ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Wilson On Circular Arguments

1. Introduction

In his paper "*Circular Arguments*" Kent Wilson (1988) argues that any account of the fallacy of begging the question based on epistemic conditions is inadequate and suggests grounds on which a more satisfactory analysis can be provided. He does this by criticizing the epistemic attitude in the fallacy analysis and showing how this has led to an unacceptable analysis of the fallacy of begging the question. I will concentrate on Wilson's two main points. First of them is Wilson's argument against the epistemic condition: that we should not overemphasize the assumption that an argument should prove its conclusion. Wilson admits that it is an important function of the argument, but thinks that we should recognize other purposes as well, such as refuting a proposition or undermining confidence in it. Understanding these other purposes would then contribute to the study of the fallacy and point us to a better analysis. I will try to show that Wilson's ideas on argument's functions are compatible with the epistemic analysis and that they do not therefore improve our understanding of the fallacy.

The second point I wish to comment on is Wilson's argument against the division of the fallacy of begging the question into two types: the equivalence and the dependency type. According the equivalence type, a fallacy is committed when the conclusion is equivalent with some premise. In the dependency type some premise is dependent on the conclusion: its acceptability somehow depends on the conclusion's acceptability. This dependency is often analysed in doxastic or epistemic terms, as for example Sanford and Biro have done. Wilson argues that the dependency view of the fallacy of begging the question is not adequate for several reasons and assumes the equivalence view. I will argue for the dependency view of the fallacy. I do not believe we can subsume it to the equivalence type. Wilson's critique in fact coincides with Biro's views on some points. In conclusion, I argue that the epistemic version of dependency can adequately analyse the fallacy of begging the question.

2. On the functions of the argument

Wilson argues that to understand the fallacy of begging the question better, we must widen our view of the functions of the argument from the epistemic emphasis. This epistemic approach has assumed the status of background assumption. It shows in the fallacy theory as an attitude that the primary purpose of an argument is to prove some proposition. He quotes two writers that he thinks have especially emphasized this function, David Sanford and John Biro. Sanford's formulation of this idea is that an argument should increase the degree of reasonable confidence which one has in the truth of the conclusion (Sanford 1981: 150). According to Biro, an argument should make us know that something, which we did not know to be true, is true, because of something which we do know to be true (Biro 1977: 264). Wilson points out that Biro even seems to go as far as to say that knowledge is the sole aim of the argument when he writes that "Someone that has seen Socrates die would not need an argument for the proposition that Socrates is mortal."(Biro 1984: fn. 5, 243). Wilson criticizes these views. He thinks that we must recognize other purposes as well:
"For example, arguments are offered on occasion to refute some proposition, or to undermine confidence in it by giving a counter argument against it or by showing that an argument that has been given for it is not valid. Arguments are also given in contexts where one wants to understand better a passage of a text or a discourse – perhaps even a novel or other fiction – to unfold the implications of a plot or of a theory, for example. Somewhat further removed from proving paradigm of argumentation as the marshalling of evidence, arguments are sometimes given in order to explain, to understand, and to predict … arguments may be given in order to answer correctly a puzzle or a problem, where "real knowledge" or even belief need not be involved." (Wilson 1988: 39.)

I believe that Wilson is quite right in saying that knowledge cannot be the sole aim of the argument. Still, even if knowledge is not the sole aim of the argument, its primary function may still be to show that its conclusion is true. The examples Wilson puts forward clearly qualify as legitimate cases of argumentation. But he should establish more clearly that they are not designed to prove their conclusions. Let us consider for example the case of refuting some proposition. In such a case, the conclusion of the argument is that 'it is not the case that p'. However, this is obviously a new proposition that the argument tries to prove. It might not be proved, but the point of the argument is to achieve it. Refuting a proposition means that we know it is false. Another example was "undermining confidence in a proposition". The conclusion would perhaps be something like 'We

should not believe that p' or 'it is not certain that p' or 'it is not probable that p'. The conclusions of these arguments are however propositions that the argument tries to prove. Another example was the case of understanding a novel. A person takes some pieces of information given in a novel, such as the characters, their motives etc. and tries to explain why they behave as they do. These explanations hold only in the context of that novel and are objects of a constant revaluation. The author might have meant that the novel contains information about some real life situations, but it is not necessary. However, arguments given to understand the novel, aim to prove something in that context. The fact that the premises of these arguments do not hold in the actual world does not change the way an argument is supposed to function. This applies as well in solving a puzzle or for different problems where 'real knowledge' or even belief need not be involved. The conclusions proved are 'true' only in the given context**[i]**, but this does not undermine the function of the argument: to prove its conclusion.

Wilson's examples emphasize that there can be various kinds of arguments: arguments about an argument, or arguments about the relative position of a proposition in our belief system, or arguments that start from premises accepted only for the game's sake. Nevertheless, they do not show us that argument as such changes in any essential way in these situations. So I would conclude that Wilson does not succeed showing that these different uses of argument go against the widely held background assumption that an argument is supposed to prove some proposition, namely its conclusion.

Yet Biro is not saying that arguments have no other functions than proving some proposition**[ii]**. He is emphasizing knowledge-acquisition for at least two reasons: First, to make clear what is the difference between him and Sanford, and secondly, to give us a clear criterion by which we can evaluate arguments. Biro thinks that if the judgement of an argument is connected to the beliefs of the proponent of the argument the whole process of argument evaluation becomes radically relativistic (Biro 1984: 246). Later, Biro wrote in a joint article with Harvey Siegel:

"Argumentation is a complex phenomenon with disparate aspects and functions: persuasive, communicative, social, logical, etc. Argumentation theory, consequently, is properly interdisciplinary; we theorize about argumentation in rhetorical, philosophical, logical and social scientific terms." (Biro & Siegel 1992: 85)

Biro emphasizes that the central purpose of the argument is to prove a new

proposition, but he does not deny the other functions. The knowledge-acquisition, however, is for him more than a background assumption, it is the central norm by which we should judge arguments. He argues that only such normative account can capture what is essentially wrong in the fallacy of begging the question. Proving some proposition belongs to the hard nucleus of the argumentation. It is its primary function. It has others, some of which were mentioned earlier, but they are secondary aspects: many of them are often ruled out from the domain of argumentation theory as unessential. Incidentally, it seems that the argumentation theorists can widely agree on the idea that there can be no real argumentation without a difference of opinion between the arguers and that there are at least two parties**[iii]** involved. If there is no difference of opinion, there is nothing to be proved, and consequently no real argumentation.

I am not claiming that studying argumentation in different contexts and with several purposes is not useful. Argumentation varies and we should study this variation to understand fallacies. Quite another question is, whether it should differ in quality as much as it does. The different contexts do not, however, alter the central task of the argument: to prove its conclusion. I do not think that these examples succeed in showing that this emphasis should be given up.

3. Defence of the dependency view of the fallacy

The second point of Wilson's arguments I wish to comment on is his argument that the dependency notion of the fallacy of begging the question is not satisfactory. I will first give a textbook example of the dependency type**[iv]**:

(1)

A: God exists!

B: How do you know that?

A: Because the Bible says so.

B: How can we trust the Bible?

A: Because it is the word of God.

God's existence is A's first conclusion and the issue to be proved. B is in doubt of this and asks for further evidence. A offers the word of the Bible as grounds for believing the existence of God. B has doubts on the trustworthiness of the Bible as evidence, and asks why he should trust it. A offers as evidence the original conclusion, the question at issue. B is offered no other reason than the original question. The reliability of the Bible is dependent on the existence of God. Yet the conclusion, God's existence, is dependent on the Bible. The conclusion and the

premise seem to depend on each other, and since no other evidence is offered for them, the argument can be judged as question begging.

Wilson does not accept the dependency conception: “Conceptions of the fallacy formulated in terms of premises being evidentially dependent on the conclusion are too indeterminate to be of much use” (1988: 43). He gives two versions of the dependency criterion for the fallacy of begging the question. The first version states that an argument begs the question if the conclusion is evidentially relevant to some degree to at least one premise. The second version classifies an argument as question-begging in the case that the conclusion is the only evidence for one or more of the premises. I have several objections to Wilson’s approach.

The first version is clearly too wide definition to be acceptable. But I do not believe that anyone propounding the dependency version thinks that the conclusion’s evidential relevance to premises alone makes some argument fallacious. It can be considered as a necessary condition for the fallacy of begging the question, but not as a sufficient one.

If we were to accept the second version, we would, according to Wilson, be forced to accept several fallacious arguments as non-fallacious:

“For example, consider any argument having as a premise a conjunction of two (distinct) propositions, one of which occurs as the conclusion. Generally there will be evidence supporting the conjunct of the premise that is distinct from that expressed by the conclusion. This general shortcoming affects the more specific versions of the dependency conception that follow.” (Wilson 1988: 43.)

Since this is a general shortcoming, we can consider it before going on to the specific versions of the dependency. We can do that by looking into the following dialogue-game that represents the situation Wilson describes:

(2)
n A: p.
B: why p?
n+1 A: p&q.
B: why p&q?
n+2 A: if r, then q. r.
therefore q.
B: q, why p?

Wilson’s claim is that the criterion does not hold because there is evidence for the other conjunct q. But the propositional device of linking propositions to conjuncts

holds to the other direction too: the premise p&q can be divided to two different premises p and q. This is B's tactic in n+2. She accepts q, because she accepts r and that q follows from r, but insists for further evidence for p. This tactic exposes A's error. He has evidence for q, but not for p. But p&q does not follow from r so B's tactic pinpoints the fact that A's only evidence for p is p, and he can be accused of begging the question. This is what the criterion states: the argument begs the question because the conclusion is the only evidence for the premise.
Having dealt with this general shortcoming, we must now turn to the specific objections Wilson raises against the dependency analysis given in epistemic or doxastic terms. He asks us to consider the following formulations:
"(a) in order to know or reasonably believe that one or more of the premises are true, one must know or reasonably believe the conclusion to be true; or
(b) knowledge or reasonable belief that one or more of the premises is true requires inference from the conclusion (i.e. knowledge of the premises is not independent of knowledge of the conclusion)" (Wilson 1988: 43).

Wilson has several objections to these formulations and I will deal with them one by one. I believe that his objections give us grounds to decide how we should define begging the question. First, Wilson remarks that it is often difficult to decide why someone accepts some proposition. He thinks that the consideration of the parties involved in the argumentation is irrelevant. It introduces a relativistic consideration that precludes us from obtaining a satisfactory analysis. Since there are indeterminately large number of different ways of coming to know a proposition, it becomes difficult to see how arguments could be found to beg the question. (Wilson 1988: 44.) I agree with Wilson that it may be very hard to decide why someone accepts a certain proposition. In this connection, it might be useful to separate between why someone believes some proposition and what grounds one gives in the argument. There are obviously indeterminately large number of ways of coming to believe something, and one can have indeterminately large number of reasons to believe something. I may believe that the earth is a geoid, because in my dream, I saw God taking earth to his hands and squeeze it from the poles. Yet if one reasonably believes or knows something, it means one must have some grounds, some warrant for one's belief. If questioned, one must be able to produce this warrant, and an argument is a tool for producing it. If my belief on earth's shape is caused by my dream, others come to know this after I produce the argument. So, why someone believes some proposition is often hard to know, but, given the requirements of openness and

intra personality of knowledge, what grounds one has for believing, is something that can and should be conveyed through arguments. In an argument one gives the one's grounds for believing something. They are what we are judging when we judge an argument. We are not judging the personal reasons one may have for believing something. Nevertheless, because we are judging the argument, not some person's beliefs, we should not attach the explanation of the fallacy to these beliefs. That is why I feel that Wilson's argument does have some force in it, and it guides us in choosing between the epistemic and the doxastic version.

Wilson's critique does more damage to Sanford's doxastic version than to Biro's epistemic one. This is so because only Sanford ties his explanation to the belief's of the individual (see for example Sanford 1972: 198). He argues that whether an argument a person proposes begs or does not beg the question depends on the fact why that person believes the premise. The question is begged, if the premise is believed by the person only because he or she believes the conclusion. But since it is very hard to decide why someone believes some proposition, we could hardly ever give judgement on arguments. Sanford would have to stipulate that a person has given all his or her reasons for the conclusion, but this is troublesome for there might always be some arguments we have not heard. Also, I would prefer to treat the argument as a set of propositions that may at least sometimes be evaluated on its own. We could not do this if we tied the evaluation of the argument to the arguer's beliefs. As I said, we are judging the argument, not personal beliefs.
Biro, on the other hand, does not tie his explanation to what the persons actually believe in. He thinks that a question-begging argument is not epistemically serious (see Biro 1977: 264). This means that it does not, as an epistemically serious argument should, show us that something, which we did not know to be true, is true, by showing that it follows from something we know to be true:
"…they [examples] show clearly that nothing turns on the beliefs of any individual, either in terms of their temporal order, causal connectedness or relative strength. The features on which the epistemic seriousness of an argument – and thus the justice of BQC**[v]** – depend, are in no way psychological or relative to the arguer (or addressee)" (Biro 1977: 266-267.)

