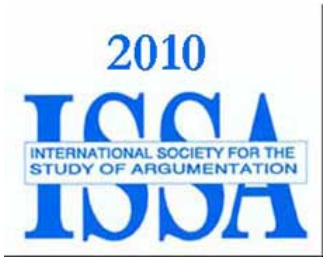
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – The Challenge Of Studying Argumentation In Context



1. Introduction

Recent research has shown increasing interest in contextualised argumentation, because, as some authors remark, argumentation is always a context-bound communicative activity (van Eemeren et al. 2009). A number of signs – such as, for example, the establishment of an international doctoral program on argumentation practices in different contexts (Argupolis, www.argupolis.net) – prove the increasing interest for the study of contextualised argumentation within the community of argumentation scholars. At the same time, the importance of the argumentative perspective is also recognised in a number of other disciplines, which become more and more open to interdisciplinary cross-fertilisation (see for example Muller Mirza and Perret-Clermont 2009 about argumentation in science education and learning). We could summarise the situation as a progressive convergence of interests: the interest of argumentation theorists for the study of context and the interest for argumentation arisen in a number of contexts traditionally tackled by various other disciplinary perspectives.

The general view at the basis of the study of contextualised argumentation is that argumentation is a form of communicative interaction by means of which social realities – institutions, groups and relationships – are constructed and managed. People develop argumentation in numerous purposeful activities: to make sound and well-thought decisions, to critically found their opinions, to persuade other people of the validity of their own proposals and to evaluate others' proposals. These activities are bound to the contexts in which they take place and are significantly determined by these contexts; thus argumentation too, as the bearing structure of these activities, moulds its strategies in connection with these very different contexts: from families and schools to social and political institutions; from political deliberations to media discourse and journalism; and from social and ethical debates to the economic and financial sphere.

In the framework of this increasing interest, it is worth reflecting on what study argumentation in context means at the theoretical and methodological levels. In this paper, I shall tackle this problem by elaborating on my research in the context of dispute mediation (Greco Morasso 2011). I shall address the results emerged from this work at the level of meta-reflection, trying to show what particular challenges await scholars on argumentation presently.

The paper is organized as follows. I shall first outline the origin of the present research, namely the framework in which this reflection has originated (section 2). Then I shall focus on some specific challenges that await argumentation scholars considering contextualised argumentation (section 3).

2. Argumentation in context: dispute mediation a case in point

The reflections I shall present in this paper largely stem from my involvement in a study on contextualised argumentation about *argumentation in dispute mediation*. Beside characterizing the role that argumentation plays in dispute mediation (Greco Morasso 2011), this research project constituted the opportunity to reflect more in general on what studying argumentation in context means at the theoretical and methodological levels.

In the original research project, I have been focusing on how argumentation helps fulfil the pragmatic goals of mediation. It was already ascertained that argumentation is to some degree present in dispute mediation (van Eemeren et al. 2003, Jacobs 2002, Jacobs and Aakhus 2002a and 2002b, Aakhus 2003, van Eemeren 2010, Walton and Godden 2005, Walton and Lodder 2005). Yet how argumentation is established in this process of conflict resolution and what the mediator's role is in this process still remained unexplained. In particular, the "problem" that set my research project into motion concerned the *change in attitude* that parties experience in a successful mediation process and that brings them to become co-arguers, i.e. rational interlocutors jointly engaged in an argumentative discussion. In fact, when parties enter their first mediation session, they are normally involved in a conflict that they cannot manage by themselves any more. This is typical of mediation (van Eemeren 2010). However, the very nature of mediation implies that parties should make their own decision on their problem, by discussing about it. In this sense, as it clearly emerges when looking at empirical data, parties who have a good mediation process in the end have been able to conduct a fruitful argumentative discussion by themselves. How can this change in attitude – from disputants to co-arguers – happen? How are the

parties able to do it? And what is the mediator's role in triggering this change in attitude?

Such were the questions that guided my interest in argumentation in dispute mediation (Greco Morasso 2011). In this paper, I shall not focus on the specific results about the process of mediation. Rather, this research project will constitute a basis to reflect more in general on the study of argumentation in context. In the next section, I will extrapolate from my personal research experience four main challenges which I believe are to be faced by all scholars interested in argumentation in context.

3. Argumentation in context: current challenges

In this section, I shall turn to discuss four aspects that I derive from reflection on the study of contextualised argumentation carried on in the above-delineated framework (see section 2). I present these aspects as four challenges that argumentation scholars need to face, namely: (3.1) Defining context as a theoretical problem; (3.2) Reconstructing the features of the *specific context* taken into account in the argumentative analysis; (3.3) Being open to interdisciplinarity and (3.4) Identifying prominent features of argumentation in specific contexts.

Some research about what studying argumentation in context means has been already done (see van Eemeren 2010), but it is fair to say that there is still a lot of work expected to go deeper in the study of argumentation in context. By eliciting these four aspects, I do not claim to present a consistent and exhaustive theoretical picture about the directions of research which can be undertaken to specify the theoretical relations between argumentation and context. Rather I would like to open the discussion on some issues which have emerged as general issues relevant to the analysis of argumentation in context.

