes it clear that differing publics are at work in deliberating upon governmental funding of the non-profit arts, this notion is not entirely new. Mulcahy and Wyszomirski state that "American arts policy-making has revealed a sharp cleavage between populist and elitist conceptions of public culture (1995, p.180).

An analogy can be drawn between the populist public (audience) and Habermas' "plebeian public" or a "culture of the common people" (1992, p.427). Habermas's (recent) elaboration on this conceives of this public as a culturally and politically distinct "lower strata entail[ing] a pluralization of the public sphere in the very process of its conception" (1992, p.426). Yet to proceed hastily with this analogy seems rather premature here. Instead I will continue to cast these two publics, admittedly generalized, in the more traditional categories of the populist and elitist.

I will attempt to employ a more refined [but no less problematic] notion of the elite than depicted in the arguments analyzed above. The elite is that public whose set of knowledge and symbolic apparatus is deemed most apt to judge decisions which rely on that very knowledge. An appeal to an elite public is simply to gain support from those deemed qualified to know. The NEA walks a precarious line between policy decisions giving to artists concerning art, and the policy decision concerning a government agency based on the broader, populist, American public. Mulcahy and Wyszomirski state that:

"the NEA has sought a balanced' cultural policy… this political strategy has not been without cost. In accepting Caesar's embrace, the muses have become publicly dependent and accountable. The value of the arts has to be justified to the taxpayers… For some this obligation constitutes politicization of the arts; for others, it is a cost of doing public business. Historically this political strategy had

been an important ingredient in the NEA's bureaucratic success"
(1982, p.181).

This balance, however, is perhaps associated with a consensus model of deliberation in the public sphere. In light of my argument, the success of the NEA todya can be better understood as a power struggle for legitimacy. For in the *American Canvas* the elite are not simply those qualified to know, or an ideal audience of those most apt to judge. This conception of an elite public (of knowledge) has shifted towards a *politically* elite public, the latter associated with high-mindedness, high-class, and indifference to the concerns of the common public. In the NEA's efforts to legitimate its own role, its strategy shows an effort to tailor its message towards a more legitimate populist public, rather than towards a de-legitimated elite public. The NEA's internal conflicts in adhering to this legitimation strategy are quite profound. For herein is a de-legitimation of the artistic elite. Already since FY1996, a ban has been placed on giving grants to most individual artists. In the NEA's own struggle for legitimacy, their apparent strategy will have a major impact on government supported non-profit art in America.

5. Conclusions

The message of the NEA – as seen in its own messages and in the public discourse – shifts its conception of an elitist public to contending populist public within the public sphere. My argument forwards the position that the case of the NEA, and others, can be viewed in terms of a strategic process of legitimation based on power struggles rather than consensus building, the result being that the ideal pluralistic democracy is not lessened but better understood. By analyzing discourse manifest as texts in the public sphere, concepts of the public who hold the most legitimate knowledge and power and influence in the decision making process emerges.

Still, further probematics and questions abound. Among these are issues concerning the conception of the elite public and, moreover, the populist public, both of which still needs more definition. Perhaps research into the plebeian public sphere, or popular culture generally, can inform this issue.

Yet the most pressing question here is what is to become of the crisis of the NEA, as the agency continues to struggle with its normative policy in light of legitimized an de-legitimized publics.

Comments by Bruce Robbins (1993) relate to this point: Just because professional

insiders invent publics for themselves, therefore, it does not follow that the outside is imaginary or that there is no real connection between what is invented inside and the forces outside that must be managed, assuaged, responded to, negotiated or compromised with. We know… that the autonomy of the profession seems to abandon momentarily when faced with the demand for a generally accessible account of itself is never more relative or provisional. It is granted by social bodies outside the profession, whether the' estate… or 'public opinion' or some mixture thereof. And it can be sustained only for as long as its support continues – an long as the profession's authority in a given area is judged, by enough of those people who have the power to withdrawal that authority, to be not only legitimate, but more legitimate than the other contenders.

The NEA seems to have accepted that its authority depends on a legitimized populist public, yet perhaps even they are unsure of this deferral.

The American *Canvas* states that "the future of the arts in America depends upon the will of the people. The spirit to grow is there, but a flower can be crushed with a single step" (Larson, 1997, p.6). The NEA has put its stakes in the hands of the populist public, time will see whether it gets crushed under that public's weight.

REFERENCES

Dadisman, C. (1997) "Art won out over profit, but most of the time, it doesn't." Tallahassee Democrat.

Foucault, M. (1994). Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth. In: P. Rainbow (Vol. Ed.), *The Essential Works of Michael Foucault 1954-1984:* Vol. 4. New York: The Free Press.

Fraser, N. (1992). Rethinking the Public Sphere: A contribution to the critique of actually existing democracy. In: C. Calhoun (Ed), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 109-142). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Galbraith, J. K. (1973). *Economics and the public purpose*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Gans, H. J. (1974). *Popular culture and high culture; an analysis and evaluation of style.* U.S.: Basic Books.

Gans, H. J. (1992). American popular and high culture in a changing class structure. In: R. A. Smith & R. Berman (Eds.), *Public policy and the aesthetic interest*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Goodnight, T. G. & Hingstman, D. B. (1997). Studies in the public sphere. *Quarterly Journal of Speech:* 83, 351-370.

Habermas, J. (1995). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An*

inquiry into a category of bourgeois society (T. Burger & F. Lawerence, Trans.). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (Original work published 1962).
Habermas, J. (1984). *The theory of communicative action: Reason and the rationalization of society* (T. McCarthy, Trans.). Boston: Beacon Press. (Original work published 1981).
Habermas, J. (1992). In: C. Calhoun (Ed), *Habermas and the public sphere* (pp. 109-142). Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
Handy, B. (3 November 1997). "Where elite meet to be aesthetes." *TIME magazine.*
Heretage Foundation (1997). Online. http://www.townhall.com/heritage/library/categories/budgettax/bg1110.html
Katz, E., Kim, J., & Wyatt, R. O. (1997). *News, talk, opinion, action: Media, interpersonal relations, and political participation in the public sphere.* Manuscript.
Larson, G. O. (1983). *The reluctant patron: The United States government and the arts, 1943-1965.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Larson, G. O. (1997). *American Canvas: An arts legacy for our communities*. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Policy, Research and Technology & The Office of Communications, National Endowment for the Arts.
Miller, B. (199). "The state of the art." Video Production.
Miller, J. (1997). "Study cites gulf between artists, public. *New York Times*: 14 October.
Mulcahay, K. V. Mulcahy, & Swaim, C. R. (1982). *Public Policy and the Arts.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
Mulcahay, K. V., & Wyszomirski, M. J. (1995). *America's commitment to culture: Government and the Arts.* Boulder: Westview Press.
National Endowment for the Arts. (6/10/1998). Homepage. Online: http://arts.endow.gov/Guide/Facts/DidYa2.html
National Endowment for the Arts. (1997). New Release: American canvas report released by the NEA. *NEA.*
Netzer, D. (1978). *The subsidized muse.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Robbins, B. (1993). *Secular vocations: Intellectuals, professionalism, culture*. London: Verso.
Spivak, G. S. (1988). Can the subaltern speak? In: C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (Eds.) *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
Willard, C. A. (1987). Valuing Dissensus. In: F. H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, J. A. Blair, & C. A. Willard (Eds.), *Argumentation: across the lines of discipline*

(pp. 145-157). Holland: Foris Publications.
20 U.S.C. 951. P.L. 89-209 (1965). *National Foundation on the Arts and Humanities Act of 1965.*

ISSA Proceedings 1998 – From Arguing Within To Arguing Across Boundaries: Globalization As A Challenge To Argumentation Studies

Is it possible to argue across the boundaries of self-contained, ideologically or culturally incompatible formations (e.g., East and West, North and South, Islamic and Christian civilizations)? In other words, can controversies be discussed and resolved rationally without there being even a common, general intellectual or cultural tradition for disputants to fall back on as the final guarantee for an eventual agreement? The default answer to this question, for a number of reasons, is "No."

Analytical and neo-pragmatist philosophers by and large have long expressed their doubt that a rational agreement can ever be reached argumentatively between radically different systems. W. V. Quine undercuts such a possibility with his influential doctrine of the "indeterminacy of translation." For Quine, outsiders "cannot even say what native locutions to count as analogues of terms as we know them, much less equate them with ours term for term," and the "native may achieve the same net effects through linguistic structures so different that any eventual construing of our devices in the native language and vice versa can prove unnatural and largely arbitrary" (1960:53). Richard Rorty believes that

"there is no way to step outside the various vocabularies we have employed and find a metavocabulary which somehow takes account of *all possible* vocabularies, all possible ways of judging and feeling," which has led him to reject argumentation as the mode of cross-"vocabulary" interactions (1989: xvi, 8).
Postmodern thinkers in general not only accept the premise of a radical incommensurability between different life-worlds, but also add an ethical dimension to the issue, making it even more difficult to contemplate the possibility of rational, non-coercive means of cross-cultural conflict resolution. Jean-François Leyotard, for instance, introduces the concept of a *différend* as "a case of conflict, between (at least) two parties, that cannot be equitably resolved for lack of a rule of judgment applicable to both arguments." When "a universal rule of judgment between heterogeneous genres is lacking in general," a "wrong" would necessarily result from the fact that "the rules of the genre of discourse by which one judges are not those of the judged genre or genres of discourse" (1988: xi). Even Jügen Habermas has acknowledged that his earlier formulation of a "discourse ethics," based on the principle that "a norm can be considered objectively right if it would be consented to in free discussion by all concerned as consonant with their interests," fails to take into proper account "the power of history over against the transcending claims and interests of reason," the "ideas of the 'good life'" which "form an integrated component of the particular culture," and "*Sittlichkeit*, the concrete customs of a community" (Dews 1986: 17-18).

And anthropologists lend further support to this general skepticism with vivid stories of their personal encounters with other cultures. Clifford Geertz, in an account of how, during a 1971 trip to Indonesia, he had a "debate" with a local religious master over the issue of whether American astronauts had indeed landed on the moon, shows what an impossible task it could be trying to argue with people locked in an acutely different cultural framework. The setting was a religious school in Sumatra. His opponent, the teacher-director of the institution, opened with the declaration that "no Muslim could believe [the moon-landing]," because the Prophet was "held to have said that an enormous ocean lies between the earth and the moon and this was the source of [Noah's] flood." If the Americans had indeed gone to the moon, then
1. they "would have put a hole in this ocean and a flood like Noah's" would have ensued and would have drowned us all;
2. they would have proved that the Prophet was wrong, which was impossible;
3. what they did was most likely to be a trick played by God who "had constructed

a fake moon off to the side somewhere for them to land on."

Geertz, feeling that he had better not question the "authority of a *hadith* [a tradition from the Prophet]" there and then, and not quite knowing "what to do with [the master's] argument," chose to confine himself to describing what Western science considered the moon to be. And he suggested in conclusion that "maybe the best thing would be for a Muslim to go along on the trip next time." This invocation of the "seeing is believing" presumption, however, apparently did not sound particular persuasive to people who had accepted the premise that the almighty God could easily construct a "fake moon" in the first place. As a result, what promised to be a "great debate" between two cultures quickly fizzled into a "clash of narratives," with "nothing" being "disturbed" (1995: 82-84).
Even though they have been, and to a significant extent remain, the dominant assumptions, these perspectives have come under criticism from the very beginning. Donald Davidson famously challenges the notion of "incommensurability" on the basis of its own "incoherence." For if two different "conceptual schemes" were indeed as radically incommensurable as has been suggested, they would be *mutually unintelligible*. And it would not be possible for us to find other conceptual schemes incompatible to ours on the basis of a comparison (1973-1974). Richard J. Bernstein speaks for many when he points out that "[incommensurable] languages and traditions are not to be thought of as self-contained windowless monads that share nothing in common. . . . There are always points of overlap and crisscrossing, even if there is not perfect commensuration" (1991:92). And Geert-Lueke Lueken calls attention to the fact that whether "systems of orientation" (SOs) are incommensurable or not "depends on our interpretations of them," which can be "improved and revised," and that incommensurability should be "regarded as a matter of degree" (1991: 244).

While perspectives such as these have alleviated our anxiety over an incommensurability-caused breakdown in cross-cultural communication (not to mention argumentation), there is still no denying the fact that neither a neutral ground nor a commonly acceptable "meta-vocabulary" is available when symbolic exchanges take place between independent formations such as the above-mentioned. A culture is definable precisely by the uniqueness of the basic assumptions and beliefs its members subscribe to. If the disputants insist on invoking their own first premises, as in the case of Geertz "debating" the

Indonesian religious master, there can be no way a mutually agreed-upon decision can be reached on what should be the point of controversy (e.g., the question "Did American astronauts actually land on the moon?" would have invited scorn rather than argument had it been raised in an
intra-cultural context of the Western discourse), much less that a position can be justified rationally. Large international or inter-cultural formations, moreover, came into being because of an irreconcilable conflict, real or imagined, in vital interests. As a result, much of the "argumentation" that pits one of those formations against another (e.g., the daily debates in the U.N.), upon a close examination, turns out to be little more than veiled exercises of *realpolitik*, calculated horse tradings, self-advertising exchanges between the deaf, etc.. Within this context, the "complexities of [international] political life are reduced to a calculus of power, justice is reduced to self-interest, appearances are reduced to the reality they conceal, and, ultimately, language is reduced to the world it would represent" (Beer and Hariman 1996: 390).

It must be a keen awareness of this intrinsically realist nature of international or intercultural relations that has discouraged argumentation scholars from going beyond an *intra*-cultural context in pursuit of a normative theoretical model applicable to *inter*-cultural debates as well. An incredulity toward the possibility of what the Self and the Other would *both* regard as a rational exchange between them is deeply embedded in the practices of argumentation studies. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca point out in their *The New Rhetoric* that argumentation presupposes an "effective community of minds" whose "minimum" conditions of possibility include everything from a "common language" to a shared body of "norms set by social life" and a mutual "wish to enter into conversation." As an illustration of what could result had one tried to argue in the absence of such a community, they refer to Alice's helplessness and frustration over her failed attempts to communicate with the denizens of the Wonderland. The need for a community remains as much a going assumption as Alice's story continues to function as a cautionary tale for the discipline of argumentation studies as a whole (1969: 14-15). Even though among theorists of "argument fields" or "argument spheres," an interest in inter-field border crossing has been developed since the 1980's, the multiple "fields" or "spheres" in question are clearly understood to have come into being within, and to depend for their existence and normal functioning on, the same cultural formation of the West (Eemeren et al. 1996: 204-206).