Begging-the-Question-Criticism depends on the essential relativity involved in Biro's terms. The premise should be more knowable than the conclusion. The term 'more knowable' means that p is more knowable than q if one can know p

without knowing q, and as Sanford (1981: 156) later added, one cannot know q without knowing p. So, Biro's explanation is dependent on the general epistemic situation, not on individual arguers, and Wilson's critique does not seem to apply.
Wilson gives the following example to support his thesis that it is hard to decide why someone believes the premises:
A very reliable source (Johnson-Laird, 1983, 180) tells us that ordinary individuals who have never been taught logic do not make use of rules of inference to make valid deductions. From this proposition I infer that no individual who has been taught no logic uses rules of inference to make valid deductions. Does this inference beg the question? I (now) assume that the same proposition is involved, yet my evidence in one instance was the testimony of the source and in the other instance an inference. (Wilson 1988: 44.)
He admits that the assumption that the same proposition is involved is incorrect, but the reader should perceive from this that ".. there is a wide variety of possible evidence matched by paths for coming to know; consequently it will be unusual to find a proposition occurring as a premise the sole evidence for which will be the conclusion. (Wilson ibid)." I am not sure whether this example proves anything. Let us see if they could be presented better. There are two different arguments here, the first one being:

(3) Johnson-Laird claims that ordinary individuals who have never been taught logic do not make use of rules of inference to make valid deductions.
Therefore
Ordinary individuals who have been taught no logic do not make use of rules of inference to make valid deductions.
The second argument would be:
(4) No individual who has been taught no logic makes use of rules of inference to make valid deductions.
Therefore
Ordinary individuals who have been taught no logic do not make use of rules of inference to make valid deductions.

Now, I do not think we would claim that (3) is case of begging the question, it is an argumentum ad verecundiam, the proponent is referring to an authority in the field and there is nothing wrong in that. (4), on the contrary, would be considered as question-begging in a normal dialectical situation. Its conclusion is reached by applying the replacement rule of the universal quantifier. Such a replacement is

not inherently wrong, but in a dialectical situation it would do no good to the proponent of the conclusion. I do not see how this example discredits the view held by Biro that (4) would not be an epistemically serious argument since the premise is not more knowable than the conclusion, and one could not know the premise and at same time not know the conclusion, stipulating that the context is not a lecture on logic. Still, Wilson's example does have some force against Sanford's position. Knowing when an argument begs the question can be difficult, when its assessment is tied to the beliefs of an individual proposing the argument. Actually, this difference is what Biro and Sanford have discussed in several articles [see Biro 1971, 1977, 1992 and Sanford 1972, 1981]. This would seem to show that Wilson's argument do not apply to Biro's position.

Before concluding I wish to discuss few minor objections Wilson raises against Biro. He argues that Biro's explanation of begging the question runs into difficulties when a person's commitments form an inconsistent set. In that case, those commitments cannot be more knowable than the conclusion since an inconsistent set of propositions cannot be known. This is an interesting problem. What sort of criteria should we impose on a person's commitments, for example in dialogue-games, or should we limit the classical logic somehow? A player may prove any proposition from his opponent's inconsistency, which does not seem represent actual discussions very well. Yet in relation to Biro's analysis, it suffices to remember that his explanation is tied to true propositions. We can claim, with some credibility, that true propositions do not form inconsistent sets of propositions, so Biro needs not concern himself with this situation. If on the other hand one's explanation is tied to the beliefs of the arguer, as Sanford's is, this objection would have some force, since beliefs do form inconsistent sets.
Another problem for Biro is, according to Wilson (1988: 45), the case of strategic planning. This case is very similar to the case I discussed earlier in relation to arguments given to understand, for example, a novel. The strategic planners are not using true propositions as premises in their arguments. They are toying with hypothetical statements. If there is no real knowledge, i.e. no true propositions involved, does not that make Biro's account of argument in terms of knowability inadequate? I believe that this problem can be solved by looking into the status of the propositions acquired from strategic planning. These propositions are not considered as true statements as such, but only in relation to the hypothetical statements about the enemy's moves. They are hypothetical statements or recommendations such as "If the enemy attacks with this type of force and from

these directions, the following measures would most likely be the most efficient…". In this context, the premise that concerns the enemy's moves is surely more knowable than the conclusion about the measures that should be taken since the measures taken can be unsuccessful. Strategic planning is in this sense analogical with the case of trying to understand a novel. The information that the author gives about the characters and their motives is surely more knowable than our speculation from those premises.
The important thing to notice is that Biro's criterion speaks of relative knowability, not absolute knowability. His position is not affected by the fact that the premises are not true.

4. Conclusions
I believe that I have presented enough reasons for us to decide that Wilson's critique against the dependency notion and the epistemic version of it is not adequate. At the end of his article, Wilson brings forward an example to note the problems of assuming only the equivalence analysis:
(5) Nixon realized that he was dishonest; hence he was dishonest.(Wilson 1988: 51)

This example can be analysed with the epistemic version. In (5) one could know the conclusion without knowing the premise, but one could not know the premise without knowing the conclusion. Therefore, the argument is not epistemically serious, but begs the question. The same can be stated about the example (1), the discussion on God's existence. These arguments do not seem to fit to the equivalence type of analysis.
Wilson's critique of the epistemic and doxastic version's of the fallacy of begging the question had force against Sanford's view, but was compatible with Biro's critique of the doxastic version. I believe that Wilson did not succeed in showing that it applied to the epistemic version as well. If we can accept the dependency view, as I think we can, this seems to work towards the acceptability of the epistemic version of the fallacy of begging the question. Biro's version is not without problems though. For example, the term 'relative knowability' needs to be explicated further.

NOTES
i. Problems relating to specific contexts have been examined by for example David Lewis in his article 'Truth in fiction' (1978).
ii. Nor is Sanford: his version speaks of the primary purpose of the argument (see

for example 1972: 198).

iii. In the case of a solitaire arguer, the other party would be nature, from which the arguer elicits answers by tests.

iv. Even though this is a textbook example, I cannot claim that it is good example of begging the question in the sense that it would be an example of someone's actual argument. It could also be improved by adding some other independent premises, which would make it plausible. But I do claim that in this form, it does beg the question against B.

v. Begging-the-Question-Criticism.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Judges In Argumentation Games

1. Introduction

There is a lot of definitions of argumentation systems used for different purposes. In some of the papers one can distinguish simultaneous use of the notion of argument in two senses: as a proposition that is an argument for the thesis and as a proof method. For the second we use argumentation functions and argumentation strategies to characterize it. In that model many of the nonclassical logics are definable in natural way.

The argumentation processes may be considered as games over a judge opinion (Gargov, G. & Radev, S. 1987a), (Vreeswijk, G. 1993). The winning (price) of such a game is the judge verdict. The judge may be of different forms and different structure:

1. In the case of discussion the judge is the common knowledge (and opinion) of both players,
2. in the football play type (or the administration) the judge consists of a set of judges and possibly is structured hierarchically (higher instance),
3. In the chess the judge is the rules of the game except the case when the champion is elected.

Moreover the judge knowledge (opinions, evaluations, believes) may differ from the knowledge of the players and possibly his believe system may change during the discussion (game). From the other hand the players may be honest or not and their honestness may be included in the calculation of the price (judge opinion) or not. Also the judge may be honest or not. These possibilities determine a couple of different games and deductive problems. Few of the interesting (and simple) examples are investigated in the present paper. For more complicated cases we need more time/place then the limit of that paper.

2. Arguments and argumentations

In logical investigations we often treat semantics generated in the process of justifying some statements by means of other statements. The latter are usually called arguments for the former. At the beginning (Gargov, G. & Radev, S. 1986) we tried a simplified approach based on the following assumptions:

1. the argumentation is one-step, i.e. the arguments are already with a definite truth value determined by their meaning,
2. the scheme of evaluation is consistent in the sense that no already evaluated statement should be given argument.

Such simplified considerations lead us to the so-called argumentation functions generating truth definitions given some basic semantics (Vakarelov, D. 1972), (Gargov, G. & Radev, S. 1986, 1987a, 1987b), (Radev, S. 1996). The corresponding logical systems (treated in the cited papers only at the propositional level) turned out to be small (3 or 4-valued) many-valued logics.
Later we tried to extend the treatment to more dynamic situations when the arguments for a given statement are also questioned and this gives rise to an iterated procedure of argument evaluation.

3. Argumentation systems
The argumentation systems are powerful instruments for decision making. In the present paper we investigate more complex argumentation systems instead of simple ones because of the complexity of the problems we have to decide in the implementations. Nevertheless we start with the construct of the simplest argumentation systems.
Elementary argumentation system is a triple EA=Q,A, where:
1. P,Q are finite sets of nodes (propositions); elements of P and Q are propositions; elements of P are the arguments and of Q – the thesis,
2. A is a finite set of binary (argumentation) relations in P×Q such that A,P,Q are disjoint sets. For every a -> A and every p -> P and q -> Q if q -> a, then we say that p is an argument for q in a-sense (the expert a believes that p is an argument for q), or briefly: p is a-argument for q.

Evaluated elementary argumentation system is 5-tuple E=Q,A,V,s where:
– Q,A is an elementary argumentation system,
– V is a set of values,
– s:P -> V is a partial mapping called semantical (justification) function.

Without loose of generality we may suppose that either the set P consists of these arguments we know their values, or the mapping s is total. It is easy to see that every partial mapping may be extended to total. When P -> Q= -> (in the elementary argumentation systems no argument may be a thesis) it is natural to suppose that only arguments from P are evaluated. In the case when not P -> Q=

-> (some arguments may have their arguments too, hence for some A it appears as an argument and as a thesis) the situation is more complicated.
(1) Typical example of elementary argumentation systems is the connection between propositional and predicate logics. Let P be the propositional language for arithmetic and Q be the set of quantified (closed) formulas. The meaning of every formula of the form -> xA(x) (-> xA(x), respectively) depends on the meaning of the corresponding formulas A(0),->,A(n). Hence for every i the formula A(i) is an argument for the formula -> xA(x). Naturally the set of all arguments for -> xA(x) is infinite, but one can find a finite set of arguments that characterize the thesis -> xA(x) (respectively the example that proves -> xA(x) (Gargov, G. & Radev, S. 1987b)).
In many cases as: generalized quantifiers (Dale, R., Hovy, E. Rosner, D. & Stock, O. (Eds.) 1992), implication formulas (Gabbay, D. 1976), induction, etc. one can find examples of evaluated argumentation systems or equivalent notions. The semantical function s is defined only on the basic formulas and inductively extended on the complex ones. The extension depends on the law (strategy) we choose for it. In the previous example the law is: “Accept the thesis -> xA(x) only if you accept all its arguments”. Analogously the modus ponens law says: “Accept B if you accept A and A -> B.” The greatest part of the logical semantics are based on such laws. Hence the corresponding argumentation systems characterize these logics (Gargov, G. 1987).

4. Semantical functions
For the semantical functions we suppose that are total, because of the trivial extension of every partial function with a new value “?”. Also it is natural to base the investigations on the classical semantical functions, c i.e. such that V={0,1} and
– c(A -> B)=min(c(A),c(B)),
– c(A -> B)=max(c(A),c(B)),
– c(¬ A)=1-c(A).

Sometimes the same effect is obtained by the down-closed classical semantical functions (Gargov, G. 1987) for which we suppose only:
c(A -> B)=1 implies c(A)=1 and c(B)=1,
c(A -> B)=1 implies c(A)=1 or, c(B)=1,
c(¬ A)=1 iff c(A)=0.

The down-closed semantical function is based on the language-generator: only the

generated formulas are evaluated, all other are free of logical values. Here under the language-generation mechanism we understand the model in which the language is not apriory given but is generated in parallel with the proof. In that model it is not the case that the language, proof methods and semantics are given independently and we prove theorems about their relations. More precisely is to say that we prove properties of a given logic-language-information complex.

5. Strategies

There are different strategies to obtain the "logical" value of the thesis from these of it's arguments. It is natural to think that the basic arguments have only two possible values – 0 and 1 (false and true). The atomistic principle says that if there are more logical values then there have to be arguments and strategies that allow us to reach these values. As we show some of the many-valued logics are based on the 2-valued and the corresponding strategies (Gargov, G. 1987), (Gargov, G. & Radev, S. 1986), (Radev, S. 1996).

The strategies that one can find in the literature are in different forms. Using any strategy one can define a corresponding semantical function for the elements of the argumentation system. The more complex strategies may be build from the simplest. Hence first we consider the simplest ones based on the two element set of values V={0,1}. Between simplest strategies for 1 – ''True'', 0 – ''False'', ! – ''Defined'' and ? – ''Not defined'' one can observe in the human decision processes there are:

1 -> 1 – the thesis is accepted if all it's arguments are true (Lukasiewicz, J. 1920),

1 -> 1 – the thesis is accepted if at least one of it's arguments is true (Blikle, A. 1991),

1¬ -> 0 – the thesis is accepted if it lacks false arguments (Thomason, R. & Horty, J. 1988),

1¬ -> 0 – the thesis is accepted if not all it's arguments are false,

0 -> 0 – the thesis is rejected if all it's arguments are false (Blikle, A. 1991),

0 -> 0 – the thesis is rejected if at least one of it's arguments is false,

0¬ -> 1 – the thesis is rejected if not all arguments are true,

0¬ -> 1 – the thesis is rejected if it lacks true arguments as well as the less logically ones:

11 – the thesis is accepted if the greatest part of it's arguments are true (Polya, G. 1954)

00 – the thesis is rejected if the greatest part of it's arguments are false (Polya, G.

1954)
1 -> ! – the thesis is accepted if all its arguments are defined (Blikle, A. 1991),
0 -> ? – the thesis is rejected if some of it's arguments are not defined (Dewey, J. 1910)
0 -> 11 – the thesis is accepted if there is no more then one of its arguments false (Verheij, B. 1995)

Some of these strategies seems the same. Naturally in the 2-valued case some pairs of strategies produce the identical results. We mention all these strategies because they are prepared for many-valued cases in which "there is no true argument" and "all arguments are false" means different things. In the many-valued semantics these strategies will not only "accept" or "reject". In the brackets one can find a paper (not the unique) where such a strategy is used (not always consciously). It is surprising how often the authors omit the information about the deduction strategies they use. Usually under strategy we shall mean any combined strategy, for instance the combination of the strategies "accept if all are acceptable" and "reject if all are rejectable" (1 -> 1 and 0 -> 0) give us a maximal strategy – to be true or false that strategy needs all the arguments to be of the same value (maximal assurance). Intuitively such a strategy is used when the decision maker have to have "maximal assurance" of his decision. Analogously the combination "accept if all, reject if exists" (1 -> 1 and 0 -> 0) is a conjunctive strategy because of the conjunctive representation in logic; (1 -> 1 and 0 -> 0) disjunctive strategy. When the basic logic is not the classical one we consider more complicated strategies; for instance the maximal strategy in the three valued case consist of: "accept -> if all are ->, e.g. the strategies (1 -> 1 and 0 -> 0 and ? -> ?) where the new logical value "?" corresponds to "not determined". In general the strategy says how to compute the logical value of the thesis from the logical values of its arguments.
Note that the additional value? in the maximal strategy allow us in the next argumentation step to obtain 1 using some of the nonlogical strategies, while after the conjunction strategy that will be impossible.
Interesting form of argumentation system is (Wittgenstein, L. 1961) where tree-like argumentation system is mixed with classical logic proofs and even the hypertext grammars.

6. Argumentation systems
Now we are ready to introduce the notion of argumentation systems. It is time to

take into account the difference between arguments from P and conclusions from Q. For that we suppose that a family L of different languages is given and that a foundation principle holds: “No argumentation process may have arguments from different levels.” In the argumentation systems we can make proofs as in the logical systems. Again some proofs may be totally correct, but now sometimes the arguments for the thesis may be not sufficient for the acceptance of the thesis. Let us build successfully the argumentation systems from the elementary ones to the complex.

7. New semantics

There are many possibilities for the organization of the argumentation. Respectively the justification (argumentation) functions may have different properties. For instance for every A the set j(A) may be: finite, empty, m-element, less then m-element.

Also we suppose that the justification function is logical – for every A and B we have:

j(A -> B)={C -> D: C -> j(A) and D -> j(B)}

j(A -> B)={C -> D: C -> j(A) and D -> j(B)}

j(¬ A)={ ¬ C: C -> j(A)}

The logical justifications will be called argumentations.

From all these objects we define a new semantical function t(s,j, – >):Q -> V -> where V -> (possibly V -> V) is a new set of truth values. In other words the value of the formula A is obtained by the ->-type calculation of the s-values of it’s arguments from j(A). For instance, if j(A)={B,C} and s(B)=0 and s(C)=1 and _ is the conjunctive strategy, then t(A)=0 because there is one 0, while by the maximal strategy it is ? because there are 0 and 1, whence the value is neither 1, nor 0 (Gargov, G. & Radev, S. 1986). Obviously we have the following trivial but important fact.

Fact: If the justification function j is 1-element, then the produced semantics t is equivalent to the given semantics s independently of the strategy.

Even the contradiction argumentation strategy (1 -> 1 and 0 ->0) produces a semantics in the case when j is 1-element. That’s why in the classical logic it is sufficient to show that the axiom is true and to have true all its consequences.

Note, that in most investigations some of these objects are mixed: sometimes j

and s are mixed in one element, almost always L=L -> and V=V ->, very often s and t are the same function. The last is natural, because in almost all logics s=t. In the logics, however, we investigate consequence relations, in algebra we investigate functions and operations, in linguistics we investigate grammars and languages, etc. And simultaneously we fix all other objects to eliminate "the noise".

8. Formal definition

An argumentation system consists of a family of elementary argumentation systems, hence the arguments came from different languages and values and semantical functions are also families. Argumentation system is a 5-tuple AS=L,A,V,N in which:

– S is a set of strategies,
– L is a (set of) work language(s),
– A is a set of argumentations,
– V is a set of values,
– N is a set of semantical functions

Elementary argumentation is a pair *O where I is a set of arguments (expressions from some of the languages from L) and O is an argument (expression from another language from L). The argument O is the conclusion and the arguments I are the premises of the elementary argumentation.*

Evaluated elementary argumentation is any elementary argumentation *O extended with a semantical function s_N such that s(i) is defined for all i* -> I. Argumentation node is an evaluated elementary argumentation extended with a strategy -> S.

New semantical function t is defined for the argumentation conclusion in the argumentation node after the calculation of the values s(I) of the premises with the strategy s.

Argumentation process is a tree of argumentation nodes, the root of which is a thesis, and every predecessor of a node is an argument for that node. In other words the nodes are labeled by arguments from A and by strategies from S. The premises of a node are all the arguments for that node. A successor is accepted if the argumentation strategy in that node gives an acceptable value from the values of all the predecessors (arguments) for that node. The thesis is accepted if the argumentation calculation accepts the root. Note that in some cases the acceptance may be connected with more then one designated values from V.

Intuitively the argumentation system is a mixture of evaluated elementary argumentation systems. There are languages instead of sets of arguments and consequences, there are sets of truth values instead of one complex truth values. The truth values are practically decision possibilities. In the complex decision the situation is changed and thus in the new situation the decision maker has new set of possibilities.

9. Argumentation logics

In the argumentation systems, the connections between facts is not so strong as in the logical systems. Hence we may collect all the facts, that are (possibly) in contradiction in one family. These facts later are organized in small consistent theories and the consequences of these theories are the arguments for the decision. The logical way is to use many-sorted languages and the connections between sorts are axiomatically introduced in the system. In the complex argumentation systems we have as many sorts as formulas (propositions) using every proposition as an justification identifier. Hence the classical logic approach is not immediately applicable in the argumentation systems. From the other side we have nonclassical logics in which one can manipulate inconsistency information in a logical way. In these logics the logical values may be considered as possible decisions. Naturally there are connections between argumentation systems and the many-valued nonclassical logics (Gargov, G. 1987).

Many of the multi-valued logics correspond to some argumentation systems. All 3 and 4-valued logics are based on the mentioned strategies, hence are simple. It seems that the relevant logic has the most complicated strategy.

10. Some simple argumentation games

First we suppose the simplest case when there are only two dramatic personae of the game: P, or Proponent, and O -Opponent. The game is played on a language L where all the relevant assertions are made. In turn P and O choose statements and put them forward to the other. If there arises an uncertainty the other player asks a question and depending on the answer continues or stops the game. The players support their statements by arguments (we may assume that the arguments are given by some argumentation function). These arguments though are to be evaluated by the other player. Put very briefly the game may have the following outcomes:

1. one of the players wins unconditionally – when he has found a true (in the opponent’s sense) argument making all opponents arguments false;

– one of the players wins “relative to some ambiguity”
– when he has found a true argument while his opponent’s arguments are either false (but not all of them) or undefined;
2. a disqualification of one of the players
– when he has produced false arguments while the other has failed to produce anything true but has not given obvious falsities;
3. a mutual disqualification
– when both produce false arguments;
4. a true tie game (real contradiction in the game)
– when both have true arguments;
5. an undefined game
– when the arguments of both players are undefined (not evaluated by the opponent);
Thus we have a kind of 9-valued logic governing the truth evaluation of a statement.

11. Judges

The Judge is the most important person in every game. Interesting is the fact that in most investigations (Bvivedi, M.N. 1886), (Davidson, D. 1990), (Hintikka, J. 1976, 1984), (Gabbay, D. 1976), (Ricoeur, P. 1976) there is no judge in the games. In some of the papers the game is not investigated or even there is no word about the argumentation game considered. The judges seems are the authors and they propose their judge strategies. We want judge to be “honest”, but we think the honest means “We are write!”.**[i]** Hence we try to make him “honest” in our sense and respectively propose the arguments for that. Because the opponent is not “honest” we prepare the arguments to persuade the “True”. The symmetry says the opponent thinks in the same manner. Hence the Judge have to make a truth from these two different truth. His strategy is based on questions (if he is allowed to ask, because the reader of newspapers, the listener of the politicians, the TV observer, etc. have no possibilities to ask questions.).
In some discussion games (Vreeswijk, G. 1993) the judge is a part of the rules of the game. For instance when the repetition is forbidden and the initial semantics of the judge is in the given argumentation system then his semantics is based on a some form of the empty argumentation rule – if the opponent has no new argument then the proponent wins.
Following almost the same arguments as Hintikka (Hintikka, J. 1984) we introduce in the discussion two players P and O. Whenever there is a trivial

strategy for both players – “My thesis is the only right.” – we introduce the third player – the Judge (J). The Judge is the most important dramatic person in every discussion. Every discussion is made only for him and the winning of the play is his opinion. The propositions of P and O are J-evaluated. In the classical theory of games (von Neumann, J. & Morgenstern, O. 1953) the judge is introduced as the price. In the logical games the judge is introduced as the rules of the game (logics). Hence the game has full information about his evaluations. In the economic behavior the money the player win are good form of a judge if there is no inflation. But in many discussions about the future the judge cannot be defined because only one of the possibilities is realized. Let us suppose that the elementary game is a pair of propositions of the players. The semantical function of the judge J may have three possibilities – 1 (true), 0 (false), and ? (unknown). The Judge have to evaluate 9 possibilities. From the sports we have natural property of the judge – he have to show the winner. The values of the judge’s verdict are of the following types:
1. wins unconditionally (knock down)
2. wins by points
3. tie game
for both players where there are three tie games (0,0), (1,1) and (?,?). If the judge has the “disqualification” possibility then every 0 means disqualification, the value (0,0) means disqualification of the both players. If he has possibility to give two equal medals, then (1,1) means that. The only “pat” situation is the value (?,?). In some games that possibility is eliminated by dividing the judge onto odd number of judges. Sometimes the “pat” has also the meaning “continue the game” like in some football elimination’s.

We may consider also the judge function as “greater then” with the natural order 1?0. Hence the judge possibilities are 3 and his decision is the usual implication table for the three-valued classical logic.

0 – ? – 1
0 – ? – 0 – 0
? – 1 – ? – 0
1 – 1 – 1 – ?

Here the judge role is to compare the argumentations of both players. If the result is 1 then P is the winner, if 0 – O and if the evaluation is ? – the game is continued. As it is easy to see the judge realizes the conjunctive strategy. A

generalization of that fact is the following theorem:
Theorem. For every game there is an argumentation system with three argumentations such that the conjunctive strategy gives the value -> iff in the corresponding game the result is ->.
There is possibility to play multi-step game instead of one-step. When the game is continued the players propose the next arguments. Usually are investigated games with no repetition of the arguments. That restriction is realizable only in the simplest languages in which we can recognize when two propositions are equivalent.
The possible answers of the players are new arguments Pk and Ok such that Pk is an argument for some Pi, i k and Ok is an argument for some Oj, jr. The Judge questions in such a game are of the form "Why?" It is easy to see that the first positive (negative) answer evaluate all the arguments. The only case when new question is possible is when the Judge strategy is of the type 0 -> 11 (not accepted when the number of positive arguments is small).
It is possible the judge to be not honest even when both players are honest and the judge is their common knowledge. That is in the case when the common knowledge is defined inconsistently. To verify the judge we need a superjudge hence return to the start point – argumentation game for the judges.

12. Play without opponent
The play without opponent is simple – the judge asks for arguments and extend his argumentation system. The thesis is accepted (1) when the judge reach only true arguments. Otherwise the judge continue the questions until he construct an "acceptable" closed world. If there is a contradiction then the judge's verdict is 0. Here we have a form of the disjunctive strategy applied. The only difference is in the second Judge – his verdict is 0 when the proponent has no arguments for the second thesis. If the judge agree with the unknown arguments and agree with the argumentation relations then the result is equivalent to the application of the disjunctive strategy.

13. Conclusions and related topics
The argumentation games with judges in fact are 3-agent systems. Multi-agent argumentation systems are powerful instrument for prediction and analysis (Biedrzycki, J., Gryczan, A. & Radev, S. 1997), negotiations (Sierra, C., Jennings, N., Noriega, P. & Parsons, S. 1998). and other fields of Artificial Intelligence.
Multi-agent argumentation systems allow us to deduce from dynamic inconsistent

information that is impossible in logical systems. From the other hand a lot of logical systems may be considered as argumentation systems. Usually these logics differ only on the argumentation strategies and/or justification functions. The argumentation systems allow us to compare such logics in a natural way – without any changes in the formal language or axiomatic systems.

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NOTES
i. This includes not only "That what I say is true", but also "My way of thinking is true" and even "This is the only true way of thinking".

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Arguments From Perfections

1. Introductory remarks

This paper is not a direct discussion of the concept of perfection. Rather it raises a problem of arguing and drawing conclusions from the concept of perfection in inter-religious discourse.

The way we argue depends, of course, on the mode of reference we are using. In religious discourse we often do not argue and draw conclusions from the concept of God, but from the singular perfections like ultimate goodness, absolute love, greatest wisdom, etc. These descriptions are referring under certain conditions to God, despite the fact that "God" does not have the same meaning as "ultimate goodness".

This form of discourse has become normal in inter-religious debates, where a rigid concept of God (whatever is meant by this) is often replaced by its more flexible referential descriptions. Some philosophical theologians too, see good reasons for the flexible talk about God: "Conceptual frameworks come and go. This does not mean that we should not try to understand the very meaning of the God of Israel and the God of Jesus, but that we have to look for another conceptuality, one that will take into account all that know about the world in which we live." (Van der Vekken 1992: 163).

The strategy ables to overcome cultural differences and build up the models of inter-religious discourse in which the univocal use of "God" has been substituted by equivocal and analogous uses of the concepts of good, love and wisdom.