Since in its most fundamental orientation, argumentation studies is devoted to studying conflict resolution through exchanges of reasons, which is hardly the normative mode of international or intercultural interactions, its disciplinary inclination to focus attention on intra- rather than inter-cultural disputation is not without its justification. And the propensity would stay warranted were it not for the fact that a new world-wide rhetorical situation is taking shape and the clarification of this emerging situation is posing a serious challenge to this field of inquiry. With the end of the Cold War and the unprecedented and unstoppable drive toward globalization, a brave new era has forced itself upon us. The world as a whole has become to such an extent interconnected financially, economically, environmentally and communicatively that the notion of a "generalized interest" begins to make sense, and scholars and public commentators alike, most of whom are by no means naïve and sentimental idealists, have started to talk openly about formulating "universal ethics" or codifying "planetary legal standards." In days gone by, writes international relations scholar Stephen Schlesinger, ideological constructs ranging from "nationalism" to "historical memories" had had such a hold on people that "the idea of a world of laws" would have seemed "a laughable proposition." Today, however, "the imperatives behind worldwide trade . . . are [so] tightening the bonds among nations" that not only have we been witnessing a steady movement toward "working together in a lawful fashion around the world," we have actually started to forge a "juridical global community," with treaties governing trade, global warming, land-mines, etc., as its "building blocks," and we may even have "become a world legal society without admitting it" (1997). Columnist Flora Lewis maintains that "globalization of economics and technology is no longer a contentious thesis but an irresistible reality with concrete effect on people's lives." As a result, the idea of "articulating . . . a global ethic" applicable to "everybody everywhere" is "spreading with increasing insistence" (1997). And in a critical survey of new theories on globalization and communication, Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi presents a whole range of scholarly arguments "around the public sphere and its apparent or possible growth into a transnational civil society," from the suggestion that "the only possible response to global market forces is . . . a universal public sphere in which common interests can be recognized and acted on" to calls for "the creation of a global perspective and values in the depths of people's hearts and minds, establishing the idea of a global civil society" (1997: 11-12).

One cannot imagine a "world legal society" or a "global ethic" being instituted

without there already being a "global rhetorical regime" in place to serve as one of its indispensable institutional infrastructures. What shape the "trans-national public sphere" would eventually take remains vague and controversial at this moment. What is beyond any doubt, however, is that the construction of such a sphere must necessarily be based on a global consensus that results from *rational* discussions and debates among *all* its would-be members. Whereas the principle of give-and-take on the basis of cold calculation of private interests and power relations has been the principal means of international conflict resolution, it would never work as far as building up a "global civil society" is concerned. As an indication that preliminary work to build up this society is already underway, controversies have erupted in recent years over issues such as "democracy," "human rights," or "Asian values." A close look into the mode of verbal exchanges typically found in efforts to resolve issues such as these yields some unexpected findings.

First, no incommensurability-caused problems seem to be plaguing the contentious cross-cultural, inter-continental or even inter-civilizational exchange of opinions. The representative "voices" of the East, the South, or the non-Western cultures in general do not come from people like Geertz's interlocutor in the above-mentioned episode, much less from the denizens of Alice's Wonderland. Rather, they typically come from people such as former Singaporean prime minister Lee Kuan Yew or the current Malaysian prime minister Mahathir Mohamad, who tend to be Western-educated Third World elite and who are conversant in Western rhetoric to such an extent that they usually have no problem whatsoever in understanding, communicating with, and debating champions of Western values. An example is Bilahari Kausikan, Singapore's representative to the United Nations. Not only did he defend "Asian values" vigorously in Western mass media or public forums, he also contributed rhetorically sophisticated articles to influential American academic journals such as *Journal of Democracy*.

Second, as their primary strategy, these (often self-proclaimed) spokesmen for the non-Western world tend to draw from *Western* discursive resources and to frame, formulate, and defend their positions in Western, rather than their native terms. The arguments, presumptions, and modes of reasoning they characteristically deploy are likely to be those authorized or even valorized by Western, especially contemporary Western, discourses. Thus in his defense of Singapore's political system, Kausikan appeals only to authoritative Western sources (e.g. C.B. Macpherson's theory of democracy, David Hitchcock's comparative study of Asian

and American values) and invokes only currently valorized Western beliefs, presumptions or values (e.g., contingency, particularism, diversity) (Kausican 1997). And in none of his speeches addressed to an international audience has Prime Minister Mahathir invoked any Islamic doctrine as the warrant or backing of his position.

In pleading for a globally regulated currency trading (which mainstream West opinion makers had found to be an absurd idea) following the outbreak of the Asian crisis in July 1997, for example, Mahathir draws an analogy with three milestones in the development of modern capitalist market in the U.S.: the anti-trust legislation that effectively outlawed monopolies; the legislation to prevent anyone from "acquiring controlling interest in companies and then stripping their assets" at the expense of other shareholders; and the legislation that stopped "insider trading" by making it illegal. The market, he argues, has always been subject to regulations, and if a financial community such as the U.S.'s deems it necessary, and can always find the right legislative or legal means, to protect small investors, ordinary shareholders, common people, from being victimized by big wheelers and dealers, why cannot the *international community* find a way to prevent similar victimization of small financial entities or players in a globalized market? (1997).

Third, even though – or perhaps because – the debates are conducted in Western terms, Western interlocutors in general do not appear as effective argumentatively as one would expect them to be. Public commentators and scholars alike tend either to ignore the arguments presented by people like Mahathir or to greet them with rire d'exclusion or with ideologically inspired indignation/condemnation, rejecting them off-hand as self-evident anti-Western nonsense or self-serving sophistry in defense of undemocratic institutions and practices at home, not to be dignified with reasoned rebuttals. When they do respond, the counter-arguments are often of suspect validity and currency in contemporary Western discourse (e.g., resorting to universalism, apriorism, the notion of "intrinsic value," etc. to counter attempts to relativize human rights culturally). In spite of the protests from the non-Western interlocutors against what Kausican terms "willful misunderstanding" of their positions, the Western representation of these positions by and large remains unsatisfactory to the represented. Samuel Huntington, for example, characterizes Singaporean leaders as believing that what their people want and need is "not democratic government but good government – that is, government that will provide economic well-being, political stability, social order, communal harmony, and efficient and honest

administration" (1997: 11). And yet he leaves out "democratic accountability" from their announced list of the components for a good government. And as one suspects must be the case, no Singapore spokesman has pitted "good government" against "democratic government" (cf. Kausican 1997).

Such an approach is not only ineffectual, it violates the communication ethics observed in the West. The rhetorical awkwardness is indicative of an unexpected encounter with rhetorical difficulties that the overnight breakdown of what used to look like a permanent binary structure has created. Whereas this structure rendered it unnecessary to think about the norms of argumentation with anyone other than a fellow Westerner, the clear-cut distinction between us and them, and the sense of communicative security such a distinction provided, are no longer there. Among the disturbing questions the new situation has raised are:

1. Will concepts, arguments and procedures keep their intra- communal status in legitimacy, validity, or strength when applied inter-communally?
"Democracy," for example, is regarded as an "essentially contested" concept within the Western discourse of political science, its meaning having been interpreted differently and debated upon constantly (e.g., the recent debate over the distinction between "liberal" and "illiberal" democracies). And yet there has been a reluctance on the part of Western interlocutors to discuss with non-Western critics what it should mean, for the simple reason that to agree to argue about the meaning of democracy is to admit implicitly the "debatability" of whether the current model of Western liberal democracy, as such, is suitable for non-Western parts of the world, and to imply a willingness to accept whatever comes out of a debate. Another example, can those powerful arguments that have been formulated and presented for cultural diversity in the U.S. be admitted if they were employed by people like Mahathir or Lee Kuan Yew in pleading for what they claim to be the need to maintain a world-wide diversity in cultural values?

2. Must the ethical guidelines applicable within the Western world apply inter-communally to its rhetorical interactions with the non-Western world also?
Within the framework of the Western rhetoric, for example, the going assumption is that one should distinguish between the message and the messenger. And yet *ad hominem* is frequently applied inter-communally (e.g., "Mahathir is an anti-Semitic authoritarian and there is no way we should take what he says seriously").

3. What should be the basis for defining the relationship between argumentation and interests?
When participating in intra-communal argumentation, there is a clear understanding that one is willing to make serious commitment to the adjudicating authority of argumentation, and would subject one's interests to the regulation and conditioning of good reasons. Could we expect, or ought to expect, participants to the inter-communal argumentation to make the same commitment?

4. What should be the guideline for dealing with the relationship between argumentation and ideology?
Ideological differences do not prevent people within a community from arguing with one another (e.g. the Republicans vs. the Democrats in American domestic politics). Should considerations for international ideology be allowed to preempt one's obligation to justify positions which are domestically correct and yet controversial in a global context, or to preempt one's obligation to respond to counter-arguments presented by one's perceived ideological Other from the non-Western world?

Reflections on these issues against the background of an ever-intensifying process of globalization have begun to produce new approaches and fresh thinking in cross-boundary argumentation. Scholars who have interacted intimately with their non-Western counterparts have become increasingly aware of the need for a less ethnocentric attitude toward cross-cultural disputes. Many human rights experts have realized, for instance, that "it is not realistic to deny the real or apparent insufficiency of cultural legitimacy of some human rights standards," and have sought to "explore the possibilities of cultural reinterpretation and reconstruction through *internal cultural discourse and cross-cultural dialogue*," as a more effective means for "enhancing the universal legitimacy of human rights." Such an approach abandons the assumption that "sufficient cultural support for the full range of human rights is either already present or completely lacking in any given cultural tradition," for the new view that "prevailing interpretations and perceptions of each cultural tradition can be expected to support some human rights while disagreeing with or even completely rejecting other existing human rights" (An-Na'im 1992: 3). Accepting this new foundational assumption makes it possible to have real argumentation among different cultural traditions.
Western political leaders have also become sensitive to issues standing in the way

toward an international dialogue. U. S. President Clinton in an important speech on the issue of China, for example, declares that American criticism of Chinese human rights records has been made "in the hope of a dialogue, and in dialogue we must also admit that we in America are not blameless in our social fabric.… And if we expect other people to listen to us about the problems they have, we must be prepared to listen to them about the problems we have" (1997). And in an interview given to *The New York Times* shortly after she became the U. N. Human Rights High Commissioner, Mary Robinson "stresses balance in approaching human rights," pointing out that "[it] is only a moral voice if you have real credibility," and credibility grows from impartiality" and fairness. And she promises "open debate about Western and Eastern values," observing that "[we're] not going to make real progress for women in Afghanistan unless we can do it within their culture" (1997).

Argumentation theorists, similarly, have started to turn their attention on these issues. From his effort to address the implications of the concept of incommensurability to argumentation, Lueken hits on the insight that since "the intersubjective constitution of objects and rules does not work in cases of incommensurability" and there is "no possibility to refer to common meanings, perceptions and rules," participants in an "inter-paradigmatic controversy" should enter "a kind of mutual field research, an open exchange released from the pressure of reasoning, rules, validity questions and performed to understand the alien SO by participation or to create a new one commonly" (1991: 249). This new approach, which Lueken calls "anticipatory practice," is precisely the one adopted by non-Western elite in their effort to enter a meaningful dialogue with the West on behalf of their cultures. And as more and more Western scholars come to realize the importance of turning their interlocutor's resources to their use in order to be effective in cross-cultural debates, "anticipatory approach" will be more commonly adopted.

This trend toward strategic application of "anticipatory practice," however, goes against what Lueken emphasizes as its central aim, i.e., "mutual understanding." Yet a Habermasian orientation toward "understanding" is problematic in this context, for a freedom from "the pressure of reasoning, rules, validity questions," which Lueken prescribes for the new practice, could only spell an end to argumentation as a symbolic practice. Contrary to Lueken's claim that "rule-reconstruction," such as what van Eemeren and Grootendorst has done when they formulated their famous ten ethical guidelines for argumentative exchanges, is

"no solution" to argumentation across SOs (1991: 245), what such an argumentation urgently needs is precisely a special set of ethical rules for its practice. Both President Clinton and Mary Robinson came to grips with this need, if only intuitively, when they reiterated "reciprocity," "impartiality," "fairness" as the principles for inter-cultural dialogues. And as Richard Bernstein points out, "the response to the threat of [a] practical failure [to understand 'alien' traditions]… should be an ethical one, namely, to assume the responsibility to listen carefully, to use our linguistic, emotional, and cognitive imagination to grasp what is being expressed and said in 'alien' traditions" (1991: 92-93). If a shared "will to argue," which the perception of a widely shared or "generalized" interest in a globalized world has given rise to, and the technique of "appealing to the Other's cultural resources for the justification of the Self's position," have made it unnecessary, as a precondition to argumentation, to have the kind of "community of minds" which we used to take for granted, for cross-communal argumentation to proceed in a civil and productive manner, we do need to define a number of ethical guidelines for all parties to follow.

No definition of such guidelines can become binding without its being legitimated through a truly international dialogue on this subject. For such a dialogue to be at all possible, however, argumentation theorists are expected to open up a space for the global discussion with their thematization on the issues involved and with a drafted list of such guidelines. On the basis of Eemeren and Grootendorst's "ten commandments," some general maxims can in fact be tentatively drawn for argumentation *across* cultural formations:

1. maxim of argumentative burden:
what is presumed to be true or valid on one side of the boundary does not necessarily retain its presumption cross-communally;
2. maxim of attitude:
once entering a debate, parties involved should bracket off their own group' received judgments, perception, etc. of the other group, treating each other as rhetorically equal partners and consider each other's arguments seriously throughout the process of argumentation;
3. maxim of argumentative stance:
no party should expect from the other what is unacceptable within *its own* group;
4. maxim of argumentative strength:
what is granted certain degree of argumentative validity on one side retains the same degree of its *intra*-group validity when advanced by the party from the *other*

side in *inter*-group argumentation;
5. maxim of audience:
a *good* cross-communal argument advanced by members of one group should be able to persuade rational judges of the *other* group;
6. maximum of strategy:
it follows from maximum 5 that each group should strive to find support for its standpoint from the other group's culturally sanctioned pool of arguments;
7. maxim of commitment:
parties should be committed to making appropriate adjustments in perceptions, conducts, policies, etc. in accordance with the outcome of a cross-cultural debate.

These candidates for a normative set of ethical guidelines are meant to be an invitation for open discussions on how argumentation theory should adapt itself to the new reality of globalization, much more than to offer a solution to the numerous problems and issues that have been touched upon in this discussion. Given the urgency of finding a solution to these problems, it is high time that argumentation scholars turn their attention to the new task, and contribute to the successful formation of a future "global civil society" or "global public sphere" with their careful identification and analysis of the conceptual, technical and ethical difficulties lying under those issues.

REFERENCES

An-Na'im, Abdullahi Ahmed (Ed.) (1992). *Human Rights in Cross-Cultural Perspectives: A Quest for Consensus*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
Bernstein, Richard J. (1991). Incommensurability and Otherness Revisited. In: *Culture and Modernity: East-West Philosophic Perspectives* (85-103). Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.
Clinton, William J. (1997). Speech on China. *The Associated Press Friday,* October 24, 1997; 3:51 p.m.EDT.
Davidson, Donald. (1973-1974). On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme. *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* 47: 5-20.
Dews, Peter (1986/1992). *Editor's Introduction. In: Jügen Habermas, Autonomy and Solidarity*. London: Verso (pp. 1-32).
Eemeren, Frans H. van, Rob Grootendorst, et al. (1996). *Fundamentals of Argumentation Theory.* Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
Geertz, Clifford (1995). *After the Fact*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Huntington, Samuel P. (1996). “Democracy for the Long Haul.” *Journal of Democracy* 7.2: 3-13.
Kausikan, Bilahari (1997). “Government that Works.” *Journal of Democracy* 8.2, 24-34.
Lueken, Geert-Lueke (1990). Incommensurability, Rules of Argumentation, and Anticipation. In: Frans H. van Eemeren, et al. (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Argumentation* (pp. 244-252, Ch. 32).
Lyotard, Jean-François (1988). *The Differend: Phrases in Dispute.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.
Mahathir, Mohamad (1997). *Asian Economies: Challenges and Opportunities* (A Speech Given on September 20, 1997 at the Hong Kong Convention of the World Bank). Available on-line at
http://www.smpke.jpm.my/gn-data/ucapan.pm/1997/970920.htm.
Perelman, Ch. & L. Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969). *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
Quine, W.V. (1960). *Word and Object.* Cambridge: M.I.T. press.
Rorty, Richard (1989). *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Schlesinger, Stephen (1997). Moving to One-World Society. *The Los Angeles Times* (Internet Edition) Monday, October 27, 1997.
Sreberny-Mohammadi, Annabelle (1996). Introduction. In: Sandra Braman & Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammadi (Eds.), *Globalization, Communication, and Transnational Civil Society* (pp. 1-19). Cresskill: Hampton Press.

ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Rhetorical Prolepsis And The Dialectical Tier Of Argumentation

In contemporary studies of argumentation, no development is more important than the decline of the formal deductive model and the rise of informal logic. The formalist prospective, dominant through most of this century, holds that an argument consists of propositions related to one another as reason or reasons to a conclusion. Thus, Irving Copi, in a classic formulation of this concept, defines an argument as "any group of propositions of which one is claimed to follow from the others, which are regarded as providing evidence for the truth of that one" (Copi 1961: 7). Conceived in these terms, arguments exist in isolation from their contexts and are to be studied in terms of the formal relationships between reasons and conclusion. Their social and political dimensions are set to the side.

Over the past several decades, in a broad interdisciplinary and international movement, the formalist approach has been criticized by scholars interested in developing a more flexible and more socially responsive approach to argument. Proponents of this approach do not deny the existence and significance of formal structure, but they insist that form alone is not adequate to give a realistic account of how arguments work. From this perspective, argument should be studied through an informal logic that considers the motives, goals, and social contexts that condition the process of arguing. Thus, Trudy Govier, defines argument as "a set of claims that a person puts forward to persuade an audience that some further claim is true" (Govier 1987: 1).**[i]** On this account, and in contrast to Copi's position, arguments are used for and by people; someone is trying to do something to others, and the agents and audiences involved in this activity are essential rather than incidental to the nature of argument.

An important corollary of this approach is that arguments must be studied within two tiers. The first tier relates to core structure and yields a formal account of an argument as a product. But this tier cannot account for rational persuasion, the goal of argument as process, since arguments actually surface within a competitive field.

As Ralph Johnson has explained, the participants in any argumentative situation "know that there are objections to the Arguer's position. Indeed the Arguer must know this herself and so it is typical to attempt to diffuse such within the course of argument. If she does not deal with the objections and criticisms, then to that degree her argument is not going to satisfy the dictates of rationality…. Hence if the Arguer really wished to persuade the Other rationally, the Arguer is obligated

to take account of these objections, these opposing points of view, these criticisms" (Johnson 1996: 354; see also Walton 1990). In short, beyond the structural level, an argument must engage a dialectical tier in which it competes with other arguments for rational assent.

On Johnson's account, argumentation must be dialectical if it is to be rational, and the dialectical process entails positioning and structuring arguments within a controversy. This view explicitly stresses the agonistic dimension of argument and implicitly recognizes its grounding in social situations, and both of these features indicate a strong affinity between dialectical argumentation and rhetoric. In fact, Johnson's description of the dialectical tier in argument seems to echo one of the traditional precepts of rhetorical lore – the figure of thought most often called *prolepsis*.

It is no surprise that Johnson and other informal logicians fail to note the connection between prolepsis and their own work on dialectic. Prolepsis is an ancient and persistent item in the rhetorical lexicon, but it occupies an obscure and seemingly technical place within that lexicon, and over time, it has been called by different names, defined in strikingly different ways, and divided and sub-divided into a labyrinth of even more technical terminology (see Dupriez 1991: 355-56.) Nevertheless, the basic idea conveyed by the figure is quite simple, and once we strip away the technical baggage, we can hardly miss the affinity between the strategy it indicates and the dialectical interest in argument expressed by informal logicians. Prolepsis is a figure of anticipation; in using it, the speaker or writer anticipates and forestalls objections (Lanham 1991: 120), or as Abraham Fraunce puts the point in plain, old Elizabethan English, prolepsis occurs "when we present and meet with that which might be objected and do make answer to the same" (Fraunce 1950: 100). This concern about identifying and responding to objections is closely related to Johnson's view of how dialectical arguers proceed.

In noting and emphasizing this affinity between prolepsis and the dialectical concept of argument, I do not mean to suggest that the two are equivalent. A strategy for producing particular arguments has a much different status than a philosophically derived norm for evaluating argumentation in general. Nevertheless, I think it significant that informal logicians, as they come to grips with the social dimensions of argument, invoke ideas that connect rational processes with strategic considerations and with aspects of the traditional rhetoric of persuasion. The relationship between rhetoric and argumentation has

become an issue of some significance in recent years (Wenzel 1987, 1990; Hansen 1997), and a careful consideration of rhetorical strategies like prolepsis might offer a concrete basis for specifying this relationship. In what follows I want to make a tentative first step in that direction.

My own study of the rhetoric of oratory also encourages this effort. As I have read and reread the texts of canonical orators such as Demosthenes, Cicero, Burke, and especially Lincoln, I have become increasingly impressed by the way that they construct and position themselves within a universe of discourse. The eloquence of these authors, I have come to believe, is, in some part, a function of their skill in representing, framing, and resolving controversies within the boundaries of a single discourse. This skill entails the development of an effective voice in multi-vocal contexts, and therefore I think of it as a matter of dialogic placement. As the term dialogic suggests, dialectical argument is only part of this process; other elements, especially the imaginative use of language, are also required. Nevertheless, a dialectical sensibility – a well developed capacity to recognize and encounter argumentative objections – seems a necessary condition to achieve this rhetorical skill.

Rhetorical figures, perhaps because of their traditional association with style, have received scant attention from contemporary students of argumentation.**[ii]** Yet, in the canonical oratorical texts, such figures appear prominently and recurrently as strategies of dialectical placement. Prolepsis is the most obvious figure of this type, but there are a number of others including:

1. *prosopopoeia* in which a speaker gives voice to an inanimate object or a person not present and constructs a dialogue in which the personified other raises points that are answered or refuted (Quintilian IX.2.30);
2. *correctio* in which a speaker articulates a point and then retracts it through self-correction (Lanham 1991: 42); and
3. *hyperbole* in which a speaker makes a plausible case for an exaggerated argument supporting her position so as to encourage acceptance of a weaker but still sufficient argument concerning the same position (Lanham 1991: 87; Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 290-91).

In all these instances, the figure works “dialectically” by placing an argument within a field of arguments. These figures often have additional functions as they help position the speaker in reference to other, competing speakers– and thus they may become strategies of dialogic, and not just dialectical, placement. But

the argumentative function is an important part of the dialogic process, and the study of how these figures work in oratorical texts should offer some insight into the practical workings of argument at the level of the dialectic tier.

Of all the orators I have studied, I have found that Lincoln uses these figures the most often and with the most telling effect. Eventually I hope to conduct a detailed study of how they function in his prose, but in this paper, I have only enough space to analyze one text – an early speech in the corpus of Lincoln's oratory. This text offers a useful example of how prolepsis operates rhetorically and suggests some of the complex ways in which rhetorical functions merge with aspects of dialectical argumentation.

The "Address to the Young Man's Lyceum," delivered on January 31, 1838, is one of the earliest of Lincoln's speeches for which we have a reasonably complete text. The speech is of interest for many reasons (see Jaffa 1982: 183-235, Thurow 1976: 20-37, and Forgie 1979: 55-88), but I want to concentrate on just one characteristic – the way that Lincoln positions his own ideas, arguments, and sentiments in relation to his audience. This effort to encompass the audience is a hallmark of Lincoln's rhetoric, and in his later, more famous, and more subtle speeches, Lincoln's texts seem to absorb the audience and context in an almost seamless performance (see Leff 1988, 1997). In the "Address to Young Man's Lyceum," the same rhetorical sensibility appears, but it is executed less skillfully and is easier for the critical reader to detect, and the most obvious tactic Lincoln uses is a prolepsis.

The theme of this address is "the perpetuation of our political institutions," and in the introduction, Lincoln argues that the threat to existing institutions does not come from outside sources but from within the American community. Specifically, he maintains that the threat takes the form of disregard for law and resort to "the wild and furious passions" of the mob as substitute for the "sober judgment of Courts." Instances of this "mobocratic spirit" are so many and so far spread throughout the country that Lincoln claims it would be tedious to recount "the horrors of all of them." Instead he refers to two instances, one in Mississippi, the other in St. Louis, to illustrate his point.

In making the point, Lincoln presents a complex rhetorical development that incorporates both argumentative and stylistic features. Because of its argumentative complexity and because of the importance of its wording, I need to quote extensively from the passage in question: In the Mississippi case, they first commenced by hanging the regular gamblers: a set of men, certainly not

following for a livelihood, a very useful, or very honest occupation; but one which, so far from beingforbidden by the laws, was actually licensed by an act of the Legislature, passed but a single year before.
Next, negroes, suspected of conspiring to raise an insurrection, were caught and hanged in all parts of the State: then, white men, supposed to be in league with the negroes; and finally, strangers, from neighboring states, going thither on business were, in many instances, subjected to the same fate. Thus went on this process of hanging, from gamblers to negroes, from negroes to white citizens, and from these to strangers; till, dead men were seen literally dangling from the boughs of trees upon every road side; and in numbers almost sufficient to rival the native Spanish moss of the country, as a drapery of the forest.… [In the second case in St. Louis] a mulatto man, by the name of McIntosh, was seized in the street, dragged to the suburbs of the city, chained to a tree, and actually burned to death; all within a single hour from the time he had been a freedman, attending to his own business, and at peace with the world.…

But you are, perhaps, ready to ask, 'What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?' I answer it has much to do with it. Its direct consequences are, comparatively speaking, but a small evil; and much of its danger consists, in the proneness of our minds to regard its direct, as its only consequences. Abstractly considered, the hanging of the gamblers at Vicksburg, was but of little consequence. They constitute a portion of the population, that is worse than useless in any community; and their death, if no pernicious example be set by it, is never a matter of reasonable regret with any one. If they were annually swept from the stage of existence, by plague or small pox, honest men would, perhaps, be much profited by the operation. Similar too, is the correct reasoning in regard to the negro at St. Louis. He had forfeited his life, by the perpetration of an outrageous murder, upon one of the most worthy and respectable citizens of the city; and had he not died as he did, he must have died by the sentence of the law, in a very short time afterwards. As to him alone, it was well the way it was, as it could other-wise have been. But the example, in either case, was fearful.… Thus by the operation of this mobocratic spirit, which all admit is now abroad in the land, the strongest bulwark of any Government, and particularly those constituted like ours, may effectually be broken down and destroyed – I mean the attachment of the People. Whenever this effect shall be produced among us; whenever the vicious portion of the population shall be permitted to gather in bands of hundreds and thousands, burn churches, ravage

and rob provision stores, throw printing presses into rivers, shoot editors, and hang and burn obnoxious persons at pleasure, and with impunity; depend upon it, this Government cannot last (Lincoln 1989: 29-30).

The first step in this development is a vivid description of the horrors of mob action in the two instances. With that phase completed, the audience might expect Lincoln to press on to his conclusion. But he does not. Instead, he invokes prolepsis and raises an objection to the emerging logic of his position: "But you are, perhaps, ready to ask, 'What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?'"

In response to this question, Lincoln distinguishes between the direct and indirect consequences of mob action. The direct consequences, he asserts, are not so horrible, and he proceeds not simply to raise an objection to the cases he cited but to present them in a different light, to reframe them through a different set of terms. Note that in the Mississippi case, the gamblers, in the first version, are engaged in a lawful, if somewhat disreputable business, but in the second, they are dismissed as "worse than useless," and their deaths, other things being equal, would occasion "no regret with anyone." "Similar too," Lincoln adds, is the case of the "negro at St. Louis." In this restatement of the case, the mulatto named McIntosh becomes a nameless "negro", and while in the first description he had been a "freeman, attending to his own business, and at peace with the world," he now emerges as an outrageous murderer who had he not "died as he did, he must have died by the sentence of the law in a very short time afterwards."

Lincoln completes the prolepsis by refuting the objection he has just formulated. For this purpose, he considers the indirect consequences of vigilante justice and argues that mob rule always sets a fearful example. Once set in motion, it proceeds through its own momentum, punishing the innocent as well as the guilty, and continuing "step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of person and property of individuals are trodden down, and disregarded." These outbursts encourage the lawless in "spirit to become lawless in practice," and they demoralize good citizens who seek to abide by the law but who must lose faith in a government unable to protect them. In the end, the "mobocratic spirit" breaks and the destroys the strongest bulwark of a free government – "the attachment of the People."

In one sense, the passage that I have just summarized takes the form of a simple prolepsis. Lincoln states a position, then raises an objection to it, and ends by

refuting the objection. But something more than that is also at work. This rhetorical development not only moves through a sequence of propositions, but it also orchestrates the emotions of the audience. Lincoln begins with a warning against mobocracy phrased so as to illustrate its horrors concretely and vividly. Then, he does not simply raise an objection, but he seems "to give in to the prejudices of the audience" (Thurow 1976: 26), as he re-presents his examples in language that justifies the mob and turns anger against its victims. And finally he surmounts both of his earlier perspectives through sober consideration of the remote, indirect consequences of mob action. In short, Lincoln seeks to move the audience from anger against the inhumanity of the mob, to vicarious participation in its energy, and then to an elevated position from which it might control either one of these emotional responses.