There are however problematic cases, if we have to presuppose, that some particular culture or religious group is lacking the concept of certain perfection or even several of them. Semantic investigations have established a provisional set of human concepts, expressed as identifiable words in all languages. This set,

which includes close to sixty elements, provides a trans-cultural framework for analysing meanings across languages and cultures in the form of trans-cultural metalanguage. According to the linguistical investigations, certain tribes of Papuas do not have the concept of love (Wierzbika 1995: 210).
This fact, stated by linguists as an empirical one, creates a theoretical problem: Which forms of argumentative discourse are effective, when speaking with Papuas about God as ultimate love? The concept of "God" itself is of course not universal, but can inter-religious argumentation be construed in trans-cultural metalanguage if there is no place for the concepts of divine perfections like love, wisdom etc?

2. The concept of perfections and conceptual framework
Good arguments usually convince. At least, they convince those of us, who can understand how the argument works. It is also widely assumed that if the logic of the arguments is the same, the argument which uses commonly understandable and univocal concepts is more convincing than the one which uses non-understandable and equivocal concepts. For instance, the missionaries who work with primitives know well, that preaching in the name of ultimate love is normally much more effective than giving arguments from the concepts of primal cause or first mover. For, to provide effective arguments they need to have rely on suitable conceptual framework.
Now, what are the common concepts for all mankind? According to linguistic semantics, in particular to the so-called Goddard's and Wierzbicka's "NSM" school of semantics (Goddard & Wierzbicka 1994) there exists pretty clear answer to this question, namely, in the form of the set of universal human concepts. The set of universal human concepts has been established on the basis of cross-linguistic investigations and contains several substantives (I, you, someone/person, something/thing, people, body), determines (this, the same, other), quantifiers (one two, many, all, some) mental predicates (think, know, feel want, see, hear) etc. As to the attributes: "Good", "bad", "big", "small" are universal, but for instance "love", "wisdom" are not universal concepts for the mankind. According to the Wierzbicka, there are some tribes, where arguments from "love" are non-understandable. Just because they do not have corresponding concept in their tribal language.
How, then, the missionary could tell something about Jesus as a Perfect Love? Non telling about the love would badly harm the very understanding what Christian God is? In the Biblical parables love is the most central and highly

important topic. It is also true that the most effective inter-religious arguments will take their start from “love”.

3. Prof. Wierzbicka’s parable explication project
Prof. Wierzbicka’s project offers the solution in the use of universal human concepts. For the Biblical parable of the Lost Sheep (Lost Son, Lost coin) in which the idea of love is the central, she proposes following explanations in the set of universal human concepts:
God wants to do good things for all people
all people can line with God
God wants this
God does many things because of this
sometimes a person doesn’t want to live with God
because this person wants to do bad things
this is bad for this person
if you don’t want to live with God
because you want to do bad things
this is bad for you
God wants you to think something like this:
“I don’t want to do bad things any more2
“I want to live with God”
God does many thing because of this… (Wierzbicka 1997: 18)

Wierzbicka seems to think, that her explanation of the Lost Sheep in the terms of universal human concepts refers to God of Love in principle in the same way as the original parable does. (Wierzbicka 1997: 18). She rejects the view that metaphorical expressions could not be paraphrased and her own project is aiming to provide Christian missionaries with many other universalised parables, which, however, turn out to be strikingly sketchy and similar to each other. Let us ask: Can good inter-religious arguments be construed by such highly artificial explanations of the parables? Could any better understanding of what God of Love really mean be achieved by the tribesmen by using them? I really doubt on this. Moreover, I feel that there is something very odd in Wierzbicka’s idea of the set of universal human concepts. The practising missionaries will probably tell more, why Wierzbika’s arguments do not work in practice.
I will limit my criticism with philosophical objections. In what wollows I hope to show why I would prefer to call Wierzbicka’s project rather Frankenstanian

Project: Despite the good intentions it has, it lacks to recognise the essential way humans are having their life. In the rest of my paper I will express my criticism in detail and draw an alternalive approach for arguments from perfections.

4. Methodological background

Why, it can be asked, is Wierzbicka so certain that the concept "love" is not the universal concept? Of course, linguistical investigation have proved that certain cultures are lacking this concept, what simply means the empirically stated fact, that particular culture X does not have the corresponding expression as identifiable word in their vocabulary. But does this empirically stated fact means the same as that the culture X is lacking the very idea of love? And in order to explain tribesmen what God means by love, one has to use Wierzbicka's translations? I really doubt on this.

Moreover, what would be the point to recognise this strange tribesmen as the humans and not human-like robots or human-like lions? Just think on different forms, love is manifesting itself and how trhese manifestations are related to the human's everyday life. Imagine the relations between mother and her child, the feelings between young man and woman; and the mixture of love and pain you feel when someone, very close friend of yours is suddenly dead? Could you say that nothing like this never happens in culture X. Could you imagine that the members of X culture never will have same sort of feelings we call "love"? Or that they have feelings, thoughts and ideas, but are never conscious about them. If so, how do you know that this culture X is human culture?

What I mean by this question, of course, is not, that the tribesmen are not always kind or friendly, or that they never prefer wise acts to silly deeds. Certainly, there exist some unfriendly cultures, where love is out of everyday life. I like'd to stress only, that it is very odd indeed to imagine the human race who does not posess the *slightest idea* what love and wisdom are. Because the manifestations of love are so widely universal for humans, and because their form of life is so different from ours, we would be quite uncertain about how to interpret their social practices. Even if a tribesman is turning to us by using plain English expressions, we would not be able to decide whether he is intending the same thing as we normally intend by using these expressions or not. George Pitcher has a nice comment on Wittgensteins' "If the lion could speak, we would not understand him". He explains:

"Suppose a lion says: "It is now three o'clock" but without at a clock his wrist-

watch-and we may imagine that it would be merely a stroke of luck if he should say this when it actually is three o'clock. Or suppose he says: "Goodness, it is three o'clock; I must hurry to make that appointment", but that he continues to lie there, yawing, making no effort to move, as lions are wont to do. In these circumstances – assuming that the lions general behaviour is in every respect exactly like that of an ordinary lion, save for his amazing ability to utter English sentences – we could not say that he has asserted or stated that it is three o'clock, even though he uttered suitable words. We could not tell what, if anything, he has asserted, for the modes of behaviour into which his use of words is woven are too radically different from our own. We could not understand him, since he does not share the relevant forms of life with us" (Pitcher 1965: 243).

In which sense, then, are the members of the culture X more humans than just human like lions or marionettes? If they do not posses the slightest idea that love is, could we not say that their life is too different from ours? (Raukas 1996: 39).

5. An Augustinian model

Why should we not admit that culture X has indeed the concepts of love and wisdom? It is more realistic to admit that form of live manifest these things and at least sometimes they express love in their everyday practices. This is precisely what Wierzbicka's investigation *indirectly denies*. Of course, she is probably admitting that the absent of the certain concepts in vocabulary does not make Papuas non-humans. But she is denying (at least indirectly) their conceptual consciousness about love.

Why are some linguists so reluctant to embrace these conclusions? They fear, I believe, that if the concepts and ideas are not equated with easily identifiable linguistical expressions, they can discover by empirical methods, then they will loose any possibility to see how these concepts and ideas work in human mind. As a philosophical background knowledge about language-world connection, such linguists are having an old fashioned Augustinian idea. They tend to think, as Wittgenstein puts it in his *Philosophical Investigations*, that "the individual expression in language name objects – sentences are combinations of such names. In this picture of language we find the roots of the following idea: Every word has a meaning. This meaning is correlated with the word. It is the object for which the word stands." (Wittgenstein 1953: 1.)

Let us consider for the moment that there are some other concepts the human culture X does not have in their vocabulary. What about the ideas of "nonsense" or "criticism"? The linguist who follows her augustinian based empirical methods

is probably telling us that the culture X does not have the slightest idea that "nonsense" and "criticism" are. Just because the culture X is lacking certain easily identifiable words in their vocabulary. Therefore, all our argumentative attempts which are based on the understanding of nonsense, should be explicated *via* the set of universal human concepts, similar to Wierzbicka's Biblical parable explications.

But is this really way out of difficulty? If the life of those members of culture X is like our life in many ways, then we are admitting not only that they are human beings, but also that in their natural behaviour they express their desires, feelings and thoughts just as we do. Wierzbicka ignores the diverse ways in which the language of the tribe does enter the lives of people.

6. An alternative approach to the problem

In *Philosophical Investigations* Wittgenstein describes two men working with building stones. One of them shouts orders, the other reacts to the orders. Wittgenstein says this might be not only the language but the entire language of the tribe.

To understand what Wittgenstein means by "entire language" I turn to fine example, given by Malcolm in his "Language Game" (Malcolm 1995: 179). I hope that this example explicates my claim that "love", "nonsense" and "criticism" can be seen in the language of culture X, just because they are humans and their natural behaviour is similar to ours. Not because linguistical investigations have proved that there are (or are not) linguistical expressions in the vocabulary of their tribe.

"Let us suppose that a worker is building a wall. Only slabs are used in walls: beams are used only in roofs. We may even suppose that beams physically *cannot* be used in walls because of their shape. Now this builder, at work on a wall, calls out to his helper "Beam". The helper looks at him in astonishment – then bursts into laughter. The startled builder looks at the helper, then at the wall, then back at helper with grin of embarrassment. He slaps himself on the head, and then calls out "Slab". The chuckling helper brings him a slab. Cannot we say that the builder's original call, "Beam", was, in that situation, *nonsense*, and that first the helper and then the builder perceived that it was nonsense?" (Malcolm1995: 179).

Likewise with love. It is true, that the tribesmen do not have in their vocabulary explicit words for love. However, only blind and dumb cannot see and hear the natural way love is manifested in their everyday life.

7. Concluding remarks

In conclusion I will sum up main points of my criticism. I discussed two different approaches to the inter-religious (inter-cultural) discourse. First, I tackled Prof. Wierzbicka's highly optimistic project to translate Biblical parables into the trans-cultural language which contains only universal concepts. Most of what I said in my paper about this project was critical and challenges Wierzbicka's basic idea. I claim that Wierzbicka's inter-religious discourse lacks (beside its theological and philosophical point) its argumentative force. Firstly, because her model interprets the empirical facts of linguistic by too simplified philosophical (Augustinian) theory of language and how the words could have their meanings in language.
Secondly, the phrasal equivalents to "God", "love" and "wisdom" in the set of universal human concepts are greatly equivocal. An alternative (I believe – more natural) approach takes its start from the wittgensteinian idea according to which speaking a language is participating in a very complicated rule covered social activity. I will argue that referential practice do not necessarily presuppose the use of universal concepts, but necessarily assumes certain common practices. If we have good reasons to presuppose that different cultures are not too far from ours – in the sense that in their natural behaviour they express their desires, feelings and thoughts just as we do – arguing from perfections, like love, do not necessarily imply equivocation, which would undermine our normal argumentative models.

I had originally intended that I would be able to say more about wittgensteinian-type arguments from perfections. However in the process of working out the paper I changed my mind and merely called to your attention the way how good arguments could not be stated.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Criteria For Winning And Losing A Political Debate

1. Introduction

I am concerned about the quality of the public political debate. I am concerned about reducing it to a game, where opposing political parties play their roles, obey the game's rules and confirm the genre.

In this paper the aim is to answer the following questions: What are the relevant criteria for the analysis of winning and losing a political debate? What are the theoretical and methodological implications of applying a normative argumentation theory (pragma-dialectics) and a descriptive interaction theory (conversation analysis) to the same data?

To give an answer to these questions I have first tried to investigate the general and specific character of the modern political debate and from these I have drawn the relevant evaluation criteria. To justify why these are relevant, I have decided to look at the debate genre in a broad diacrone perspective. By doing this I believe that a cearnel of genre constituting features can be revealed besides a set of more context-sensitive ones. In other words I try to describe the genre in terms of constant and relative/flexible elements. Thereafter, I will argue that a winning and losing enterprise forces the investigator to build a normative framework.

My claim throughout this paper is that there is a close relationship between genre development and the development of evaluation criteria. Consequently I will also claim that while genres change and develop over time, also evaluation criteria will

have to change.

2. The development of the political debate genre

Broadly speaking "genre" can be understood as either relative or stable, or as a combination (Ventola 1989). In this perspective I will understand the pragma-dialectical ideal context as a predefined, idealized and stable genre. However, I will argue that a context description has to consider both stable and variable features in order to provide relevant evaluation criteria.

My point is not to give an outline of the ancient roots of the political debate, but rather to point at the fact that electronic debates, and especially televised debates, represent a shift in debate style from a more discussion-like format to a more quarrelsome one. This shift has implications for what kind of criteria that create the winner and the loser of a public political debate.

My claim is that the debate tradition experiences an important shift with "The Great Debates" between Nixon and Kennedy in the 1960 campaign. At this time the political debate genre as we know it today was in its infacy. Five specific elements of debate can be isolated as it has developed in the American tradition, a debate is:

1. a confrontation,
2. in equal and adequate time,
3. of matched contestants,
4. on a stated proposition,
5. to gain an audience decision (Auer 1962).

My point of departure for the analysis of winning and losing is the genre "political debate", more precicely "election debate interview by radio". By asking what is *quality* in this context, I have established a set of evaluation criteria to decide the winner and the loser. While analysing interactional political argumentation my general claim is that both a theory of argumentation and a theory of interaction is required (Sandvik 1997). This claim can be supported by pointing at important features of interactional argumentation like the repetition of arguments, the manipulation of topics, interruptions and competition for the floor, which all are relevant information in the analysis of quality. In order to select a winner and a loser of political debate, this two-sided character of the communicative activity must be considered.