This development dramatically enacts one of the main themes of Lincoln's text. Repeatedly and with special emphasis at the end of the Address, Lincoln maintains that the nation can be preserved only through rational means. While passion once helped form America, it "will in future be our enemy. Reason, cold calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defense" (Lincoln 1989: 36). The section on mob rule embodies this principle. It demonstrates that a merely emotional reaction against mob rule offers no remedy to the problem of disrespect for law. Such a response is hardly better than the emotions that drive people to mob action, since, in both cases, passion controls our response to a specific situation. What is needed instead is the discipline of reason and a habit of mind that turns from the direct emotions of the moment to rational considerations of long-term and indirect consequences. And this discipline is embedded in the rhetorical action of the text. What we witness is not the destruction of an opposing position but its absorption into a synthetic perspective. Lincoln accommodates his audience by elevating it, and in the process, he turns prolepsis into a strategy for transcendence.

Viewed in the context of Lincoln's oratorical career, the Lyceum Address foreshadows a notable feature of his rhetoric – the scrupulously careful placement of his own ideas, arguments, and sentiments into a social context; his own position emerges in and through a network of controversy, and it is constructed a way that seems to subsume rather than to destroy or dismiss alternative positions. Consequently, his rhetoric typically works to highlight and celebrate controversy by embodying it and directing it toward a synthetic end; the competition of rival arguments evolves toward a point where cooperation seems possible and desirable.

In his later speeches, this tendency is developed less obtrusively and more skillfully than in the Lyceum Address. The sequence of literal objection and response conveyed through prolepsis is displaced by other dialogic figures. This development culminates in his most famous speeches, the Gettysburg Address and the Second Inaugural, where prolepsis (the correction of someone else) gives way to *correctio* (self-correction). But the evolution of Lincoln's dialogical sensibility is a topic for another paper.

In this paper, I hope to have illustrated the complexity of prolepsis and its relevance for those interested in the dialectical tier of argument. The Lyceum Address reveals that prolepsis is not simply or necessarily a technical instrument of rhetorical style; it can become a complex principle that coordinates the logical, emotional, and stylistic dimensions of a discourse while it also positions the discourse within a field of controversy. Prolepsis, then, functions as a figure of dialogic placement since it negotiates the interplay among language, argument, audience, and context that is central to rhetorical practice.

Finally, I want to return to the issue of the relationship between rhetoric and argumentation that I raised earlier in this paper. My study of prolepsis emphasizes an important affinity between rhetoric and dialectical argumentation: Both operate in the medium of controversy, and to achieve their ends, both must engage opposing positions. But the rhetorical task, as I have tried to sketch it, entails management of elements that extend beyond argument *per se* and that enter into the social conditions surrounding it. Thus, Lincoln does not simply place his argument in context. He also constructs a persona for himself and orchestrates the sentiments of his audience. These rhetorical concerns represent a controversy in relation to the speaker and the social\political positions he occupies. Because it is designed as an intervention in the social context itself, rhetoric seeks not just to present and position arguments but to influence the conditions that affect reception of arguments. Hence, whereas dialectic deals with competing arguments within a field of rational controversy, rhetoric ultimately deals with relationships among arguers within a field of social interaction.

It is this distinction between argument and arguer that I consider as a key to understanding how rhetorical action may be distinguished from dialectical argument. But to support this hypothesis, I would have to argue at greater length and to inquire into many more instances than the one I have considered in this paper. For the moment, I can only hope that the hypothesis is sufficiently plausible to justify further inquiry into the dialogic and dialectic dimensions of

argument, and more specifically, that it might stimulate scholars to take a fresh look at the figures of rhetoric, to examine them in terms of how they are manifested in actual cases, and to consider how they might help us develop a thick conception of rhetorical argumentation and its connection with informal logic.

NOTES

i. In later editions of this book Govier has modified this definition. In the fourth and most recent edition (1997: 2), she writes that: 'An argument is a set of claims that a person puts forward in an attempt to show that some further claim is rationally acceptable.' This later definition does not differ as obviously and dramatically from Copi as her earlier one, but the basic difference persists.

ii. An exception in this respect is Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 168-179. But as they approach the figures argumentatively, they insist on bracketing their stylistic dimensions. For reasons I hope to make clear later in this paper, this categorical distinction between style and argument overlooks the complexity of the way the figures operate in practice and occludes some interesting and productive questions about the relationship between dialectical argument and rhetoric. These limitations may account for the failure of other argumentation scholars to pursue the line of inquiry opened by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca.

REFERENCES

Copi, I. (1961). *Introduction to Logic.* 2nd ed. New York: MacMillan.

Dupriez, B. (1991) *A Dictionary of Literary Devices: Gradus A-Z. Trans. and adapted by A.W. Halsall*: Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Forgie, G.E. (1979). *Patricide in the the House Divided: A Psychological Interpretation of Lincoln and His Age.* New York: W.W. Norton.

Fraunce, A.(1950). *The Arcadian Rhetoric* (1588 ed.). Edited by E. Seaton. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Govier, Trudy (1985). *A Practical Study of Argument.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Govier, Trudy (1997). *A Practical Study of Argument*. 4th ed.

Belmont, CA: Wadsworth. Hansen, H.V. (1997). *AD Arguments and Proof Burdens* (The History of a Footnote). Unpublished paper, presented at Northwestern University, Evanston, IL.

Jaffa, H.V. (1982). *Crisis of the House Divided: An Interpretation of the the Lincoln Douglas Debates*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Johnson, Ralph (1996). The Need for a Dialectical Tier in Arguments. IN: D.M.

Gabbay and H.J. Ohlbach, (Eds.), *Practical Reasoning: International Conference on Formal and Applied Practical Reasoning* (pp. 349-360), Berlin: Springer.
Lanham, Richard (1991). *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*. 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press.
Leff, M.C. (1988). Dimensions of Temporality in Lincoln's Second Inaugural," *Communication Reports* 1, 26-31.
Leff, M.C. (1997). Rhetorical Hermeneutics. In: W. Jost and M. Hyde (Eds.), *Rhetoric and Hermeneutics in our Time* (pp. 196-214), New Haven: Yale University Press.
Lincoln, Abraham (1989). *Speeches and Writings 1832-1858*. D. Fahrenbacher (Ed.), New York: Library of America.
Perelman, Ch & L. Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969). *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation.* Trans. J. Wilkinson and P. Weaver. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press.
Quintilian (1959). *Institutio Oratoria*. Trans. H.E. Butler. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Thurow, G.E. (1976). *Abraham Lincoln and American Political Religion*. Albany: State University of New York.
Walton, Douglas (1990). What is Reasoning? What is an Argument? *Journal of Philosophy*, 399-419.
Wenzel, J.W. (1990). Three Perspectives on Argument: Rhetoric, Dialectic, Logic. In: R. Trapp and J. Schuetz (Eds.), *Perspectives on Argumentation: Essays in Honor of Wayne Brockreide* (pp. 9-26), Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland.
Wenzel, J.W. (1987). The Rhetorical Perspective on Argument. In: F.H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, J.A. Blair, & C.A. Willard (Eds.), Argumentation: Across the Lines of Discipline. *Discipline,* pp. 101-9. Dodrecht:Foris.

ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Teaching

Logic: How To Overcome The Limitations Of The Classroom

Dobie Gillis: You mustn't take all these things so literally. I mean this is just classroom stuff. You know that the things you learn in school don't have anything to do with life.
Polly Espy: Dicto Simpliciter (Shulman 1951: 61).

Dobie has been devoting their dates to teaching Polly the informal logic that he thinks she needs in order to be up to his standards. When he finally is satisfied with her progress and tries to transform their relationship from "academic to romantic," she frustrates him by finding fallacies in all of his overtures. Out of desperation, he attacks his own lessons by warning Polly against treating as fallacious outside the classroom something that is fallacious inside of it. His warning comes too late. Nevertheless, if she is serious in labelling his romantic overtures as fallacious, then she is wrong to do so because Dobie is only expressing his interest in her and hoping that she will return it, not arguing for anything. If Polly has misused his lessons, Dobie bears some responsibility for it because, in common with many other teachers, he has not tried to compensate for the fact that lessons on the fallacies are likely to encourage students to look for mistakes even before they consider what the speaker or writer could be saying or doing.

In this paper I make some suggestions as to how logic teachers can overcome the limitations of the classroom. The first section proposes that students consider the significance of the results that cognitive psychologists have obtained when they give subjects certain logic problems to solve. When students see how predictable it is that mistakes will be made, they may want to ask how the classroom contributes to their own failure to master logic. The second section proposes that students be given lessons that are self-critical or critical of other lessons in logic. An ingenious and imaginative way of introducing logic is offered as an illustration of the kind of lesson that students be asked to critique. The third section is about how to teach students to give a critical reading to an argument. A letter to the editor is quoted, and, to overcome the limitations of the classroom, it is proposed that students be assigned the roles of different parties to the argument. The

paper concludes with some observations about the values that should inform critical analysis of argumentation.

1. Why do students do so badly in logic?

Students in a formal logic class have problems that can be surprisingly persistent, and these problems tend to be the focus of our pedagogy. They struggle with negations in compound statements, applications of the concept of validity, the truth table for the conditional, and equivalences that involve the use of 'only', 'if', and 'unless'. Some students, notably those with backgrounds in mathematics or science, don't have these problems. Nevertheless, research reveals that almost everyone, even teachers of logic, fail the Wason Selection Task, and some cognitive psychologists have concluded that we are programmed to be in cognitive dissonance with how we should be thinking, a matter thoughtfully discussed in Manktelow and Over (1990: 149-58).

I invite my students to think critically about this research by including versions of the Selection Task on the 'pre-test' given to the students. For example:

Shown below are drawings of four cards. Each card has a letter on one side and a number on the other side. Here is a rule about these cards: *if there is a vowel on one side, then there is an even number on the other side*. Which of the cards do you have to turn over to decide whether the rule is true or false?

E – K – 4 – 7

Because most students do not give the 'correct' answer, 'E' and '7', and because they give so many different answers, they will be interested in thinking about why they go wrong.

Cognitive psychologists have experimentally verified that a different wording of the problem makes a difference. They have found that subjects do much better when the Selection Task is presented in versions that are more like problems someone may actually confront, for examples, as sales receipts with the amount of the purchase on one side and a place for the signature of the manager on the other, where the rule that subjects are asked to work with is that a purchase over a specified amount requires the manager's signature.

However, experimenters have been troubled by the likelihood that the subjects who do better with these more realistic versions are not relying on purely *logical* considerations. To test this possibility, experiments have been designed to see whether or not there is a 'facilitation effect', i.e., where subjects seem to be relying on their own knowledge or experience. Cheng, Holyoak, Nisbett and

Oliver (1986) have suggested ways for teaching logic differently based on the results of some of these experiments, but their work is critiqued in Cosmides (1989), and the issues that divide them, together with a helpful review of much of the research done on the Selection Task may be found in Manktelow and Over (1990).

Ironically, the emphasis on the facilitation effect serves to raise a doubt as to whether we ever do or should rely on purely 'logical' considerations when reasoning, except when in the classroom (or when doing brain teasers). 'Logical' considerations seem to be in back of the use of the conditional in the statement of the rule, and I think that students should complain about its use, as they should complain about the reference to it as a 'rule'.

When it comes to some of the more realistic versions of the Selection Task, this reference to a rule and the use of a conditional make sense: we can understand how there might be a rule in a department store about how much a purchase has to be before it requires the signature of the manager. However, there is no activity in terms of which the reference to a rule makes sense in the card version of the Selection Task other than an activity that is like the one mathematics students engage in when asked to state the principle, for example, behind the generation of a specified sequence of numbers.

When I ask students to think about why they have gone wrong, I suggest that they consider whether it is the use of the conditional that has misled them. Its use is mystifying, suggesting as it does that there is some reason for expressing things conditionally. "If there is a vowel on one side there is an even number on the other." This seems to suggest that there is some underlying connection. However, the real reason why the conditional is being used is that according to logic the rule that takes that form is equivalent to another version of the rule that is easier to understand and does not employ a conditional, namely, that a vowel is not paired with an odd number. Why, then, state the 'rule' as a conditional? The unfriendly answer is that logicians and cognitive psychologists are insensitive to the significance of the fact that the forms that they count as equivalent would not be substituted for one another when people actually talk to each other, and so they do not take responsibility when the substitution ends up confusing people.

Next, I invite students to ask what can be done to compensate for the limitations of the lab or classroom. Unlike the experimenters, as a teacher I *want* students to make the right selections. So I ask them to reword the Task question to make what is being asked clearer. Here is a possible rewording: "There are four

possibilities: vowel/even; vowel/odd; consonant/even; consonant/odd. Which cards would you have to turn over in order to determine that the possibility of vowel/odd has been ruled out?"

Some students might still not make the right selections. If this happens, there is an explanation for why they do not that experimenters seem to ignore, namely, that the students are suffering from might be called the dumb class syndrome. This is a condition that affects students who can apply certain lessons when called upon to do so outside of the classroom but are paralyzed or unable to function when inside it.

My suggestion is that the Selection Task be taught as a lesson on how the classroom (or laboratory) has built in limitations. Students can be asked to reflect on the influence of the context in which the Task is presented on rates of success or failure. They also can be helped to see how the 'correct' answers are counted as correct only because the Task is understood in terms of a specialized discourse, and that there is a problem applying the results to actual discourse.

There is value in teaching formal logic, despite what the lessons I have been proposing in this section might suggest. I doubt that there is much practical applicability for lessons on formal validity or on equivalences, let alone lessons on algorithmic facility with truth functional or quantificational schemata. However, I think that lessons in formal logic can be valuable in helping students to become more aware of the significance of how things are worded, especially when a determined effort is made to supplement logic lessons with other lessons that compensate for the limitations of the classroom.

The most important lesson in formal logic is usually taught before any of the lessons that I have referred to in this section, the lesson on what an argument is and how to read and formulate it. It tells students to think about what, if anything, is being argued by asking whether the arguer is taking a position, and, if so, what that position is and what support is being offered for it. In the next section, I suggest that the lesson be used to illustrate itself, and I show how this might be done by a critique of an intriguing way of introducing logic.

2. What a Difference a First Day Makes

The lesson I have chosen, because it is so pedagogically appealing, and because it deals with some of the central concepts of logic, is one proposed by Alan Penczek (1996). I come to the first class a bit late, and behave as I normally do. After removing various items from my briefcase, looking for chalk, and erasing the

blackboard, if necessary, I ask:
How many of you believe that I am the instructor of this course?

I can expect the class to react with surprise and laughter. I repeat the question, and ask the students, by a show of hands, to indicate whether they believe that I am the instructor. Most will raise their hands, and I confront those who don't and ask them:
Who *do* you think I am?

Presumably, the question is sufficiently intimidating that I can go on to say that every student has concluded that I am the instructor. I keep a straight face and do not admit that I am the instructor while I act like one by telling the class that each of them has engaged in a "piece of (inductive) reasoning," whose "conclusion" is that I am the instructor.
Penczek's next instruction is that I write 'He is probably the instructor in this course' on the blackboard with a line over it, and then tell the students the following:
You have come to believe that I am the instructor of this course, and we are calling this your *conclusion*. However, you must have had some reasons for calling this your conclusion, and we will call these reasons *premises*. These premises together with this conclusion make up an *argument*. Can anyone suggest some of the premises that you might have used in coming to this particular conclusion? That is, why do you believe that I am the instructor? (p. 122).
The premises are supposed to cite what I did when I came into the classroom – went to the front of the classroom, put my briefcase on the desk there and removed some items from it, erased the blackboard, and asked them a question – and I am to state each 'premise' as a declarative sentence in the third person. Then I point out that the argument is an enthymeme and that when supplied with a missing premise – 'people who have turned out to be instructors have looked and behaved as he did' – the argument is inductive because it is possible for the premises to be true when the conclusion is false if, for example, I turn out to be an unhappy ex-student who is pretending to be the regular teacher.
Penczek's pedagogy seems likely to get the attention of the students and engage them. The lessons I proposed in the previous section ask students to explain why they make the mistakes they do in logic; the lessons I am proposing in this section ask the students to think about why they have so little trouble learning what

Penczek is teaching. Of course, when a lesson is as successful as his lesson promises to be, it is harder for students to think about it critically.

To help them to do so, I ask them to consider how they would react when they are standing before a receptionist's desk and are asked by the person behind it, "Do you believe I am the receptionist?" I want them to see how disconcerted they would be by this question. Are they not supposed to stand there? Is the receptionist saying that she has too much to do? Is it the wrong desk?

I ask them why they were so obliging and did not challenge me to explain why they did not do with me what they would have done with the person behind the desk, namely, ask, "Why are you asking me that question?" They might answer by saying that they assumed that the question was part of a classroom exercise, and I ask them to formulate this explanation as an argument. What I really want to suggest to them is that it is questionable that the explanation should be formulated as an argument. After all, what is being explained is why students did not behave a certain way, not what support they could have had for some conclusion they have drawn.

Why is Penczek interested in what they believe? This is the next question that the students should be asked, and they will need some help in order to give the right answer, namely, that by getting them to answer the question about what they believe about me, the question of what reasons they have for this belief can be raised:

what they are supposed to believe, namely, that I am the teacher, can thus be considered the conclusion of an argument whose premises are the justification that they have for that belief.

I ask them to formulate Penczek's argument for the claim that they do believe that I am the teacher even when I behave as I normally do on the first day of class if do not identify myself as the teacher, but do not ask them who they think I am. Here is how they might formulate it:

The students are in the scheduled room at the scheduled time for Elementary Logic.

You went to the front of the room, put your briefcase on the table and took items from it, erased the blackboard, and addressed the class.

So, the students believe that you are the teacher of their Elementary Logic course.

Next, I try to help the students to see that it is not clear how to understand the

conclusion or how the premises provide support for it. I ask them to consider how it is possible that I am not the real teacher. Here is what they might come up with:

"You are an ex-student who saw and removed a notice on the classroom door that said that the class has been cancelled, and you decided to pretend to be the teacher" or "You and the real teacher are collaborating in playing this prank on us."

Given either of these scenarios, the students may be said to *believe* I am the instructor to indicate surprise or satisfaction at how well the masquerade is going. Here saying that they believe it means that they do not suspect anything. However, the students do not have an argument for not suspecting anything; saying that they suspect suggests that they did not even consider the possibility that I am not the teacher, let alone draw a conclusion about it.

"What reasons do you have for thinking that I am the teacher rather than an impostor?" This is the question Penczek seems to want me to ask the students. It is not the original one I was to ask them, because everything cited as the premises for my belief, such as what I did with my briefcase or the blackboard are things that an impostor is just as likely to do. Even so, the students may come up with some answers to this new question that can be turned into premises, such as "An impostor is unlikely to ask this question because it would give him away."

If they do try to answer, then I ask them to consider the fact that they are answering a question that I do not really have. To see why this is significant, I ask them to consider when or how something might turn on the question of whether or not I am an impostor. If my status as the teacher needs to be determined, then they can contact the Philosophy Department or do some other checking outside the classroom, which is not the best place for such detective work. However, since I do not really have the question when I ask them whether they believe I am the teacher, then obviously nothing could turn on answering it, and so, there is no real basis for understanding the answer or determining the support for it.

However, any lesson that is critical of how a logic lesson does not compensate sufficiently for the limitations of the classroom should make clear why the lesson is worth criticizing. So, I take pains to make clear that there is nothing distinctive about what Penczek is teaching. Almost all logic teachers would refer to the student's 'reasoning' as an 'argument', and would applaud Penczek for trying to identify the 'premises' for the 'conclusion' that he says that the students have drawn. Others use different illustrations, but they, too, do nothing to compensate

for the fact that these illustrations are devised for the classroom and are not to be understood by imagining how they might be taken from actual discourse.

What turns on the failure of logic teachers to compensate for it? I hope that students will ask this question. If they ask it, then an answer can be suggested: the failure is significant because it reinforces a mistaken conception of argument and reasoning according to which an argument does not need to be understood as a response to anyone or anything. “Do you believe that I am the instructor?” The students are to answer this question without having any idea how it arises or why they are being asked it. So, any answer that they give will reveal more about the limitations of the classroom than about what they really think or believe.

Penczek’s pedagogy engages students by using their responses to illustrate the lesson he is teaching. I am proposing that students be encouraged to think critically about what they are being taught. However, they may be frustrated by the teaching of a lesson like Penczek’s when it is subjected to critical examination. To avoid that happening, they need to be told how valuable Penczek’s lesson is just because it can be criticized, how it is a strength rather than a weakness of the lesson that it gives them something to think about while succeeding in introducing them to certain concepts.

However valuable it may be to encourage students to think for themselves even about what they are being taught, the real value of a logic course is that it helps students to think critically about actual arguments. The next section makes some proposals about how to overcome the limitations of the classroom when dealing with such arguments.

3. Giving a critical reading to actual rhetoric

The hardest thing to teach when it comes to argument analysis is how to determine whether an argument is being given, and, if so, how to paraphrase that argument. In this section I suggest some pedagogical techniques that may be used to help students learn to read more critically.

Let me explain why I think there is a need to supplement what students are usually told about how to interpret an argument, namely, that they should identify the position that is being taken and the support, evidence or reasons being offered for that position. They are instructed to restate the argument as a series of declarative sentences, as premises followed by a conclusion. They are told to supply any and all missing premises (or, if it is unstated, the missing conclusion). Although the advice can be useful, it is of limited value without a lot of other advice, except when applied only to the contrived examples often used in the

classroom. To see why, consider this letter to the editor in the Portland *Oregonian* (March 13, 1997).

If faced with making an end-of-life request for physician-assisted suicide, I want to make my own decision. If assistance in making this decision is necessary, I want to choose my advisers carefully.
I am not a Roman Catholic, so I do not want the pope or his hierarchy to participate in making my decision. I do not want evangelicals, with their idiosyncratic reading of scripture, to participate in the process.
It is incredible that people who are not wanted and have no place in my daily life think they have a right to stand by my death bed and tell me how to die. Although well-intentioned, I want these people to mind their own business. My personal and painful decision is not their business.
(signed) Fred Ratzeburg

The usual lessons reading an argument do not yield good results when applied to this letter. If students are on encouraged to take him literally, then the position he seems to be taking is that he does not want Catholic priests or evangelicals to advise him when he is dying because he is not a Catholic, he does not accept the evangelical Bible interpretations, and these priests or Evangelicals are not his friends and do not have a place in his daily life.
Ratzeburg is not a Catholic and does not trust the interpretations of the Bible by evangelicals that they rely on when talking about moral dilemmas like physician assisted suicide. Ratzeburg does not have any members of the Catholic hierarchy or any evangelicals as friends or family. So, Ratzeburg does not want these religious people to participate in the decision he will be making about asking a physician for help in killing himself.
This formulation of his argument seems faithful to what he says, but the statement of the conclusion could be improved upon to reflect the fact that he is saying that these religious people have no business telling him what he can do.
So, priests and evangelicals should not participate in the making of his decision whether to ask a physician for help in killing himself.

However, something significant seems to have been lost by this replacement of Ratzeburg's voice by that of the reformulator. How he expresses himself and what that reveals about why he is giving the argument is an important clue to what he is arguing, as is whom he is addressing, or what he is writing in response to. Even if we want students to focus on the issues he might be addressing, they need to be

reminded of the significance of the fact that any reformulation or restatement of the argument is likely to ignore something of importance to the reading of the argument.

Moreover, the restatement, especially if it takes the premises-and-conclusion form, tends to encourage a pernicious form of logic-chopping. By reducing Ratzeburg's letter to a sequence of sentences we make it easier for it to be dismissed, when what we should be doing is finding ways to illuminate the issues he is raising. Because the focus is on the restatement, rather than on what he is giving us to think about, the formulation of premises that are too abstract or general or obviously unwarranted is encouraged.

To reveal to students what may be lost in translation I propose that they be assigned the roles of the different parties to the argument: Ratzeburg; a spokesman for the Catholic Church; an evangelical Christian; a non-religious person opposed to euthanasia; and a supporter of euthanasia who is religious. (Another teaching technique has groups of students rather than individuals play the different roles.) The objective is to enable students to give a critical reading of an argument by recreating in the classroom the conditions that would prevail when the arguer was available to respond when his argument is critically analyzed.

Although it is not possible to anticipate what will happen in the panel discussion, certain developments might take place. Ratzeburg may be challenged to explain why he is targeting the Church or whether he thinks that it should not speak up or try to influence people on a matter it cares deeply about. He may be defended on the grounds that his real concern is that public policy not be decided on religious grounds, and this defense may be questioned by citing non-religious objections to mercy killing or by attacking what seems to be a pro-choice argument for assisted suicide, perhaps by questioning whether doctors are the right people to determine whether their patients are in their right minds when they ask for help in killing themselves.

If the panel discussion is very successful it will provide the students with things to think about. The rest of the class can be asked to evaluate the panel discussion: How might the panelists have improved on what they said? How responsive were they to each other's points? The students also can be asked to say what they now think is at issue. Is the issue pluralism? Is it the role given to the doctor? The objective of the panel discussions, or any other pedagogical expedient that the teacher utilizes, should be to help in identifying what is at issue in the argument

together with the issues raised by the argument.
After the panel discussion, encourage the students to try to paraphrase his argument. “Try to say in your own words what Ratzeburg is saying.” This is the first step in paraphrasing. “Try to state the argument in a way that best reflects the thinking of the arguer.” This should be the second step. The paraphrase should make relevant references to the rhetorical context of the argument, and it also should make clear what there is to think about.

Ratzeburg is writing out of his exasperation with the lobbying done by the Church and other opponents of euthanasia who are evangelical Christians. To dramatize his dissatisfaction with their role, he depicts them as wanting to be by his bedside when he is dying to influence his decision about how he is going to die. This dramatization makes it seem as though their role is the issue, and so appeals to anyone in his audience who shares his worries about the lobbying by powerful religious groups, despite the fact that it is highly unlikely that he favors muzzling the Church.
However, there is more to his argument than the appeal to a certain anti-religious sentiment: he seems to be offering a version of a pro-choice argument for euthanasia. Even though religious people may reject physician assisted suicide as an option; others should be free to do what they want to do. Ratzeburg seems to assume that the only opposition to euthanasia is on religious grounds, that there is no need for him to speak to any of other objections to physician assisted suicide. His argument sees pluralism as the issue and objects to the use of religious imperatives to determine social policy.
Whether or not the student is successful at paraphrasing, the attempt at doing so is important because it makes the student a participant in the argument.
Although I cannot claim from my experience with the use of these techniques that students are usually very insightful or perceptive in the critical readings that they give to the argument, I believe that it is important that the techniques be used to compensate for the limitations of the classroom. When we restate or even paraphrase Ratzeburg’s argument we can’t help removing something of him from the argument, and these techniques help to do something to get his voice back.

There is another reason for the panel discussion approach. Because the argument is being discussed in the classroom, students (and teachers) are encouraged to suppose that they can think critically about an argument without asking themselves why they are doing so. Teachers may insist that the real object is to

shed light on what is at issue in the argument, but their practice often makes it seem as though the objective is to sit in judgement of the argument. However, when we think about the goals of argument analysis, models other than one where there is a battle or contest with a possible winner or loser recommend themselves. I am thinking, in particular, of the conflict resolution model, according to which our concern when reading an argument is to find a way to bring people together. Consequently, our paraphrase of the argument should speak to the concerns and interests of different parties to the dispute.

We should try to address what bothers Ratzeburg, namely, the power that religious groups have in influencing public policy, and the need to acknowledge that we live in a pluralistic society. At the same time, we can remind him that he should not assume that the opposition to euthanasia comes only from those who have theological objections to it, however idiosyncratic those objections or the scriptural basis cited for them might be. By doing so we can speak to at least some of the concerns of opponents of euthanasia. My suggestions about how to resolve the conflict may not turn out to be successful, but they seem to be informed by better values than is the attempt at giving a reading whose objective is the reaching of a verdict – valid or invalid; correct or incorrect – on the argument.

These remarks about the objectives of a logic class lead in the next section to a discussion of the values that should be embodied in a critical thinking class.

4. The Paradox of Teaching Critical Thinking

There is something paradoxical about the charge we are given as teachers of logic or critical thinking. We are to teach students to think for themselves. To do so we have to rely on certain lessons, and the lessons have a certain built-in authority. Students are being told to think for themselves while at the same time they are encouraged to learn certain lessons that someone else has thought up for them. This apparent paradox is another reminder of how important it is to try to compensate for the limitations of the classroom.

In this paper, I have offered some suggestions about how to teach students to think for themselves. In the last section I offered a proposal about how to teach students to read an argument critically that made them participants in their own education. In the sections before that I advocated the use of lessons that were self-critical, critical of other lessons in logic, or that asked students to think about why they were not getting the ‘right’ answers. Even a self-critical lesson is a lesson, and unless students come to make

the criticisms on their own, they will not really be thinking for themselves. Although there always is a risk of their losing confidence in what they are being taught when the lessons are criticized, the goal is to help students to see how any real discoveries they make grow out of their own struggles.