Ideally the debate is an arena for the open discussion of ideas and opinions about the course the nation should take, and apparently the ideal pragma-dialectical

context “critical discussion” is a possible candidate. However, the modern electronic debate is far from this ideal, a fact that needs no further elaboration. The political debate aims at persuade a third party, it is conducted in a public sphere, and it is competitive in character (Sandvik 1998). From these descriptions of the debate I have drawn the following four criteria to establish the winner: non-fallacious moves, speech amount, interruptions and topic manipulation. Hence the winner is selected from both argumentative and interactional criteria, and here we are at the normative and descriptive character of this genre description.

For the sake of the debate genre, I will suggest that the stable elements of the genre are related to the quality of the arguments and can be described in terms of a normative theory, while flexible elements yield the interactional process and can be described in terms of a descriptive theory. Debates always entail argumentation, and argument assessment is central to any approach to argumentation. Debating is a verbal activity, and dependent upon contextual arrangement, like degree of formality, the interviewer’s role and intention, number of participants and physical organization, it is more or less interactional. Anyhow, a theory of spoken interaction is required.

The argumentative winner is established on the basis of non-fallacious moves, and consequently a normative theory of fallacies is required (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984, 1992). The interactional winner is established from *how* the debaters interact and compete, and insight from Conversation Analysis creates the theoretical basis (Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson 1974). However, Conversation Analysis, or a more eclectic theory of interaction are descriptive in character, but at the moment this original descriptive theory is exploited to select a winner and a loser, the whole enterprise of establishing a winner is turned into a normative project.

Public debate has developed over time, and the question is whether the criteria for good and bad argumentation and good and bad conduct can be viewed as stable or flexible due to contextual changes. If a normative and even ””epistemic account of argumentation is linked to stability, this can create the stable element of the genre, while flexible elements can be drawn from its changes. My project is to search for 1) something stable from which good and bad argumentation is evaluated, and this “stability” can be epistemplogically based, and 2) to search for context-sensitive and thereby flexible elements which vary over time, and this “flexibility” is interactionally based.

3. Winning and losing a debate

Winning a debate and winning any other organized competitive activity share some important common characteristics. Dependent upon the game you are playing, some specific winning-qualities are implied and drawn from premises inherent in the game. But winning a game is not always equivalent to a positive conception of quality. “Quality” is generally a positive term, and a debate, a film and a student text may be described in lines of “quality”, but a winner of a verbal or a literal duel may not neccessarily possess positive qualities, but both of them display “qualities” which enable them to kill the opponent. So, “winning” must be described in relation to a specific activity, and may involve negative behaviour and characteristics. Winning a modern political debate, then, rests upon a set of winning-qualities or winning criteria which have their basis in a normative fundament and may be perceived as negative. As mentioned above non-fallacious moves, speech amount, interruptions and topic manipulation establish the winner. These will now be further commented.

Non-fallacious moves: The pragma-dialectical argumentation theory is fundamented in a theory of rationality and regards fallacies as violations of one of the ten rules for a critical discussion (van Eemeren 1986, 1987:202, van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1984:18). This point of departure has one important implication: unlike other approaches to fallacies, it can provide a set of norms that applies to all the recognized fallacies, and it does not give each individual fallacy a specific theoretical framework, as is the case in particular logical approaches**[i]**. Nor does it regard only the formal fallacies as interesting and worth treatment within a theory of fallacies**[ii]**, but also regards informal fallacies as equally important, since they occur in natural language use. By regarding fallacies as violations of the discussion rules, pragma-dialectics links the fallacious moves to the speechs acts that, in every stage of the critical discussion, contribute to the resolution of a dispute. Therefore the pragma-dialectical concept of fallacies is not related to one norm, as a logical approach is with validity/invalidity as the only norm, but relates to ten norms, the ten rules of a critical discussion. This implies that there are different criteria involved for deciding whether a move is fallacious or not.**[iii]**

As underlined above the modern electronic debate represents a shift in the public debate style. The new debate format opens for quick and entertaining exchange of moves, and the interviewer and administrator of the floor introduces confrontational topics and cuts the debaters off in order to heat the debate atmosphere. My point is that the debaters are framed to act according to this standard, and this creates the basis for the interactional criteria, which I now will

continue to justify.

Speech amount: It is a frequently held opinion that there is a close relationship between dominance and control over the floor: To be dominant in a dialogue is to control a major part of the territory which is to be shared by the parties, i.e. the interactional space, the discourse ratified and jointly attended to by the actors (what is normally called the 'floor'). (Adelswärd et al. 1987: 314)

Speech amount in a situation of competition is a means which can tell us something about who is the most dominant politician. In other settings where the turns, topics and amount of time is pre-allocated, this is not a relevant area of investigations. But it would be wrong automatically to assume that the party with the highest amount of speech is dominant or that she has won the debate, although the winner is partly defined in terms of getting and holding the floor. There is no automatic correlation between speech amount and dominance. Some people can be highly dominant without uttering more than a few pivotal remarks. With this in mind, my point of departure is nevertheless that the party with the highest amount of speech – in this particular situation of an election radio debate interview – will be regarded as dominant and successful in getting the floor and holding it.

Speech amount is a purely quantitative value and can be measured in different ways. Amount of time is one way, but not reliable, since the speaker's speed will influence how much talk produced. I have therefore chosen to count the words produced, something which is in line with most of the research done within spoken language**[iv]**. Thereafter a comparison between the two politicians is undertaken, on the basis that the situational context is symmetric.

Interruptions: As mentioned above the communicative activity "election radio debate interview" represents a highly competitive speech situation. In political debates there are reasons for doubting that the interactants willingly leave the floor and select the co-debater as the next speaker unlesss they have made a strategic move, to which response they look forward to. In interactional political argumentation self selection and speaker continuation is more likely to be the turn allocational principle at work. In political debates and debate interviews where the chairman or the interviewer plays a withdrawn role, simultaneous speech is very common and in most cases represents attempts at taking the floor from the other party.

In a competitive, conflictual and disagreement-oriented context like the election radio debate interview, the parties compete for the floor and try to *take* it from

the other party. In my opinion, this fundamental characteristic qualifies for regarding interruptions as an adequate reflexive means to further one's own political message, and consequently successful interruptions are a plausible indicator of "winning-behaviour". If successful interruptions display interactional strength and "winning potential", it is necessary to make a distinction between successful and unsuccessful interruptions, on the basis of speaker shift or not (James and Clarke 1993:245)**[v]**. In this work I will separate unsuccessful attempts at taking over the floor (by some investigators called 'simultaneous speech') from interruptions – which are successful moves, and relate them to "winning and losing".

The view on speech organization, overlapping speech and interruptions has met strong criticism from contemporary investigators of conversation (Edelsky 1981, Beattie 1989, Tannen 1983, McLaughlin 1985, Coates 1986, Goldberg 1990, Talbot 1992, and James and Clarke 1993, among others). The criticism concerns a perspective on conversation as smoothly organized with one speaker talking at a time and with syntactically and objectively defined transition places for turn allocation, and the fact that overlapping speech, and interruptions, are seen as disturbances and clearly disruptive in nature. Opposed to this, recent investigations have shown the multifunctional nature of interruptions, or simultaneous talk, pointing out that they can fulfill highly positive socioemotional functions unrelated to dominance. A more nuanced understanding of interruptions with a more consistent methodology is called for and has already been initiated. Common for this new trend is the perspective that conversation is mutually negotiated, and that broad contextual information has to be included in the interpretation of simultaneous talk, often with an analysis of the actual speech event as the starting point. As Tannen says: […] in order to understand this pattern, it is necessary to ask what the speakers are *doing* when they talk over other speakers (1996:232).

So then, what is clear is that the analyst cannot automatically start from the simultaneous speech marked in the transcript, and thereafter be satisfied with distinguishing interruptions from overlaps on the basis of syntactic criteria alone**[vi]**. Rather he has to regard both functional and sequential criteria to decide whether an instance of overlapping speech can be said to represent interruptions. Consequently, every instance of simultaneous talk is regarded both in its local discursive context and from the broader context, including type of speech event and the speakers' aim. Thereafter two types of winning and losing

the floor are described: winning and losing by interruptions, and winning and losing as the result of talk starting at the same point. Interruptions in this context are related to competition and dominance, and are violative and power-oriented in character, and occur during the talk of the other speaker(s), and therefore all kinds of simultaneous speech representing backchanneling signals are excluded, including those representing involvement and rapport, often found in female conversational style (Tannen 1983)**[vii]**. The sequential criteria then, are related to *where* in the local context the overlapping speech occurs, at a possible transition point or not. This creates the basis for successful interruptions, so-called "winning-interruptions" and unsuccessful interruptions, so-called "losing-interruptions", which are not interruptions at all – only attempts not leading to speaker shift. Winning and losing the next turn, as a result of simultaneous talk starting at the same point, can be seen if the foregoing turn is terminated and the speech has thus reached a transition point, and the speakers start at the same point with the result that one of them takes over the floor, and is thus regarded as the winner because the others stop talking. My data reveal several instances where the speakers (also including the interviewer) start at the same point, and compete for the floor for some time, resulting in a winner and one or two losers. And we should bear in mind that only interruptions representing competition for the floor are registered.

Topic manipulation: In interactional competitive discourse topic manipulation plays a crucial role. Generally speaking, controlling the topic, either by introducing, shifting, reintroducing, or setting the perspective of the current topic, is an activity neatly interrelated to the status, power and interactional skills of the interactants involved. In debate interviews the interviewer has the institutionalized right to introduce new topics and to change old ones. Still, the politicians are clever at introducing their "own" topics. In the election debate interview object to this study, the politicians are more or less equal in status and strength, so they fight to control the floor – and the topic development – on equal terms. An analysis of topic and topic change provide the analyst with information in his investigation of floor management. The politician who is best at manipulating the topic development, will be considered the winner, since this skill is seen as an important part of election media competence. In addition, it has implications on another dimension of this competence, namely speech amount, which is the effect of having got your topic on the agenda.
Deborah Tannen stresses that topic control and development is a joint product;

therefore the analyst always has to ask what else could have happened (1987:8). This analytical procedure is meant to prevent the impression that the discourse, as it shows itself from the transcripts, should be interpreted as fixed and one-way-governed, and not negotiated in co-operation. Controlling the topic is closely interwoven with controlling the interaction. It is important to be aware of the fact that the introduction of a topic has to be seen in relation to the attention given to it. The one who raises the topic is not automatically in possession of power; the fact that the topic has to be responded to in one way or another, reflects its co-operative character. In this perspective the attention-giver can also be seen to display power, i.e. by asking several questions concerning the topic, by merely commenting upon it and thus giving attention to its importance – or by ignoring it totally.

The crucial questions are: What is a *topic*? How can it be identified and limited? We can all intuitively tell what a conversation is about, and that the conversation sequentially can be separated into different topics, and in this activity we draw upon both referential, sequential, contextual and formal insight. Still, the definition of topic represents an immense difficulty. This can be explained by the fact that topic is a context-unit, not a formal one. In order to gain the status as a topic, it is dependent upon an interpreting individual and a context. As Bublitz has underlined, topic is not an inherent quality or unit of the discourse, and consequently it cannot be given an objective and formalized definition, rather topic has to be interpreted, comprehended and ascribed to the discourse (Bublitz 1988:18, 26). Topic is negotiated, and so is the meaning. Therefore, the fact that topic is part of a social situation to which the interactionalists contribute, has to be realized and thereby become part of the analysis.

The pragma-dialectical approach gives no satfisfactory account of topic. Although van Eemeren and Grootendorst talk about "the propositional content" in their publications, they do not define the concept of 'topic' or 'content'. Still, there is evidence in their literature for choosing a propositional approach to topic, instead of a sequential one, which is the tradition in Conversation Analysis and ethnomethodology.

Topics develop and change throughout a conversation, and may shift both abruptly and gradually. Topic change are ideally brought about by the interviewer, so his turns should involve topical shifts. This is a conventional feature of the interview, – and a general characteristics of human behaviour:

Activity framed in a particular way – especially collectively organized social

activity – is often marked off from the ongoing flow of surrounding events by a special set of boundary markers or brackets of conventionalized kind (Goffman 1974: 251).
But as Button and Casey have pointed out "topics flow from one to another, and this means that a distinct beginning of a topic may not be readily apparent" (1985: 3). Nevertheless, I will make an attempt to define where a topic starts and where it ends, and the procedure applied is both formal, referential and sequential. The questions asked as the interaction procedes are: What are they talking about now? *How* did they come to talk about it here? What are the political reasons for *why* they are talking about it, and *why* are they talking about it *here*?

I will suggest a concept of topic that satisfies my immediate need to
1. decide the topics at stake in the debate and classifying them,
2. decide whether one of the politicians shifts the current topic or the perspective on the current topic, and
3. decide who is in charge of election media competence by being skilled in topic manipulation.