Another way to compensate for the limitations of the logic classroom is by teaching certain values by example: *respect* for the views of the opposition; *imagination* and *compassion* to see things from other perspectives; *courage* to anticipate objections to your own views; *integrity* to admit when you do not understand or are wrong; *responsibility* for making your own views clear or defending them when they are challenged. Although I am convinced that the real object of a course in critical thinking is to inculcate these values, telling students to have them when they think critically is not very good teaching, unless the teacher can embody them.

This point was lost on Dobie when he was giving Polly logic lessons to bring her up to his intellectual standard. Not only was the project a foolish one because of the presumption that logic lessons could accomplish this end, but it also provided evidence of how little respect or even liking he really had for her. Further evidence of his sexism is provided by the circumstances that led to his dates with Polly. He had traded his roommate, Petey Bellows, what he thought was a worthless raccoon coat, which Petey badly wanted because it had come back in style, for the assurance that Petey was no longer going to pursue an interest in Polly. As the story is ending Dobie discovers that she will not be his girlfriend because she had promised Petey she would go steady with him. After he calls Petey a "liar," "rat" and "cheat," only to be reproached by Polly for *poisoning the well*, he tries to be calm:

All right, you're a logician. Let's look at this thing logically. How could you choose Petey Bellows over me? Look at me – a brilliant student, a tremendous intellectual, a man with an assured future. Look at Petey – a knothead, a jitterbug, a guy who'll never know where his next meal is coming from. Can you give me one logical reason why you should go steady with Petey Bellows? I certainly can. He's got a raccoon coat (Shulman 1951, 61).

These are the last lines of the story. The ending is funny, but at whose expense? By citing as a 'logical reason' the fact that Petey has a raccoon coat, Polly reveals herself to be a faddist, which Dobie earlier referred to as the "very negation of reason" and "acme of mindlessness."

However, the joke really is on Dobie because his lessons have made Polly less

“agreeable,” i.e., less vulnerable to his intimidation and manipulation. She is sufficiently independent that she is even prepared not to be logical when there is no reason for her to be. When Dobie asks for a logical reason why she should go steady with Petey, perhaps she should have challenged the assumption behind his question, namely, that she needs a logical reason for liking Petey and wanting to go steady with him. Rather than make this rather pedantic point, she left it up to readers to make the point for her. Dobie supposed that the mastery of logic lessons has something to do with being smart or intelligent. What he failed to realize is that more, much more, is involved than being a good student of logic. You need to know when it is appropriate to apply the lessons and when it is not appropriate, and you need to have such values as respect, imagination, compassion, courage, integrity and responsibility.

REFERENCES

Cheng, P, Holyoak, K, Nisbett, K.I., and Oliver, L.M. (1986). Pragmatic Versus Syntactic Approaches to Teaching Deductive Reasoning. *Cognitive Psychology* 18, 293-328.

Cosmides, L. (1989). The logic of social exchange: Has natural selection shaped how humans reason? Studies with the Wason selection task. *Cognition* 31, 187-276.

Manktelow, K.I. and D.E. Over, D.E. (1990). *Inference and Understanding.* New York: Routledge.

Penczek, A (1996). Introductory Logic: First Day. *Teaching Philosophy* 19, 121-5.

Shulman, M (1951). *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*. New York: Doubleday & Company.

ISSA Proceedings 1998 – The Argumentative Analysis Of Literary

Works And Its Importance In Teaching Argumentation

Teaching argumentation not only serves the purpose of making us aware of the ways we use to resolve controversies in a rational manner. It also aims at making us more reflective about the general understanding we have of things. In order to achieve this it is convenient to put argumentations in a different context and treat them as part of a process in which different protagonists make known and defend their points of view. In other words, each argumentation should be considered as a segment of a longer dialogue in which the participants not only accept that their points of view can be questioned, and, eventually, refuted, but also submit themselves to critical norms in order to reach this goal.
My purpose is to show that establishing this frame of reference for argumentation analysis takes the form of a philosophical dialogue.

In a philosophical dialogue it is assumed that the arguers are motivated by the search of truth and, consequently, are interested in determining whether their points of views are indeed correct. In view of this objective they seek the interlocutors' collaboration, expecting them to provide alternative points of view and in this way enrich the questioning of the arguments offered. From this perspective, arguments come to be part of a cooperative dialogue in which, together with offering reasons, the interlocutors' objections have to be pondered. This dialogue is philosophical in that it leads to a broader reflection on the subject in question, that is, it leads to questioning ourselves about all possible viewpoints on the subject, not just the ones originally formulated. Moreover, dialogue has thus a specific direction: it is aimed at providing a global overview of all the aspects that ought to be considered in analyzing a given argumentation.
Therefore, in teaching argumentation, a reconstruction effort is required. When examining argumentation, one ought to act as if between the proponents of the argumentation and oneself a dialogue was taking place and one should, consequently, be able to question them. This can be accomplished by means of presenting alternative arguments and making conjectures about the possible answers to those objections. By means of this procedure, some presuppositions

can be made explicit which permit to reflect about what really is at stake in the proposed argumentation. Thus, the teacher can guide a process of reflection that emerges from the discussion. If, on the other hand, the teacher fails in conducting this process, the student tends to close his/her mind. In other words, instead of getting a broader vision of things, that leads to a better understanding of the problems, the student usually learns the strategies that serve to reinforce his/her own beliefs, without having to submit them to critical questioning. The student doesn't feel stimulated to develop a process of reflection that allows him/her to critize his/her own prejudices.

In order to understand how this ultimate educational goal of argumentation anlysis can be frustated, it is necessary to consider the usual strategies that are followed in the course of a class on argumentation.
Undoubtedly, learning to argue well requires, above all, training. The principles permitting to decide whether or not an argumentation is reasonable, ought to be contrasted with the usual ways of arguing in everyday experience, so that the student can appraise by his/her own judgement the value of those principles. In order to facilitate this training, it is necessary to have a great number of examples at hand. In this respect, the written press is a never ending source of examples of argumentations that can be analyzed. From a pedagogical perspective, using these examples has the additional advantage that ir permits to connect the issues debated in the press with the students' interests and in this way help them develop a critical attitude towards the press. If everything works as expected, the students analyze the argumentation examples, just as they appear in the press, and, by means of the dialogue process that the teacher organizes, are guided to reflect using their own critical judgement on the various standpoints on the issue at hand.
Unfortunately, what happens in practice is that the press fails to provide the plurality of perspectives required to produce a sufficiently broad reflection on the issues that are being debated. What the press exhibits, I refer especifically to the Chilean press, are ussually argumentations that have not been formulated in view of generating dialogue. On the contrary, those who formulate them are usually trying to put an end to the discussion by expressing what they think to be the last word on the issue, banning further reflection and quite often concealing the real interests and prejudices that are at stake. For this reason, the most debated issues are presented in a superficial, unilateral and depressing way. Besides, they quite often consist of personal attacks or disqualification of the opposing view.

The litlle importance ascribed to reflection leads to the reiteration from time to time of almost the same argument almost in the same way. This is especially frequent as regards to issues like abortion, divorce, death penalty and pornography. Because of this, the press abounds in fallacious argumentations. In this context, it is difficult to produce the kind of reflection at which the teaching of argumentation aims. It is hard for the student to connect the principles that permit to judge an argumentation's correctness with a process of reflection that entails putting in question the student's own assumptions.

I would like to quote the following example in order to illustrate more clearly this difficulty.
Background: From 1994 on, the lack of interest of Chilean young people to participate in the democratic process initiated in 1989 became manifest. Despite the fact that the percentage of young people who fulfill the age requirements for voting is so high that they could be decisive in the outcome of any election, the young people do not participate in them and many do not even register for voting. This fact motivated an ample discussion on the causes of this juvenile lack of interest in politic participation. As a reaction to it, a young person wrote the following letter to the editor.

Juvenile apathy
Mr. Editor: As a young person I was attracted by the article on juvenile apathy and thought about writing you a letter in relation to it. But I got bored.
This example illustrates, I think, that in using the press as a means for training people in argumentation strategies, there is the risk of separating these strategies from the process of reflection that constitutes the final goal of that teaching. Moreover, the reading of the press without the guidance of an accompanying process of reflection may help to disseminate a skeptical conception of life in which every point of view is equally valid and, as a consequence, every person has to limit him/herself to care for his/her own personal interests.

This result is paradoxical, since what the teaching of argumentation aims at producing is an enrichment of the student's personal experience, which means getting a broader conception of things, considering a plurality of perspectives and permitting a more autonomous reflection about which perspectives are more reasonable and deserve to be adopted.
What has been said could be misunderstood as a suggestion in the sense that the teacher should guide the student to adopt a desired conception of things. Of

course, the risk of conducting an indoctrinating process is always present, but what I am trying to propose is very different from it. It does not aim at imposing a given conception, but at providing a plurality of viewpoints, in order to bring into light and discuss their presuppositions. The problem is: how can the teacher bring up this plurality of perspectives if the different viewpoints required for it are not available in the actual argumentations that are found in the press?

My suggestion in this respect is that we ought to be able to rescue the issues debated in the past that are preserved in the litterary tradition. There we can find, exposed in literary language, points of view that can be relevant to the present situation. In this way, if we manage to incorporate those argumentations from earlier times into the present debate, we could promote a discussion of many of the cultural presuppositions that are on the foundations of present argumentations.

As stated earlier, to give sense to a set of argumentations we may consider them as a part of a fictional dialogue. In the same way as we are able to do this with the present argumentations as they appear in the press, we should try to reconstruct the argumentations explicitly present in the literary tradition and incorporate them into this dialogue. In this case, since the purpose is to provide new perspectives, the danger of indoctrination on the part of the teacher is kept away.

In many cases, a literary work, especially a novel, develops a dialogue which refers, implicity or explicity, to a controversy. In that case, we can assume that the author expects the reader to go beyond the character's private ideas and try to understand the intersubjective truths that he/she believes.

In others words, in same cases, in order to understand a character we have to understand which conceptions of things he/she is willing to defend as an objective view of reality. Consequently, it is necesary to understand the argumentations that he/she develops in support of his/her views.

On the other hand, the argument developed in a literary work constitutes a guide to introduce us into (and, therefore, to stimulate us to understand) the reality created by such literary work, since the argumentation analysis reveals the objective reality reflected by the perspectives of the different characters.

To exemplify the strategy that I am suggesting, I shall refer to two important works of literature that belong to the universal patrimony. "Don Quijote de la Mancha" by Miguel de Cervantes and "The Name of the Rose" by Umberto Eco. By means of them, we can see some of the difficulties that can be faced and resolved.

In the work “Don Quijote” we find the following passage:
“All this is so, answered Don Quijote; but we cannot all be monks and many are the roads through which God conducts his own people to heaven; chavalry is religion; many saint knights are in (God’s) glory.
Yes, answered Sancho, but I have heared that there are more monks in heaven than wandering knights.
That happens, answered Don Quijote, because the number of religious men is greater than that of knights. Many are the wandering, Sancho said.
Many, answered don Quijote, but very few are those who deserve the name of knights.” (Don Quijote, Part I, chapter 37).
Commentary: Don Quijote wants to defend the cause of wandering knights, as far as an authentic road to sanctity. His argumentation is quite simple. It shows that, although there are few wandering knights that are saint, this is due to the fact that the sample considered (all the wandering knights) is also small. Therefore, the conclusion he infers is reasonable. Nevertheless, in order to make his argumentation clearer, it is necessary to supply an implicit premise stating that “Not all monks are saint”.
To Sancho’s rebuke that there ought to be considered a greater sample of wandering knights, Don Quijote replies that the cases to which Sancho refers are not relevant. Therefore, he cannot be accused of commiting a hasty generalization.
Don Quijote’ s argumentation, then, despite the fictional character of the context, satisfies the requirement of a reasonable argumentation. Through his argument, Don Quijote attempts to compel us to see the world in a spiritual perspective, even though this perspective is not supported by a large number of people. To decide whether such perspective is correct it is necessary to examine the rules of behavior that it proposes. In oher words, it is not enough to say that only few people behave in that way.
What is most important for our purposes is that the premises from which Don Quijote starts in his argumentation not only show the presuppositions that he considered to be true, but, in addition, that he assumes that all people should consider them in the same way.

What the premises do, in short, is to describe the reality in which Don Quijote is immersed. In other words, the argumentation shows us the kind of comprehension of things that Don Quijote as a literary character has. But this is not only a personal way of looking at things, but a conception that he expects to

be shared by all and that can, therefore, be submitted to judgement by general norms. This is the reason that he aims at consistency in his argument. Therefore, it is legitimate to ask oneself not only what is the reality that the character sees, but also what are the conclusions that he would be ready to draw from his conception.

Nevertheless, Don Quijote's argumentation leaves some points unresolved. In fact, since the argument is developed by means of a comparison, from the fact that few wandering knights deserve the name of such, it would follow, by analogy, that few monks deserve the name of such. Whether Don Quijote aimed at asserting this or not is something to be debated. At this point the argumentative analysis must be completed by a literary analysis.

I am obviously not intending to maintain that only by means of an argumentation theory can we clarify the sense of a literary text. A different kind of analysis is required for this purpose. Nevertheless, the presence of argumentation, even in a literary context, makes the use of argumentative analysis legitimate, in the sense that in that analysis we apply the norms that we use to evaluate everyday argumentation. Furthemore, the conclusions that can be derived constitute an important clue to help us understand the literary character that is arguing and, in general, to understand more clearly the sense of the text.

In other words, the otherwise predominantly descriptive approach to litterary analysis constitutes no obstacle for analyzing the argumentative fragments of a text from a normative perspective. In the above example, although Don Quijote's argumentative intention is not altogether clear, I imagine that the critics may nevertheless consider that the implicit consequence that I have pointed out ought to be added to the many other resources that Cervantes uses to criticize the church of his time. Let us turn now to another example taken from Unmberto Eco's "The Name of the Rose".

Background: The Inquisitor Bernard de Gui has just finished the process in which he condemns the cellarist as heretic. He reflects then on the process.

"There are five probatory clues that make it possible to recognize those who are in favor of heresy.

First: those who visit in disguise the heretics when they are in prison;

second: those who lament their being imprisoned and have been their intimate friends during their lives (in fact, it is difficult that the heretic's activities had passed unnoticed to someone who has been his acquaintance for long time);

third: those who maintain that heretics have been condemned unjustly, despite

the fact that their guilt has been demonstrated;
fourth: those who look with bad eyes upon and criticize the men who persecute heretics and preach successfully against them. And these can be discovered by their eyes, their nose, the expression they try to dissimulate, because it reveals their hatred towards those for whom they feel resentment and their love for those whose disgrace they lament.
Fifth and last clue is the fact that, once the herectics have been burnt, they collect their bones turned into ashes and make of them an object of veneration… But I also attibute a great value to a sixth sign, and I consider clearest heretics' friends those in whose books (although they do not offend directly against orthodoxy) the heretics find the premises from which they derive their evil reasonings. And while he said that, his eyes were fixed on Ubertino. All the franciscane legation understood perfectly what Bernard was saying". (From the Spanish translation, 1989, p. 474-475).
Commentary: Bernard de Gui's observations can be considered as a mere pretext to shed guilt on Ubertino, and to all franciscans, in passing, because their works can be considered as a starting point for the heretics' propositions. Gui's discourse is undoubtedly a threat, but it is expressed in the shape of an argument. If we submit it to analysis, we can understand – by means of the conclusions that he is ready to draw – de Gui's peculiar way of understanding the world.

Seen from an argumentative perspective, Bernard de Gui is trying to arrive at a conclusion by means of irrelevant symptoms. In so doing, he commits the fallacy of "guilty by association". One may suppose that this is only a strategy he uses to put his enemies against the wall. But this does not seem a thorough interpretation, although a more careful anlysis of the literary text should provide the final word on his real intentions. In my interpretation, Bernard de Gui does not distort reality on purpose as a strategy that permits him to defeat his opponents. Just as it was the case with Don Quijote, he presuposses that reality is as he sees it and that everybody should, consequently, see it in the same way. In other words, if he distorts the facts, it is because he sees them distorted. In his worldview reality is divided between the enemies and the partisans of the church. His authoritarianism and the personal attack he directs to the church's opponents is a consequence of his way of seeing things, a way in which there is no room for a humanitarian attitude: everything has to be submitted to the black and white test.
From a pedagogical perspective, knowing Bernardo de Gui's personality, and

specifically his manner of arguing, help us to understand what happens to all persons who commit this fallacy, that is, it helps us understand their mind and to make explicit the presuppositions that allow them to reduce, in such a drastic manner, the complexity of things.

To sum up, when analysing a literary work where argumentation is present, we can use the same kind of analysis that we would use in contemporary everyday argumentation. However, in order to grasp the meaning that this argumentation has in view of apprehending the whole sense of the literary work, of course, one has to go beyond the mere argumentative analysis. Nevertheless, their ways of arguing, and especially our being able to determine whether they are correct or not, are fundamental clues for understanding how the characters perceive reality.

My contention is that literary works can, in certain cases, help to make manifest some cultural presuppositions. That is, they can provide us with alternative points of view which help us by contrast become aware of our own way of understanding things. This brings us back to our starting point.

In contemporary controversies in Chile that touch upon moral aspects, there is a predominant tendency to argue from positions based on the belief that there are only two mutually exclusive alternatives. For instance, on the one hand, the family's protection and, on the other, the individual's autonomy. Thus, the controversy takes the shape of a dilemma: either you accept moral tradition and take a conservative position, or you accept a modern moral and are in danger of maintaining a relativistic position. Stated in this black and white fashion, the debate becomes stagnated and it becomes impossible to present new perspectives that may lead us to criticize and to reconsider both positions.

My proposition is that the presentation of an argumentation taken from literary sources may be provocative of the reflection needed to overcome this stagnation. Chilean literature preserves certain postulates that are basic to our moral tradition. In some Chilean novels, that are known to all Chilean students, the characters discuss in certain passages about moral behaviour. I think that if one could extract those argumentations from their literary contexts, they could serve to formulate different points of view that could contribute to enrich contemporary controversies.

In order to supply an example of how this is possible, I have taken some excerpts from "Martin Rivas" by Alberto Blest Gana. This is a very important Chilean novel, published in 1862, that narrates some facts ocurred between 1850 and 1857 and which are related to the failure of a liberal revolution. The moral position

portrayed by Martin Rivas, however, will not be affected by the political changes and so, it expresses a standard moral position that will persist in Chilean society. My intention is to select a few passages and reconstruct them as an argumentation that is not alien to the literary context.

Background: One of the main characters, Rafael San Luis, a bankrupt aristocrat, introduces Martin Rivas, the main character of the novel, to the house of Mrs. Bernarda Molina, who is the mother of Adelaida, Edelmira and Amador. Although Mrs. Molina was not a member of the aristocracy, she used to give parties at her home that imitated the aristocratic gatherings, in the hope of marrying our her daughters to someone important. Despite her intention, since the girls did not belong to the aristocracy, they were exposed to be taken as objects of amusement and seduction by the young aristocrats who came to the house looking for entertainment. The situation furnishes a portrait of the Chilean society of the time and, consequently, Martin Rivas' judgement of that situation becomes a moral judgement of his time's society, which probably could be extrapolated to contemporary Chilean society.

The novel's relevance for chilean culture is confirmed by the critics who consider that Martin Rivas is the work most read in Chile by the most diverse social groups (Goic, 1976). Martin Rivas' moral judgement must be extracted from the dialogues in the novel. All the relevant ones however take place in a single night.

"Martin Rivas looked upon his friend from this new perspective, which contrasted with the melancholic seriousness that he had always observed in him before. He thought that he could perceive something forced in the impulse that San Luis put in pretending to experience an unparalelled joy.

Are you really having fun?, asked Martin.

Real or faked, it doesn't matter too much, answered San Luis with a little exaltation in his voice, what really matters is to be able to stultify yourself" (p. 71)

"(…)Among this people (said San Luis), loves proceed faster than through the studied preliminaries that lovers use in the large ballrooms before they go on to the first declaration of love. The resort to gazing, resource that bashful and silly lovers employ, is almost superfluous in this setting. Do you like a girl? You just tell her directly. Do not think that her answer will be as frank as you may expect. Here, and in relation to matters touching upon the heart, the woman wants to be forced and she will not answer but halfway.

I must tell you Rafael, said Rivas, that I cannot find much amusement here." (p.74)

“There was a chair next to Edelmira (Mrs. Bernarda’s daughter) and Martin sat on it. I have not seen you taking much part in the entertainment, said the girl.
I am not very much fond of noise, Miss, said he.
Then I gather you must have been displeased.
No; but I realize that I do not have the character for these entertainments.
You are right; I, who have seen so much of them do not seem to be able to get used to them.
Why?, asked Martin feeling his curiosity aroused by the girl’s words.
Because I feel that we lose our dignity in them and that the young gentlemen, who, like yourself and your friend San Luis, come here, only see us as an entertainment and not as persons worthy of yourselves.
I think that you are mistaken in this respect, at least as far as I am concerned. And since you speak to me so frankly, let me tell you that a while ago, when I looked at you I thought I could guess from your expression exactly what you have just told me.
Oh! Then you noticed it.
Yes. And I must tell you that I liked your displeasure. And I thought with deep feeling that you were suffering for your situation.
As I told you before, I have never been able to get used to these parties that my mother and brother like. There is too much difference between gentlemen like you and us. Therefore, there cannot be uninterested and frank relationships between us.”(p. 77)
“(…) For us, answered Edelmira sadly, there is not love like the love you offer to the rich girls. Maybe those on whom we are so crazy as to put our eyes on them, are the ones who most ofend us which their love and who make us know the unhappiness of not being able to be contented with those who are around us.” (p. 77)
“Haven’t you had a good time at all?, asked him (Rafael San Luis).
I saw you a while ago talking to Edelmira. She is a poor unhappy girl who feels ashamed of her own people and hopes for someone who may consider her worthy, at least in matters of the heart.
What I have been able to gather about her feelings from the short conversation we had, has made me feel sorry for her, said Martin.
Poor girl!
Do you feel sorry for her?
Yes. She seems to have delicate feelings. And she seems to be suffering.
That is true. But, what can you do? It will be one more heart that will be burnt for

coming to close to the light of happiness, said Rafael with a sigh.
And later, slipping his fingers through his hair, he added: It is the story of the moths, Martin, those who do not die keep forever the marks of the fire that burnt their wings. Well! I seem to be making poetry, it is the alcohol speaking through my mouth." (p. 83)
My purpose, of course, is not to make a literary analysis of these dialogues, but to reconstruct them as a fictitious conversation between Rafael San Luis and Martin Rivas that is congenial to the literary context of the original.

Dialogue
Are you having a good time?, asked Rafael San Luis.
Not much, answered Martin, What about you?
Of course I am, answered Rafael.
Your joy doesn't seem real to me, insisted Martin.
And so what?, said Rafael, If you are able to stultify yourself, it does not matter whether your fun is faked or real.
Don't you really mind to seduce Adelaida, continued Martin, although you are really in love with another woman?
Rafael did not answer but remained thoughful.
Don't you think that she may suffer?, insisted Martin.
No. I think she is enjoying it, answered Rafael. And don't think that she is an easy woman to conquer, she is not the kind that surrenders easily. But she belongs to a different social class. In respect to love affairs, she likes direct questions, but she enjoys giving halfway answers.
Even if it is so, said Martin, I don't think that what you do is correct.
Why?, asked Rafael.
Because she may suffer, said Martin. You treat her as if she were an object for your entertainment. You don't worry whether she feels humiliated or lowered in her dignity.
I don't think so, said Rafael.
You don't think that love requires a frank and sincere relationship between two people?
I don't think there can be love, answered Rafael, between people from such different social backgrounds. Besides, if she really were to fall in love, she is bound to suffer, as all those who fall in love are.
Martin kept quiet immersed in his own thoughts.
Don't you think that you would enjoy seducing Edelmira?, asked Rafael.

Why do you ask that? said Martin.
Because I know that you like her, answered Rafael.
Yes, I find her attractive, said Martin, but I must treat her with respect, as she deserves to be treated.
Do you think that if you fell in love with her, asked Rafael, you would marry her?
I don't known about that, answered Martin.

This interpretative dialogue is not aimed at interfering with the literary meaning of the novel. Whether Martin Rivas personifies a romantic hero representing a naive morality or an ideal of romanticism more moderate or more realistic in opposition to Rafael San Luis, whether he portrays love in opposition to social interests or simply the reject of the bourgeoisie's ideals, is something that escapes our analysis. It belongs to the literary analysis.
What the dialogue intends is to make manifest Martin Rivas'moral position. As we can see, the dialogue ends with Martin Rivas'confusion about his own feelings. In the novel, Martin Rivas does not marry Edelmira. He marries Leonor, an aristocratic girl whom she really loves. So, it remains unclear whether he thinks that Edelmira, because of her social position, and despite the feeling of respect that he has for her, ought to remain in a situation of inferiority.

Argumentation
Martin Rivas' argumentation can be developed in the following way: Martin Rivas proposes the view that "It is incorrect to seduce a woman". He supports his view giving three different reasons: (a) "You can hurt her feelings", (b) "You can lower her dignity", as a response to San Luis's suggestion that some women, as Adelaida for instance, might enjoy being seduced, and (c) "Every woman deserves to be treated with respect", as a more solid moral reason.
The reason (c), however, is unclear because it is too basic and general. Of course, it is a good support for (a), but its connection with the implicit proposition (d) "Every woman deserves to be loved", which is a consequence of a more egalitarian moral principle, is ignored in the novel.
In this way Martin Rivas can establish a basic criterion to judge the morality of human relationships. This criterion is very specific about some kind of moral damages, like hurting people's feelings, but ignores those other moral damages that come from social class discrimination.
Martin Rivas' doubts can be introduced in the Chilean contemporary discussion and be used to present the dilemma whether or not we are willing to create a

completely egalitarian society and to accept all the consequences derived from this. This approach would provide a different perspective to analyse the moral arguments that come up in public debate in Chile.

REFERENCES

Goic, Cedomil (1976). *La novela chilena: Los mitos degradados.* Santiago: Editorial Universitaria.

Blest Gana, Alberto (1963). *Martin Rivas*. Santiago: Editorial Zig Zag. (first published in 1862).

ISSA Proceedings 1998 – How (Not) To Argue With 'Fundamentalists'. On The Problem Of Arguing Without A Shared Basis

In 1997 the German philosopher Hubert Schleichert published a book, which became a kind of philosophical bestseller in Germany. It is titled *Wie man mit Fundamentalisten diskutiert, ohne den Verstand zu verlieren. Anleitung zum subversiven Denken* (Schleichert 1997)**[i]**. Schleichert's book sketches a general theory of argumentation and offers a conception of *subversive argumentation* as a means to deal with the problem of fundamentalism. His discussion of this problem primarily deals with historical examples, in particular the fight of the Enlightenment against Christian dogmatism. One of Schleichert's heroes is Voltaire, who seems to exemplify what Schleichert means by subversivity.

In this paper I will outline and discuss Schleichert's approach with respect to some systematic conceptual issues, concerning in particular the problem of

argumentation without a shared basis. After discussing Schleichert, I will briefly give some suggestions for a more adequate approach to this problem.

1. Schleichert s approach

1.1 *A positivist concept of argumentation*

It is obvious that Schleichert adopts a "positivist concept of argumention". At the outset he introduces a distinction between the normal standard-case of argumentation and the non-standard-case. In the *standard-case* a thesis is logically derived from a set of sentences, i.e. the arguments. An argumentation is correct if the arguments are true and the inference is logically valid, or can be transformed into a valid one by adding acceptable premisses. In order to convince someone by argument, there have to be at least some sentences which are already accepted or turn out to be acceptable. These sentences, shared by both sides, constitute the argumentation-basis and may function as a resource for reasons and objections. Schleichert regards in particular sentences which express fundamental values, judgements, beliefs and principles as belonging to the argumentation-basis.

If there is no sufficient argumentation-basis shared by the opponents we have the *non-standard-case*. However, the positivist concept of argumentation rules out this non-standard-case as a case of argumentation in the strict sense. The lack of a shared argumentation-basis must, at the end, lead to a breakdown of the discussion. And, indeed, this often is the case. The fact that people, at least sometimes, continue to argue without a shared basis appears as a curious phenomenon in the positivist framework. From a logical positivist point of view, the efforts of these people are hopelessly in vain.

It is one of Schleichert's merits that he, in spite of adopting the positivist view, does not stop at this place. Instead, he asks for an *explanation of this curious phenomenon* and distinguishes four lines of explanation. We may, first, assume that the discussants simply overestimate the possibility of argumentation and are victims of this illusion. Second, the participants may mutually negate their principles. But this kind of *external criticism* is not really argumentation, since it can neither hope to convince the opponent, nor rest on a commonly shared principle. Both explanations of the phenomenon remain compatible with the positivist picture according to which real argumentation is impossible in non-standardcases. What is explained, here, is why the participants may falsely believe to have a discussion while, in fact, there is no argumentation at all.