My point of departure is a concept of topic which focusses on topic shifts and topic boundaries (Maynard 1980, Brown and Yule 1983:95, Crow 1983:137, 155, Button and Casey 1984, 1985, 1988, McLaughlin 1984:57-59, Adelswärd 1988:44, 53-60, Fredin 1993: 117-127, Jefferson 1993 and Marttala 1995). The reason for this is mainly that a concept of topic that rests upon shifts is easier to operationalise than finding a plain definition and thereafter a suitable analytical unit. This assertion can be empirically supported by Planalp and Tracy's experiment showing that interactants can segment a conversation into topical shifts (1980).
Three criteria are applied in the analysis of topical shifts: formal markers, referential markers, and sequential markers. *Formal markers* are metastatements and appeals to the interviewer. *Referential markers* are drawn from the discursive coherence and cohesion. Finally, *sequential markers* are taken from the conversational activities performed by the interactants.
Topics in politics can be divided into preferred and dispreferred on the basis of contextual information. Background knowledge from the current political situation together with general knowledge about party political differences provide the analyst with contextual information sufficient to divide the topics into

preferred and dispreferred**[viii]**. No topics are labelled neutral, since political parties are expected to take a position to nearly any topic, and topics of no immediate electional interest are hardly introduced in an election debate. The speakers have a strong desire to debate *preferred topics*, since they enable politicians to create positive pictures of themselves, and consequently these topics are evaded by the antagonist. The speaker tries to aviod *dispreferred topics* whilst the antagonist tries to introduce them. The protagonist succeeds if he is able to bring about preferred topics, but he fails – or the antagonist has succeeded – if a dispreferred topic is introduced. In my opinion, these mechanisms are inherent in political argumentation and create the basis for claiming that topics "belong" to someone, because of the politicians' knowledge about the opponent's weak points and their opportunities to parade their own qualities. As mentioned before, an analysis of topic and topic-manipulation creates the basis for deciding the winner and the loser, in other words the one who has *succeeded* in getting her topic debated by introducing topics which display either preference for themselves or dispreference for the other party.

To sum up, the analysis of winning and losing in the topic analysis draws upon a predefined distinction of preferred and dispreferred topics. Preferred and dispreferred topics are listed against a background of contextual information, more precisely the analyst's knowledge of the current political situation. Preferred and dispreferred topics are also arrived at by studying the ongoing interaction; how the politicians eagerly seem to introduce or avoid a topic or a perspective.

4. Conclusion

In this paper I have claimed that non-fallacious arguments, speech amount, interruptions and topic manipulation are relevant criteria for establisihing the winner of a political debate. These four criteria have their basis in a normative theory of argumentation and a descriptive theory of spoken language. In spite of conflicting theoretical orientation, I have argued that the selection of a winner and a loser of a political debate, intrinsically is a normative project.

Political debate has also been investigated from a genre theoretical perpspective, and I will suggest a description of genre which involves both stable and flexible elements. The stable elements of the debate is first and foremost grounded in a normative and rational, and perhaps even epistemic account of argumentation. The flexible elements are due to shifting circumstances in the way argumentation is processed, and consequently a descriptive approach is best suited to account

for the interactional changes in the debate genre.

NOTES

i. Woods and Walton, with their background in both formal and informal logic, have impressively set out to give all the fallacies their own logical treatment, without excluding the socalled informal fallacies, and without forgetting that fallacies occur in a natural dialogue situation. See Woods and Walton (1982a), (1989), Walton (1987b), (1989a), (1992a, b, c) and Woods and Hudak (1991). The drawbacks of such an approach are mainly of practical and applicable kind, according to van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992:103).

ii. See Copi and Cohen (1990:103).

iii. See Biro and Siegel (1992:90) for a detailed criticism of the pragma-dialectical concept of normativity. They argue that rationality is the norm argumentation has to be measured against and also the norm fallacies has to be seen against. According to them discussion rules are not relevant.

iv. Adelswärd (1988: 117) points out that speech amount, or to say that people speak a lot, can mean different things: that the utterances/the turns are long, that the proportion of the total interactional space is large, and that the talk is pragmatically insignificant in relation to what is relevant.

v. In the competitive context of an election radio debate interview subject to analysis, there is no link between successful interruptions and dominance, a relation much investigated and cited in the literature, see James and Clarke for further references (1993:246).

vi. Following James and Clarke (1993:237) I will use the term 'interruption' also without simultaneous speech actually occuring, for example immediately after the completion of the uttering of a word while still being in midturn.

vii. From the analyses I will also exclude the type of simultaneous utterance commonly referred to as back channel responses (Yngve 1970) consisting of one-word utterances like 'yes', 'aha', 'mm'. Further, the term 'mistiming error' is disregarded on the background that it rests upon a smooth and well-defined speaker organization, perhaps not existing in very many contexts.

viii. In the study of competitive political argumentation I consider 'face-work' to be of minor relevance. Therefore aspects of 'face' are not considered while defining preferred and dispreferred topics (Goffman 1967).

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Duties

Beyond Borders? Appeals To Moral Necessity In Statecraft

Speaking at the dedication of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum a few years ago, Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel called for the Clinton Administration to take action to stop the carnage in Bosnia. "Something, anything, must be done," he implored (*Time*, May 3, 1993: 48). Shocked by atrocities, the horror of systematic rape, and waves of panic-stricken refugees fleeing in the wake of "ethnic cleansing," many other people joined Wiesel in urging the nations of the world to intervene for humanitarian reasons. "All humanity should be outraged," asserted Thomas Buergenthal, former president of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and a survivor of Auschwitz (cited in Lillich 1993: 574). "We cannot just let things go on like this," insisted former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. "It is evil" (*Time*, April 26, 1993: 35).

Whether prompted by genocide in the former Yugoslavia or political mass murder in such places as Cambodia or Rwanda, the issue of what should be done about human rights violations in other countries highlights an old debate over whether ethical considerations ought to influence foreign policy. Do political leaders have a moral obligation to alleviate human suffering no matter where it is located? Must they protect foreign nationals even at the expense of their countrymen? If so, should it be done through a quick rescue operation? Or should it include an effort to eradicate the underlying cause of the suffering? These questions have received renewed attention with the establishment of a United Nations' War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, charged with conducting the first international war crimes trials since those undertaken in Nuremberg and Tokyo at the end of Second World War.

The purpose of this essay is to analyze appeals to moral necessity in persuasive dialogue on foreign policy issues. I begin by differentiating between two types of appeal: one based on duty; the other, on right. After comparing the deontological assumptions of duty-based appeals with the consequentialism of rights-based appeals, I discuss how metaphors are sometimes used in the latter to conflate legal right with moral obligation. Next, using a series of speeches that attempted to justify the 1989 intervention by the United States into Panama, I illustrate the

rhetorical strategy employed by statesmen who mask legal permissibility as moral obligation. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of the problems inherent in moral appeals that blur the distinction between the permissible and the obligatory.

1. Arguments From Moral Necessity

Throughout the ages, political leaders have justified the use of military force against neighboring states with a form of argument that stresses how foreign policy is driven by unavoidable necessities. In general, these necessities are portrayed in strategic terms; they are actions that supposedly must be carried out to advance national security interests regardless of whether they contravene prevailing ethical standards (Raymond 1995).

Recently a different conception of necessity has entered into debates about the use of military force. Rather than defending the resort to arms on the grounds of strategic necessity, it is often justified nowadays as a "categorical moral imperative" to stop a brutal government from violating the human rights of its citizens (Reisman 1973: 168; Schermers 1991: 592; Rodley 1992: 35). As one advocate of this view has put it, the military defeat of rulers who initiate massacres "is morally necessary" (Walzer 1977: 105). It is an absolute duty, one that holds at all times and in all places, and regardless of whether it advances the strategic interests of the intervening state.

Allowing the use of coercion by one state to modify the authority structure in another state would significantly transformation world affairs. Ever since the Peace of Westphalia ended the Thirty Years' War in 1648, the twin principles of sovereignty and nonintervention have underpinned international relations. The only widely accepted exception to the prohibition against interfering in the domestic affairs of other nation-states is military intervention to liberate one's own nationals when they are being held hostage, such as the 1976 Israeli mission to rescue its citizens from a hijacked airplane in Entebbe, Uganda. What is noteworthy about recent appeals to moral necessity is they do not focus on whether those who are suffering are the intervening state's own citizens. Sovereignty, according to those who hold this view, is no longer sacrosanct (Scheffer 1996: 37). As self-proclaimed global citizens in an interdependent world, they do not recognize human rights issues as being a purely domestic matter. An example of this attitude can be seen in a letter written to the editor of the *New York Times* (October 4, 1968, p. 46) by Arthur Leff, a professor at Yale Law School. Reacting to wrenching scenes of malnutrition during the Nigerian

Civil War he demanded: “Forget all the blather about international law, sovereignty and self-determination, all that abstract garbage,” he demanded. “Babies [in Biafra] are starving to death.” As expressed in Article 7 of the Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, proposed by the InterAction Council of twenty-four former heads of state from five different continents, “Every person is infinitely precious and must be protected unconditionally.”

2. Duty-Based Versus Rights-Based Appeals to Moral Necessity in Foreign Policy

In contrast to appeals to moral necessity that are grounded in deontological assumptions about categorical duty, a second type of appeal stresses the bad consequences that occur when legal rights are not observed (Eisner 1993: 224-225; Neff 1993: 185; Plant 1993: 110). The warrant licensing the claim that it is permissible to intervene with armed force in order to stop egregious violations of human rights rests on the backing of four propositions. The first proposition asserts that human rights are an international entitlement (D’Amato 1995: 148). Article 55(c) of the United Nations Charter requires member states to promote “universal respect for, and observance of, human rights” Over the past fifty years, the UN has developed a detailed list of inherent, inalienable rights of all human beings. The most significant legal formulation of these rights is in the so-called International Bill of Human Rights, the informal name given to The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (which was passed by a vote of the UN General Assembly in 1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (which were both opened for signature in 1966 and entered into force a decade later). The legal rules governing these rights are regarded as *jus cogens* – peremptory norms from which no derogation is permitted.

The second proposition maintains that governments committing grave violations of human rights forfeit their legitimacy. Although Article 2 (7) of the UN Charter prevents member states from interfering in the “domestic matters” of one another, the Charter’s legal protection does not extend to genocide, torture, and other horrific acts shocking to the human conscience. Governments involved in egregious human rights abuses betray the most basic obligations they have to their citizens. By not providing citizens with security they fail recognized standards of civilization and lose their political legitimacy. The domestic jurisdiction of illegitimate governments is not protected by international law (Tesón 1988: 15; Ellerman 1993: 348). Efforts by foreign states to defend the innocent against the actions of illegitimate governments is legally permissible

(Luban 1980: 164).
The third proposition declares that the international community has a legal responsibility to stop serious human rights violations. According to the International Court of Justice, there are some obligations that a state has "towards the international community as a whole" and all members of that community "have a legal interest in their protection" (*Case Concerning the Barcelona Traction, Light and Power Company, Ltd.* [Belgium v. Spain], I.C.J. Reports, 1970, para. 33). Advocates of humanitarian intervention maintain that the entitlement for protection against genocide, slavery, and the like give rise to legal obligations *erga omnes*. Any member of the international community has legal standing to call for a state to observe these obligations and to impose sanctions if wrongful acts continue. As the publicist Emeriche de Vattel put it, "any foreign power may rightfully give assistance to an oppressed people who asked for aid" (cited in Schweigman 1993: 95).

Finally, the fourth proposition submits that punitive sanctions by members of the international community against illegitimate governments are legally permissible if they meet certain performance criteria. Among the criteria typically mentioned are:
1. a serious violation of human rights;
2. the lack of any other alternative to stopping the violation;
3. international endorsement of the military intervention;
4. multilateral conduct of the intervention;
5. use of the minimum level of force needed to stop the violation; and
6. a limited duration for the intervention (Benjamin 1992-1993).

3. The Use of Metaphors in Rights-Based Appeals
What is problematic about rights-based appeals in statecraft the shift from the assertion that certain actions are legally permissible to the contention that they are morally obligatory. To make this shift the rhetor relies upon metaphorical reasoning. Although metaphors often are thought of as poetic devices used to enliven dull prose, they also shape the way we conceive of complex phenomena. "The essence of a metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson 1980: 5). Unlike analogies which compare things from the same domain of experience (e.g., "A war with Iraq will result in another Vietnam"), Vosniadou & Ortony (1989: 7) point out that metaphors involve "across-domain" rather than "within-domain" comparisons (e.g., "War is

like a disease"). By crossing categorical boundaries when depicting the unfamiliar (Kittay 1987: 19), metaphors highlight certain aspects of a phenomenon under investigation while concealing or misrepresenting other aspects.

The shift from a legal right to an inescapable moral duty to intervene against abhorrent acts of violence is attempted by using various hydraulic and organic metaphors. Like a raging flood or a wild fire, international humanitarian norms are said to be spreading across the political landscape, overwhelming everything in their path. National leaders have no choice but to accommodate these powerful forces which make the triumph of human rights a "*genuine historical inevitability*" (Brzezinski 1996: 166, emphasis in original).

Metaphors provide cognitive shortcuts that allow one to go beyond the information that is given (Shimko 1994: 662). As a rhetorical strategy, rights-based appeals to moral necessity begin by establishing that the horrible consequences of not stopping human rights abuses makes military intervention legally permissible. By playing upon metaphors of inescapable physical forces, the argument then shifts from the permissible to the obligatory. Intervention is required, not because of a categorical duty derived from features of the act that make it right independent of its consequences, but due to the need for national leaders to get in step the inexorable march of moral history.

To illustrate the problematic nature of this type of appeal to moral necessity, let us turn to the case of the 1989 United States intervention into Panama.

4. The Rhetorical Strategy of Rights-Based Appeals

At 1:00 A.M. on December 20, 1989, 22,000 U.S. troops supported by F-117A stealth attack aircraft invaded Panama in what President George Bush called Operation Just Cause. The purpose of the operation was to capture General Manuel Antonio Noriega, a military dictator who had gained control over Panama six years earlier. During his time in power, Noriega repressed opposition movements, manipulated elections, and ordered the murder of dissident political leaders. His ruthless behavior was overlooked by political leaders in the United States because he had worked for the Central Intelligence Agency and assisted Washington in its fight against communism in Central America. Between 1986 and 1987, however, Noriega's human rights abuses and his involvement in narcotics trafficking and money laundering with the Colombian Medellín drug cartel were brought to light by a series of Congressional inquiries, reports published in the *New York Times*, and independent criminal investigations presented to grand juries in Miami and Tampa, Florida. On April 8, 1988,

President Ronald Reagan issued Executive Order No. 12635, which imposed economic sanctions on Panama because Noriega's actions now were seen as an "extraordinary threat to the nation security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States."