Schleichert's third exclanation is that arguers may still try to gain a shared argumentation-basis by means of *internal criticism*. ("… wird versucht, doch noch eine gemeinsame Argumentationsbasis zu gewinnen; dies ist der Fall bei der »internen« Diskussion bzw. Kritik." Schleichert 1997: 64). Internal criticism, as conceived by Schleichert, accepts the basic assumptions of the opponent, interpretes them in a different way, and tries to show internal contradictions in his view. Schleichert obviously thinks of internal criticism as including a kind of *pretended acceptance* of the opponent's basis, if only pretended »for the sake of the argument«. Given, that the acceptance were sincere, we didn't have a non-standard-case at all. However, this line of explanation, again, does not call the presupposition of a shared basis into question.

Only the fourth explanation admits the possibility of discussions in which a shared argumentation-basis is not necessarily required. The discussants may argue subversively. *Subversive argumentation* is different from an exchange of logically valid reasons and objections. ("…, kann man sich mit dem ideologischen Gegner auch anders als nur in einer logisch zwingenden Argumentation wirksam auseinandersetzen. Das soll mit dem Ausdruck »Subversivität « bezeichnet werden." Schleichert 1997: 65) As conceived by Schleichert, subversive argumentation neither is logically conclusive, or refuting, nor does it require a preceding acceptance of the opponent's fundamental convictions. It aims at *undermining* his ideology by showing drastically what he really believes, by showing bare facts that are embarrassing and painful for the opponent, and by showing alternative views. Subversive argumentation opens an external view and aims at the effect of shaking the creditability of the opponent.

1.2 *Arguing with the fundamentalist: Subversive Argumentation*

Schleichert then discusses internal criticism and subversive argumentation as means to argue with fanatic fundamentalists. Here, he points at dangers of internal criticism and advocates subversivity as superior. What does Schleichert have in mind when he talks about discussing with fundamentalists? And what does he mean by "fundamentalism"? Surprisingly enough, Schleichert in a sense defends fundamentalism. He does not accuse fundamentalism of perverting or distorting valueable religions or ideologies, but he insists that fundamentalism is more consequent than rather tolerant and pragmatic versions of the same doctrines. By going back to the roots and sincerely taking the original sources as radical as they are, *fundamentalism reveals the real character of the respective ideology or religion.*

According to Schleichert, a basic principle of fundamentalism is that the truth has a privileged status above all false teachings and opinions. This alone, however, is not distinctive of fundamentalism. The fundamentalist additionally believes that he *knows the truth* and that he is justified by a higher authority (divine inspiration, a holy text, historical necessity, etc.) to use even violent means for pushing this truth through. Fundamentalism, therefore, is essentially opposed to tolerance. Nevertheless, fundamentalists also use argument. Schleichert warns us to underestimate the intelligence and rationality of fundamentalists. If examined *internally*, their argumentation is far from being inconclusive or irrational. Moreover, Schleichert suggests, that within the respective religious or ideological frame, fundamentalist positions are even more rational than rather liberal or tolerant interpretations of the dogmas.

This is where Schleichert sees the *dangers of internal criticism*. Internal criticism accepts, or pretends to accept, the basic beliefs of the fundamentalist, as the basis of argumentation and participates in the interpretation of, say, the holy texts. Schleichert believes that, since there are no objective criteria to decide about interpretations, such discussions will endlessly go on and lead, almost unavoidably, to subtleties which are unintelligible for a broader public. Even if the internal critic may demonstrate inconsistencies, this will never shake the fundamentalist's faith, but lead to reinterpretations of the text. So, playing the game of the enemy, the internal critic has no chance to overcome the critcised ideology. Internal criticism, Schleichert concludes, may, at best, contribute to some initial phases of a non-standard-discussion.
Only *subversive argumentation*, Schleichert insists, may bring the fundamentalist entirely into discredit by showing embarrassing and painful facts as well as consequences of the fundamentalist ideology. Subversive argumentation may call cruel practices by their name and avoid to cover them by a veil of religious or ideological interpretation. Since it is an essential feature of fanatic fundamentalists not to be impressed by arguments, Schleichert recommends to address subversive argumentation not primarily to the fundamentalist himself, but rather to a public which is less infested by the ideology. The subversive strategies may vary with the different grades of the public acceptance of fundamentalism. If a majority supports the fundamantalists, subversive argumentation may disguise as internal criticism ironically pretending to accept the domaining ideology. If fundamentalism is rather weak, subversive argumentation may overtly make a fool of the fundamentalist.

One of the techniques of subversive argumentation is what Schleichert calls "substitution *salva absurditate*". His example is Voltaire 's discussion of the Augustinian principle »*credo quia absurdum est*«. ("I believe, because it is absurd".) Voltaire contrasts the context of theology with the context of the court. If a witness reported that the accused was, say, at two places at the same time, and insisted that this is the more certain the more it is absurd, he would be judged as a lunatic. According to Voltaire, the *theological principle* means that, what appears absurd and impossible in our eyes, does not so in God's eye. Revelation, miracles, and religious faith belong to a *different sphere* than witnessing in the context of human affairs. Schleichert, however, assumes that Voltaire merely *ironically* draws this conclusion, while in fact he shows the madness of the religious principle. According to Schleichert, Voltaire's emphasis on the difference between the spheres is *hypocritical*. He pretends to accept the religious principle, but at the same time undermines it. By substitution *salva absurditate* he shows how bizarre the religious principle really is. Assuming subversive hypocrisy, Schleichert reads Voltaire in such a way that, what is literally said, means exactly the opposite.

2. Making Sense of Schleichert's approach

2.1 *Conceptual Incoherences*

There are many grave conceptual problems in Schleichert's approach. Most of them are connected with the idea of subversive argumentation.

Schleichert, again and again, repeats the positivist doctrine that what may count as proper argumentation has to be logically sound. If an inference is logically inconclusive, we do not have an incorrect argumentation, but no argumentation at all. However, subversive argumentation, as advocated by Schleichert, is not conclusive in the logical sense, not logically compelling. Here, there are no conclusive arguments. ("Beim subversiven Argumentieren (…) werden Argumente vorgetragen, die (…) im Sinne der Logik nicht konklusiv, logisch zwingend sind. Konklusive Argumente gibt es an dieser Stelle nicht." Schleichert 1997: 115) Now the question arises: Do we have two kinds of argumentation, conclusive and non-conclusive ones? Schleichert cannot have both, a positivist concept of argumentation and subversive argumentation. The positivist view entails that subversive strategies of influencing an audience's opinion cannot count as argumentation. The idea of subversive argumentation requires a non-positivist concept which allows for taking non-conclusive moves as arguments.

Another conceptual problem concerns Schleichert's use of "fundamental" and the

concept of an argumentation-basis. At many places Schleichert refers to fundamental beliefs and principles arguers *subjectively* take as certain and immune against revision. These certainties are constituted by education and rarely change in the adult's life. More or less, we are held captive by these fundamentals. At other places Schleichert gives a rather *functional* characterisation of the argumentation-basis as an intersubjectively shared reference point. What may function as such an argumentation-basis may vary from discussion to discussion. Whether there is an intersubjective basis of discussion depends on whether there is an overlap of the participants' pregiven sets of beliefs and principles. It is, again, subversive argumentation that does not fit in, since it is designed as a kind of argumentation that does not *presuppose* an overlap, but may make an impact on fundamental beliefs. If subjective fundamentals can be influenced by arguing without a shared basis, this may suggest a rather dynamic view including the possibility of transforming and even creating the argumentation-basis within the discussion.
A third conceptual problem concerns Schleichert's distinction between an *internal* and an *external* discussion which is crucial for the distinction between internal criticism and subversive argumentation. Internal criticism, Schleichert suggests, accepts the fundamental beliefs and principles of the opponent, but interpretes them in a different way. If internal criticism is supposed to be a kind of non-standard-argumentation, the acceptance of the opponent's basis must be either only »for the sake of the argument« or even entirely pretended. Merely pretended acceptance, however, may also be a strategy of subversive argumentation, which operates from an external position. Subversive argumentation, though implicitly negating the opponent's fundamentals, in certain cases ironically pretends to accept them. So, we are left with the problem how to distinguish between internal criticism in the strict sense and subversive argumentation disguised as internal criticism. Schleichert may reply that subversive argumentation remains external in so far as it operates by irony or hypocrisy. The subversive arguer hides his external standpoint from the opponent while he shows it to the audience. This reply, however, amounts to distinguishing internal criticism from external subversivity with reference to *different addresses*; it does not explicate the internal/external-difference with respect to the relation between the arguers.

Before I draw some consequences of my discussion I would like to confess that I do *not really accept* Schleichert's subversive argumentation as a genuine species of argumentation. My main reason is that subversive argumentation does not

acknowledge the opponent as a partner in searching the truth and that it hides, and thereby immunises, its own background-beliefs by playing a game of disguise and pretention. Such strategic games do not fall under the concept of argumentation. In my preceding discussion of conceptual problems I accepted the idea of subversive argumentation only »for the sake of the argument«. By a kind of "internal discussion", I wanted to show how one can arrive at overcoming positivism, if one starts within Schleichert's approach. Schleichert's idea of subversivity breaks through positivist restrictions of the concept of argumentation. Argumentation must not necessarily have the shape of a logical derivation. Arguing does not necessarily presuppose shared beliefs and principles, but may change or even create it's own argumentation-basis. These conclusions seem to contradict some of Schleichert's explicit claims, but I would like to support them. Perhaps, they can be made compatible with Schleichert, if we read him like he reads Voltaire, viz. as a subversive thinker.

2.2 *A Sketch of a Subversive Interpretation*

It is not very probable that an experienced philosopher like Schleichert is not aware of the conceptual tensions in his book. If this is so, it would be most charitable to interprete his approach in such a way that the conceptual incoherences make sense. Schleichert even may have produced them in order to show something that he does not explicitely say. Such an interpretation would amount to reading the book itself as *exemplifying* subversive argumentation. Seen in this way, Schleichert would criticise rationalist rather than religious ideologies. Even if the author did not intent this, it could be worthwhile to read the book along these lines.

Let us suppose, Schleichert himself argues subversively trying to show something that contradicts what he literally says. Like Voltaire, Schleichert could be a hypocritic who tries to undermine the positivist view of argumentation by showing it's absurdity. If this were the case, the conceptual incoherences would make sense. Schleichert would show us, the third party, how absurd the positivist doctrine of argumentation is. Moreover, the message of the book would turn into the opposite. Schleichert presents himself as a pioneer of tolerance and openness, while he does so in a rather rigid and almost intolerant way. He does not show the slightest charity towards internal religious discussions; he pretends to regard fundamentalism as the real face of Christianity. His caricature of Chistianity as fundamentalism is so crude and overdrawn that one could suspect that he in fact wants to show how dogmatic, intolerant and hostile the absurd picture of religion

is that some radical atheists or rationalists draw, that he wants to show that the fanatic critics of fundamentalism are rationalist, or atheist, or positivist fundamentalists themselves. He would not primarily show how, but how not to argue with fundamentalists.

3. Argumentation-basis: A Dynamic View

Before I finish let me briefly return to the problem of an argumentation-basis. Schleichert has drawn a picture of an overlap: Some belief or principle can serve functionally as an argumentation-basis, if it belongs to the overlapping domain of the participants' subjective fundamental beliefs and principles. I would like to replace this picture by a more dynamic one.

Following Wohlrapp (Wohlrapp 1998) and others, the fact that fundamental beliefs and principles become very deep-rooted and stable within subjective positions, can be described as a result of a process of *framing*, i.e. a process of coming to see something *as* something and act accordingly. Such ways of seeing and acting to some extent exclude other ways of framing. We cannot see and treat, say, the same mountain as a holy site and as a resource for copper-mining at the same time. When such ways of seeing and acting have become unconcious, and thereby have gained some stability we may call them *frames.* It is characteristic of such frames that we are unable to see what is outside of them. Arguers may have very different frames, according to which they see and treat the matter they are discussing about. Although they hope to convince each other by giving and asking for reasons, this hope may be disappointed systematically. Their very different frames may prevent them from finding any argumentation-basis.

However, in a discussion we do not deal with isolated sentences. *By arguing discussants express their frames.* Their argumentative moves are particularily connected by being embedded in such frames. Expressing their frames in the discussion, the participants may become aware of the fact that their frames are *limited* and that there are alternative ways of framing the matter. And this may be a first step in the process of arguing without a shared basis: the *acknowledgement of the frame-difference*. This means to get some distance from seeing one's own view as a self-evident natural thing.

A second step may be the effort to *explore and understand* the internal coherence of the opponent's frame by anticipatory practices. (Cf. Lueken 1991) As Wittgenstein said, "It is not single axioms that strike me as obvious, it is a system in which consequences and premises give one another *mutual* support."

(Wittgenstein 1969: § 142) The more we explore the web of mutually supporting beliefs expressed by the opponent's argumentation, the more we understand his way of framing the matter. Such processes of learning distinctions and related practices can be regarded as part of or accompanied by argumentative exchanges.

A further, third step may be to *integrate the different frames*, at least partially. This is, of course, the most difficult step. But such integrations of ways of seeing sometimes happen in discussions. This often shows itself in *reinterpretations* of already expressed claims. Thereby, things may be made coherent that previously appeared as incompatible. The search for or construction of analogies between the involved belief-systems may further such an integration. Therefore, arguments by analogy, and disanalogy, are significant here. (Cf. Mengel 1991)

Following these lines an argumentation-basis may stepwise be established in an argumentative exchange that started without a shared basis. This dynamic view may perhaps also open our minds for possibilities of arguing with fundamentalists. Acknowledging frame-differences, seeing ourselves as being, to some extent, kept by frames, and adopting an argumentative attitude that allows for learning even from fundamentalists, we may have a chance to overcome hostility and solve conflicts with fundamentalists not only by strategic means of deception and power, but also by argumentation.

NOTES

i. In English: 'How to Argue with Fundamentalists Without Losing One's Mind. A Guideline to Subversive Thinking'.

REFERENCES

Lueken, G.-L. (1991). Incommensurability, Rules of Argumentation, and Anticipation. In: F.H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, J.A. Blair & C.A. Willard (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Argumentation*, Vol. 1A (pp. 244-252), Amsterdam: SICSAT.

Mengel, P. (1991). The Peculiar Inferential Force of Analogical Arguments. In: F.H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, J.A. Blair & C.A. Willard (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Second International Conference on Argumentation*, Vol. 1A (pp. 422-428), Amsterdam: SICSAT.

Schleichert, H. (1997). *Wie man mit Fundamentalisten diskutiert, ohne den Verstand zu verlieren. Anleitung zum subversiven Denken.* München: C.H. Beck.

Wittgenstein, L. (1969). *On Certainty.* Oxford UK & Cambridge USA: Blackwell.

Wohlrapp, H. (1998). Some Remarks on Non-deductive Argument. In: J.F. Klumpp (Ed.), *Argument in a Time of Change. Definitions, Frameworks, and Critiques,* Annandale.