Although the sanctions damaged the Panamanian economy, they did not weaken Noriega's grip on political power. As a result, Reagan's successor, George Bush, began providing covert support for Noriega's political opponents. But the support was equally ineffective. Neither the May 1989 elections in Panama nor an attempted coup five months later ended the dictatorship.

On Friday, December 15, Noriega announced that henceforth he would serve as Panama's "maximum leader" with enhanced power to crush domestic dissent. The next day, following the murder of an unarmed U.S. marine lieutenant by members of the Panama Defense Forces, the wounding of another American serviceman, and arrest and brutal interrogation of a U.S. naval officer and his wife, Bush decided to invade. When justifying his decision in an address to the nation on December 20, Bush asserted that "General Noriega's reckless threats and attacks on Americans in Panama created an imminent danger to the 35,000 American citizens in Panama." As president of the United States, he continued, "I have no higher obligation than to safeguard the lives of American citizens." While Bush's address to the American public was couched in the traditional language of protecting citizens abroad, speeches delivered by Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering to the United Nations Security Council on December 20, 1989 and by Luigi R. Einaudi to the Organization of American States (OAS) on December 22, 1989 extended the justification to include the moral necessity of protecting foreign nationals.**[i]**

Following the line of reasoning voiced by the president, Pickering began his speech by citing the "inherent right of self-defense under international law . . . in response to armed attacks by forces under the direction of Manuel Noriega." But after underscoring the importance of safeguarding American lives, he introduced another rationale for the intervention: Noriega and his "ruthless cabal repeatedly obstructed the will of the Panamanian people." Panamanians, he insisted, "have a right to be free." Referring to Noriega and his minions as "thugs" and "monsters," Pickering noted that the "whole world" has "denounced the violation of human rights" in Panama. For the United States, the issue was not merely guarding national security interests; the "sovereign will of the Panamanian people is what we are here defending." Pointing to a series of conditions that made the

intervention legally permissible, he concluded by stressing that the invasion occurred "only after exhausting the full range of available alternatives." Moreover, it was undertaken "in a manner designed to minimize casualties and damage," and designed with the goal of withdrawing "as quickly as possible."

With the intervention framed by Pickering in terms of a legally permissible response by the United States to a moral outrage, Ambassador Einaudi proceeded to explain why Washington faced a moral necessity that obliged it to act. He began his explanation by suggesting that "There are times in the life of men and of nations when history seems to take charge of events as to sweep all obstacles from its chosen path." At such times, he continued, "history appears to incarnate some great and irresistible principle." The world community was "once again living in historic times, a time when a great principle . . . [was] spreading across the world like wild fire." The principle articulated "the revolutionary idea that the people, not governments, are sovereign." Drawing a parallel to the fall of Erich Honecker in the German Democratic Republic, Gustav Husak in Czechoslovakia, and Todor Zhivkov in Bulgaria, he claimed it is a principle that has "acquired the force of historical necessity." If the OAS invoked the nonintervention rule in the case of Noriega, it would "find itself cast on the side of the dictators and the tyrants of this world," oppressors "en route to extinction."

Would this organization, he asked, be willing to forfeit the "moral authority which it enjoys throughout this hemisphere by challenging the just verdict that history had decreed upon Manuel Noriega?" Expressing the maxim that the only language that dictators understand is force, he asserted "You cannot reason with a dictator, and you cannot, alas, ask him to relinquish peacefully that which he has obtained through bloody and unspeakable means."

The "United States was forced to a path not of our choosing, but a path dictated by our national rights and responsibilities." Our action has been "welcomed overwhelmingly by the people of Panama," who along with others in the Western Hemisphere were "sick of stolen elections, sick of military dictatorships, sick of narco-strongmen, and sick of the likes of Manuel Noriega." By supporting the United States, Einaudi proclaimed the OAS would "put itself on the right side of history."

5. Conclusion

Throughout the history of the modern state system, appeals to moral necessity have been used by many political leaders to justify military interventions. Great

Britain, France, and Russia employed such appeals at various times during the nineteenth century. More recently, they were used by India when intervening in East Pakistan (1971), by Vietnam when moving against the Khmer Rouge (1978), and by Tanzania when removing Idi Amin from Uganda (1979). Moral appeals can be an effective tactic in foreign policy argumentation, swinging the weight of presumption in favor of military intervention. Of the various factors that influence the strength of an argument, many are concerned with emotions and highly-placed values. Not only do they evoke a visceral reaction in the hearer, they address the hearer's desire for certainty by being structurally simple and unambiguous (Sillince & Minors 1991).

As the U.S. intervention into Panama in 1989 suggests, appeals to moral necessity can also mask foreign policies driven by considerations of expediency rather than by a genuine sense of moral duty. Whereas Bush explained the intervention to his domestic constituency in the traditional vocabulary of power politics, Pickering and Einaudi defended it to external audiences in moral terms. Pickering presented the course of action as legally permissible given the human rights violations committed by Noriega. Einaudi then described it as necessitated given the relentless march of humanitarian law over the centuries. What began as a plea to the UN Security Council regarding the legality of the intervention evolved before the Organization of American States into a moral imperative.

In retrospect, the moral necessity conjured up by the Bush administration was an instrumental means for promoting realpolitik ends. The welfare of Panamanians under Noriega was not a motive for intervention independent of the effect that the intervention was thought to have in advancing U.S. security interests. The use of legal rights-based appeals to moral necessity in this case illuminates a larger issue in contemporary international relations. With the end of the Cold War, numerous calls have been issued for members of the international community to intercede where outrageous conduct shocks the conscience of humankind. But not everyone who heeds these calls will do so for noble motives. Some states will use the mask of moral necessity to hide egoistic security interests. While there may be a legal right to intervene in cases of egregious human rights violations, international law does not spell out a duty to intervene. Although the use of force may be permissible, it is also permissible to forego the use of force. Indeed, there may be times when it is morally right to forego military intervention even when it is legally permissible. As Molière reminds us, we are responsible not only for our actions, but also our inactions.

NOTES

i. All quotations from President Bush are from the Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents, December 25, 1989. All quotations from Ambassadors Pickering and Einaudi are from Panama: A Just Cause. United States Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs, Current Policy No. 120.

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ISSA Proceedings 1998 – Problematizing Standards Of

Argumentation To Students

1. The Problem

I teach undergraduate courses in Speech Communication in the United States in which I'm presumed to be able to grade students on their papers and on their classroom presentations based on how well they argue rather than what they argue. Yet I also live in a so-called postmodern age in which virtually all standards of rational argumentation have been called into question, particularly those emanating from white, heterosexual, Eurocentric males like myself.

Moreover, I've discovered that even those among my colleagues who've been trained as I have in principles of argumentation, informal logic, critical thinking and the like tend to apply those principles unevenly, inconsistently, particularly as regards the sorts of highly sensitive, highly controversial topics my students find most interesting. One potential source of inconsistency is bias. There is little reason to believe that we teachers of controversial subject matter are immune from the well documented influences of prejudices and wish-fulfillment beliefs on judgments of the validity of arguments (e.g., Hample, D., 1979; McGuire, 1960).

But another likely culprit is the principles themselves. What exactly is a false dichotomy or an inappropriate appeal to authority? When do circumstances mitigate what might otherwise be considered illogical? Does the press of time ever justify my decision to follow the crowd or be swayed by an *ad hominem*?

Designed as they are to apply to an array of context-sensitive situations, the various informal fallacies are inherently imprecise. These problems in judging the quality of students' arguments bear also on what we as teachers say and do in the classroom. At a recent conference on faculty advocacy in the classroom, a number of academics used the occasion to defend against charges that they had been using the classroom to promote one or another version of political correctness. To the contrary, said one Women's Studies professor, … some, perhaps much, of what my students take to be advocacy in the classroom in fact consists of critical questions about the empirical foundations of their political and social beliefs, or critical evaluation of the logical structure of their beliefs.… As evidence for my 'advocacy', students point out that most of the corrections I make as to fact or logic tend to be in a more liberal or 'politically correct' direction. [H]owever, it is not at all surprising that I might encounter more poorly founded opinions of the

conservative sort. When the opportunity arises, I do try to point out similar errors made by the 'politically (not quite) correct', but they tend to be fewer in number…." (Holland, 1996).

But are what Holland calls "errors" in the logic of her conservative students really a reflection of her own biases, thus providing unwitting evidence of the limits of objectivity?

2. A Proposal

The problems herein identified should not be news to the sophisticated readership of these ISSR proceedings. Yet I suspect that many of us (most of us?) continue to assure our students that we will be judging their essays and class presentation on how well they support a position, not on what position they take. Similarly, we frequently assure students that, on matters of a controversial nature, we will will teach them how to think, not what to think. These assurances may well be scandalous: a violation of "truth-in-advertising" principles which we who teach argumentation, informal logic, and the like, insist that others adhere to.

Of course, one could still maintain (as I do with my classes) that it is still possible for students and teacher to arrive together at reasoned and reasonable contextual judgments of better and worse arguments. (BH Smith, Ch. 1) But even this qualified claim implicitly problematizes the blanket assurance that we teachers will be judging students' work based on how they argue rather than what they argue. Why "contextual" judgments? In what sense "reasonable"? Why only judgments of "better" and "worse"? With these questions I am led to the central proposition of this paper.

I propose that we problematize our evaluations of the quality of students' argumentation with our students. I suggest this, not out of fear that we may be hauled into court for truth-in-advertising violations, but because it is an excellent way to provoke engaged thought by students about argumentation.

3. The Context

The foregoing is part of a larger project on what I call "Teaching the Pedagogies." (Simons) For some years now I've been encouraging my students to subject my use of a video in the classroom to rhetorical scrutiny. Then, in recent years, I've assigned them the task of systematically analyzing faculty rhetoric in one of their classes, raising with them a wide range of issues having to do with faculty advocacy in the classroom. I've also engaged them in dialogue with respect to issues specific to my own teaching, attempting thereby to illustrate the sense in

which one might be able to arrive communally at prudential judgments of better or worse in the absence of formulaic rules of argumentation.

The project I call "Teaching the Pedagogies" began for me at a conference on political communication for academics like myself back in 1984. Shown at the conference was *Life and Liberty for Those Who Obey*, a hard-hitting critique of the religious right at the time, complete with damning footage of leading ministers, indoctrination campaigns, censorship campaigns, a book-burning ceremony, and a behind-the-scenes look at the workings of political operatives trying to promote conservative candidates. I was much moved by the video, and I resolved immediately to get a copy and show it to my undergraduate classes in persuasion. But how should I teach the video? Should I let my students know that the video had reinforced my disdain for the religious right or should I conceal my own opinions? I decided to take up these matters with my fellow conferees.

The question of how to teach the video evoked a torrent of controversy. "A professor's job is to educate, not advocate," shouted one professor. "A professor's job is to profess," shouted another. Opinions in the group also differed as to what my profession of belief should be. "Use the video to expose the immoral rhetoric of the religious right," said a liberal professor. "Criticize the video, not the religious right," said a conservative. "While you're at it," he said, "do a hatchet job on the video's producer for putting out such a propagandistic film."

The conferees' response to my question left me in a state of initial confusion. It appeared that equally good (and bad) arguments good be made for such promotive strategies as outright advocacy and guided discussion and for such seemingly neutral but potentially deceptive strategies as conducting an evenhanded discussion and presenting in lecture form the arguments for viewing the religious right as immoral and the arguments for viewing the video's depiction of the religious right as immoral.

One thing seemed clear, however: that each of these pedagogical alternatives had ideological implications. Each, then, could be usefully understood as a rhetorical strategy. With this as a guiding insight, yet another pedagogical alternative suggested itself to me: ask the students how they, given my biases, would teach the film were they in my place. Then use the question as the springboard for a discussion of pedagogical alternatives as rhetorical strategies. This is what I mean by teaching the pedagogies.

Over the course of many years I've engaged in this kind of pedagogical talk about

pedagogical talk with a great many students. Typically they come up with a list of promotive and neutralizing strategies similar to those proposed at the conferences of faculty members, and for much the same set of reasons. Yet, the discussion is anything but routine. It moves among multiple levels of abstraction. In the process I both "profess" and lead a class discussion, occasionally playing devil's advocate to stimulate further controversy, and occasionally pausing to analyze the premises students have brought to bear upon the controversy. I generally conclude by answering my own question, proposing that the best answer to the question is the question itself. This inevitably prompts students to raise still other questions:

Isn't this solution also a compromise of sorts, a compromise between telling it like you think it is and discussing competing viewpoints?

Yes, I answer, but it also invites your reflection on these alternatives, and that changes them and you. That is, they are no longer simply natural ways of teaching and learning. And you have to think about what you want from this class.

But aren't you biasing the discussion by letting us know your viewpoint? Mightn't students who take a different position be intimidated by you, particularly since you also give the grades in the course?

Yes, I admit, that's a continuing problem, but can you think of a better alternative? If not, perhaps we have here an example of the possibility for reasoned and reasonable judgments of better and worse, in the absence of formulaic rules of argument. The discussion continues….

This concludes the formal part of my paper. In what follows, I append a number of handouts to my persuasion classes covering issues of advocacy in the classroom generally as well as issues specifically germane to my own classroom. These illustrate the approach I have been proposing in this paper.

Appendix A: *The Written Assignment in "Persuasion" Persuasion in the Classroom*

Do your instructors persuade or do they merely inform or educate? Can professors promote a viewpoint on a controversial issue even when they are presenting an informative lecture or conducting an even-handed discussion? Is such "propagandizing" always unethical or is it sometimes legitimate? How should professors deal with controversial subject matter in class?

Analyze the way one of your instructors handled controversial material in class this semester. Perhaps identify patterns of persuasion (or non-persuasion) that recurred over the course of the semester. Or do a detailed case study of one

particularly interesting episode in class. Feel free to focus on my own classroom.

Appendix B: *Issues of Persuasion in the University Classroom*

Should educators take and defend positions on controversial issues in their university classrooms? If so, when, how, under what conditions, etc.? Are professors obligated to be up front about their advocacy? Are they obligated to prepare the ground for their advocacy by contextualizing it historically and dialectically (Brand)? Must their advocacy be relevant to the announced subject matter of their classroom? Are they obligated to represent opposing positions fairly and to engage the strongest arguments of the opposition, not just the weakest arguments? Is there a difference between advocating in the classroom (okay) and proselytizing in the classroom (not okay)?

In advocating, are professors more justified in defending minority voices over majority voices (J.S. Mill)? Voices of the marginalized or the oppressed (e.g., women, African-Americans, Eastern cultures, socialism) over historically dominant voices (e.g., white males, Western culture, capitalism)? Is such advocacy justified as a kind of academic "affirmative action" (Brod): to compensate for the advantages accruing to the dominant voices outside the university classroom? If so, are all marginalized or oppressed voices equally worthy of being defended in the university classroom? If not, what should be the bases for inclusion and exclusion?

On the other hand, is advocacy in the university classroom potentially dangerous? Given that it is coupled with the professor's right to dispense grades (and other rewards and punishments), is it potentially coercive? When used to "liberate" students from their biases, is it unduly patronizing? And does it really achieve its goals?

Thus, should university professors refrain from taking and defending positions in the classroom? Should they educate and not advocate? Should they inform and not persuade? Should they teach students how to think but not tell them what to think? Should it be enough for professors to contextualize controversies, present all sides in balanced fashion, and conduct evenhanded discussions of the issues with their class?

But is academic neutrality possible, let alone desirable? Aren't most university classrooms either "political" or "already politicized" (Moglen)? Don't the very concepts of imparting information and teaching how to think presuppose a model of objectivity that is itself highly controversial? Isn't it possible to do a lot of

persuading (and even proselytizing) in the guise of objectivity? In teaching "rules" of reasoning and "rules" of evidence, for example, can professors be ideology-free? Moreover, on controversial issues, isn't the stance of neutrality itself a position (a position of no position) and potentially an unethical position?

Don't students pay their professors (indirectly) to do more than ask questions and impart information? Shouldn't they provide models of reasoned advocacy and responsible activism?

Given the problems that even the most well-meaning instructors are likely to confront in handling controversial issues within their single-instructor classrooms, should universities do more to expose students to conflicts among faculty, perhaps in co-taught classes (Graff). In addition to "teaching the conflicts" (Graff), should instructors be "teaching the pedagogies": i.e., increasing student awareness of pedagogical issues in treatments of controversy (Simons)?

Appendix C: *Problems of Faculty Advocacy in my Own Classroom*

As you prepare for your assignment on advocacy in the college classroom, you might wish to ponder the ethics or appropriateness of some of the things I've said and done as a classroom instructor.

A. In my classes I generally tell students that I will grade them on how they support a position, not on what position they take. Yet this claim is in many ways problematic.

1. The sorts of "rules" of argument and evidence found in our text are highly imprecise. For example, the text instructs you to avoid inappropriate appeals to authority, but is unclear as to when such appeals are inappropriate.

2. What is inappropriate in one context may be appropriate in another. For example, scientists claim to reject all arguments from authority. What "counts" is what the research reveals about a phenomenon, not what some alleged expert says about it. But in the courtroom, expert opinion is often invoked by both sides in a case. And, although textbooks on argumentation generally treat appeals to "what most people think" as fallacious, in a message-dense society, we often have little choice but to rely on evidence of this kind.

3. Personal narratives are often quite persuasive; yet stories of this kind often overwhelm reason by appeals to emotion. Oftentimes, the story is about an extreme case, not a typical case. And the story gives us information about just one case, even though the generalization it purports to support is intended to apply to a wide range of cases. Yet I confess that I am often moved in my grading of speeches or essays by well told narratives.

4. Such “rules” of argument and evidence as are found in argumentation textbooks were developed over the centuries by philosophers, rhetoricians, and legal scholars, nearly all of whom were white males. Now many feminists are challenging these principles, claiming for example that women think differently from men, and that their ways of thinking (e.g., based on personal experience more than abstract logic) deserve at least equal respect. Similarly Afrocentrists frequently claim that African cultures promulgated a kind of nonlinear reasoning that is preferable to Western linear reasoning. Multiculturalists often extend this line of argument to suggest that rules of argument and evidence are culture-specific, and that white, male Eurocentric thinking shouldn’t be imposed on other cultures. I continue to grade students based on the principles of argumentation found in argumentation textbooks, and I urge them on my students. Is this an unfair imposition of authority on my part?
5. It’s fashionable these days for scholars to claim that all so-called knowledge is mere belief; that there is no objective way to evaluate an argument; that all an argument does is reveal a particular angle of view, or perspective, of the arguer. I sometimes tell my students that such arguments are self-refuting and hence self-defeating, but they could as well use these same arguments on me. Still, I insist that we as a class can often agree on what constitutes a worse or a better argument. I try to demonstrate this in my classes.
6. A particularly vexing form of controversy involves problems of incommensurability. This occurs when each side argues from premises that the other rejects; neither side in the “feminist logic” controversy, for example, is able to engage the other on neutral ground. Am I as a teacher in a position to evaluate their arguments?
7. In my “Race and Racism” classes, I’ve sometimes admitted to difficulties in grading quality of argumentation. I hereby confess that I often have similar difficulties in our Persuasion class.

B. Classroom Practices
1. In our discussion of the video about the religious right in America, I pointed out some of the issues I faced in handling controversial issues of this kind in the classroom. E.g., Should I focus our discussion on the film as a form of propagandistic rhetoric or on the religious right’s propagandistic rhetoric? Or both? On whatever the class wishes to discuss? On the least popular position? Or my own concerns? With a film such as this, can (and should) there be such a thing as an evenhanded discussion?

2. Questions of this kind present themselves to me in a variety of ways. I'm aware that I can influence your thinking (a) by the books I assign, (b) by the tasks I assign, (c) by what I say in lectures and what I talk about, etc.
a. In S.C. 082 I've spent much more time on material glorifying Martin Luther King than on material glorifying Malcolm X.
b. In S.C. 082, students read a book on race and racism issues by Dinesh D'Souza, a conservative scholar whom even other conservatives (e.g., G. Loury) have charged with promoting racist beliefs.
c. In S.C. 082, I assigned an essay on "The Power Tactics of Jesus Christ." The author, psychologist Jay Haley, presented Christ as a revolutionary who was not above using deception to gain his ends.
Two students strongly objected to the essay.
3. The course on Campaigns and Movements (SC 082) that I teach is officially designated as a Race and Racism course. One of its purposes is help overcome racism. Does Temple University's decision to require such courses of all undergraduates constitute an implicit endorsement of at least some advocacy (and even proselytizing) in the classroom?

Appendix D: *Letter on "Appeals to God and Patriotism in Political Campaign Films; Followup Discussion*
"The campaign films are designed for people who place their vote according to matters of heart over matters of mind."
Student:
"He [Reagan] showed so many things in his campaign ad that represented freedom. For example, he must have shown the flag 29+ times. This allowed me to just remember what America is all about."
Student:
The following is a response to criticisms of my advocacy in the persuasion classroom. What do you think?
In the "Classroom Advocacy" papers, a few of you took me to task for my remarks on the Reagan film's use of appeals to God and patriotism as reasons for voting for Reagan. One student commented that I'd unfairly put down religion on other occasions in class. Another said, "Educators do not have the right to chastise their students on their beliefs in God or their country."
My thanks to these students for their critical comments. God and country are indeed sensitive topics. If I've crossed the line in comments on the Reagan film or in other treatments of religion in class, I'm sorry.

That having been said, I want to defend my remarks on the appeals to God and patriotism in the Reagan film.

Earlier this semester I referenced Petty and Cacioppo's distinction between central and peripheral processing of persuasive messages. The peripheral route is the knee-jerk route; in a message-dense society, we frequently respond unthinkingly to persuasive appeals like those of God and country. As some theorists put it, we use "cognitive shorthands." Thus, we don't ask many questions about what we've seen or heard (as in central processing).

There's a lot of evidence that politicians often get elected on the basis of voters' peripheral processing. I think that's a shame. Whom we elect to high office is too important for Americans to choose based on cognitive shorthands – on hearts rather than minds.

Re the Reagan film's repeated appeals to God and pride in country, I used an analogy to Pavlov's dogs, learning to salivate to a bell rather than to the food powder with which it had been previously been associated. My point was (and remains) that symbols like the American flag and references to God come to evoke conditioned responses. Then, when Reagan is linked to these positive stimuli, their positive associations rub off. Some of you will say that the foregoing comments are further evidence that I'm unrepentant in chastizing my students for their beliefs in God and country. On this issue, I want to respond carefully. I believe one of my jobs is to help you to think critically. But that doesn't mean that I have a right in a persuasion classroom to put down all beliefs in God and patriotism. That's not in my job specifications.

Nor would I want to put down beliefs in God and country. I've seen three ministers through to a Ph.D. degree and am supervising a fourth. These people have well thought ideas about God and religion. They have also interpreted their calling and their faith into missions of healing. When these (and many other) people speak of their belief in God as the inspiration for their service to others, I have nothing but admiration for them and respect for their beliefs.

My criticism of Persuasion students for peripheral processing of God appeals in the Reagan film was by no means intended as a general put-down of beliefs in God or in religion more generally. Campaign films in general are not a message form in which one can easily determine the sincerity or authenticity of a political candidate's religious beliefs. Still less are viewers in a position to evaluate their contents.

As for appeals to patriotism, I would again urge critical thinking. What kind of

America do you want to be proud of? Earlier this semester I observed that Americans have historically been influenced by competing ideologies: one emphasizing individualism and the pursuit of economic self-interest; the other emphasizing equality and communal interests. Some critics of patriotism argue that it causes people to be unconcerned about problems elsewhere in the world. Others interpret American patriotism as a call for precisely this kind of worldly concern. Yet another way of expressing what America is all about is to point to the First Amendment, which makes possible, through its guarantees of free speech and free assembly, such substantive debates as I outlined above. Ironically, even the burning of the American flag has been interpreted by the U.S. Supreme Court as a kind of "speech" protected by the First Amendment. Of course many Americans believe flag-burning to be unpatriotic.

In my comments on the Reagan film, I believe I also drew a comparison with Nazi Germany's appeals to God and country, including the Nazi's use of the "Sig Heil" salute. Was this comparison invalid? Was it an instance of the very sort of knee-jerk rhetoric I was complaining about in class? Possibly. There are huge differences between the propaganda apparatus used in Nazi Germany to compel allegiance to Hitler and the techniques of persuasion used by American politicians to get elected. Still, there are some underlying similarities that deserve our attention.

One thing I regret is that I was a lot harder on the Reagan film than on the Clinton film. I did this because so many of you seemed to have been taken in by the Reagan film's superbly crafted appeals to God and patriotism.

But the Clinton film deserved critical scrutiny as well. Some of you said in your papers that you especially liked Clinton's kind remarks about Republican Bob Dole, as well as Clinton's expressed wish that the campaign would focus on issues and not stoop to personal attack. A more critical reading of these remarks, given what we know about Clinton's image problems, is that he was trying to frame the upcoming contest to his own advantage by taking the high road.

Others of you said that you were moved by what Hillary and her mother had to say about Bill. Interestingly, Clinton has expressed his admiration for Reagan's campaign tactics. Clinton's warm and fuzzy displays of family togetherness and family values were right out of Ronald Reagan's campaign book. We should no more have voted for Clinton based on these emotional appeals than we might have for Reagan on the basis of his appeals to God and patriotism.

Finally, there's the question of whether I've been overly critical of religion or of religious rhetoric at other times during the semester. One student cited my

showing of the film, “Life and Liberty for Those Who Obey,” put out by People for the American Way. Recall that I used the film to introduce the final paper assignment on advocacy by teachers in the classroom. How, I asked, should I have “taught” this film? Use it to criticize the rhetoric of the religious right? Use it to expose the rhetoric of the film? Conduct an evenhanded discussion? etc.

Here’s my secret: I decided after pondering this question with my colleagues that the best answer to this question was the question itself. That is, I now think that the best solution to the dilemmas associated with how to teach the film is to ask my students how I should teach the film, and then encourage further thought about the rhetoric of the teacher in the classroom. I’ve tried to do that in this class. See my essay on this (on Reserve).

Well, there you have it: Herb Simons not only advocating in the classroom, but committing himself in writing.

I’d encourage you to respond to this essay, either in writing or in a visit to my office. The same holds true for other issues we discussed towards the end of the semester. For example, is my essay evidence of a white, male, or Eurocentric way of thinking? If so, should you think any the less of it for that? Is my advocacy in this essay to you appropriate or inappropriate? Can you “grade” my essay based on how I think, independent of what I think? Keep in touch; otherwise I’ll miss you. You’ve been a wonderful class!

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