3.1. Defining context as a theoretical problem

A first aspect that emerges when considering argumentation in context is that the notion of *context* itself is still in need of accurate analysis; we still need to highlight how context influences and is influenced by argumentative interactions. The challenge of defining context is certainly a first necessary presupposition to study argumentation in context.

In my opinion, Rigotti and Rocci (2006) have proposed an account of

communication context that is particularly apt to be adopted as a working hypothesis to be further developed in studies on contextualised argumentation. I report their graphical overview presentation of the model in Figure 1.

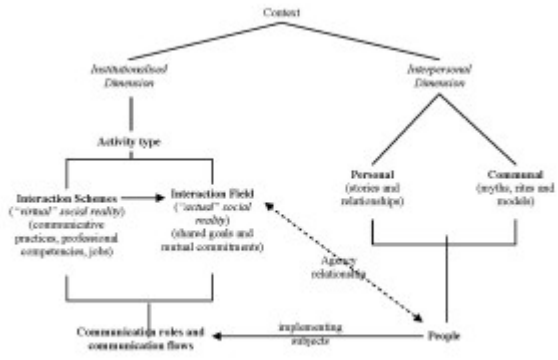


Figure 1: A model of communication context (Rigotti and Rocci 2006)

As the authors put it, this account elaborates on the notion of *activity type* (in terms of van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2005) and expands it in two important ways. In what follows, I shall mention these two extensions, while not considering the whole model in detail; a complete presentation is to be found in Rigotti and Rocci (2006).

First, the concept of activity type is specified into two constituents: the *interaction scheme* and the *interaction field*.

Interaction schemes are defined as "culturally shared 'recipes' for interaction congruent with more or less broad classes of joint goals and involving scheme-roles presupposing generic requirements. *Deliberation, negotiation, advisory, problem-solving, adjudication, mediation, teaching* are fairly broad interaction schemes; while more specific interaction schemes may correspond to proper 'jobs'" (ibid., p. 173)". An interaction scheme like mediation may be implemented in a series of *interaction fields*. Albeit the fundamental features of the interaction scheme remain the same throughout its application possibilities, the interaction field contributes to the definition of the actual communication context. In fact, while interaction schemes are virtual competences, interaction fields are pieces of social reality. Interaction schemes cannot but be implemented in different interaction fields; thus we do not have, in practice, the experience of the interaction scheme of "debate" but we know what a "TV debate" or a "parliament debate" is in a specific national and cultural context and at a specific point in time**[i]**. If we consider the context of dispute mediation as an example, several

important differences in its actual implementation depend on the interaction field to which mediation is applied. In this respect, commercial mediation is quite different from, say, family mediation. Thus, a good commercial mediator may prefer not to work with family disputes and vice versa. However, some of the features of mediation are interaction field-invariant: the presence of a third neutral intervenor, the requirement that the decision about the conflict will be made by the disputants rather than imposed by some external authority, etc. are features of this kind. Therefore, it seems appropriate to distinguish between interaction field and interaction scheme to provide a precise account of the context of an argumentative discussion like the one that may arise in mediation. Both dimensions have an influence on the arguers' strategic manoeuvring (Greco Morasso 2011) but the constraints that they impose may be different.

Second, Rigotti and Rocci's reconstruction also highlights that the institutional dimension is not the only relevant aspect to describe a communication context; the *human beings* who actually cover the different institutional roles make a difference for the possibilities of the arguers' strategic manoeuvring. Certainly, the people who "make" the different activity types are part of those activity types. However, one should not forget that a person may take part in an activity type assuming a certain role – like for example being a mediator – which however does not completely overlap with a full account of her. Human beings precede and overcome their roles, because they have desires, interests and goals that exceed what is expected by the institutionalised context in which they operate. The only partial overlapping between a person's goal and a role's goal explains, in some circumstances, conflicts of interests and personal behaviours which are not aligned with the goal of a certain activity type. For this reason, Rigotti and Rocci (2006) propose to define the relation between a human being and his role(s) in terms of an *agency relationship*. This concept, which derives from research in economics, can explain the non-alignment of individual and institutional goals; it allows for the consideration of the individual's whole set of goals and desires (see Eisenhardt 1989 for an introduction; for some specific applications to argumentation, see Goodwin 2010).

According to Rigotti and Rocci (ibid., pp. 174-175), individuals are interconnected by two types of relations which complement their institutional engagements in roles and communicative flows. The former relation concerns interpersonal relationships between the individuals, while the latter concerns the link of

individuals to the community, i.e. their cultural identities. Both types of relation are to be taken into account in mediation. At the interpersonal level, the individuals' stories as well as their representations of their relationship are to be taken into account. For example, when mediators enter a conflict, they have to be aware and respectful of many delicate facets of interpersonal rapports – think, for instance, about a family conflict, or to a conflict in a classroom. Moreover, the *cultural* context, including the individuals' common identities, experiences and stories also influences the possible proceeding of mediation. In view of these considerations, the interpersonal dimension is certainly to be included in the definition of a notion of context viable for the study of contextualised argumentation.

3.2. Reconstructing the features of the specific context taken into account in the argumentative analysis

The analysis of the notion of *context* is certainly not sufficient. Scholars who deal with argumentation in context must take into account the specific features defining the considered context, namely the precise activity type that is relevant to a given argumentative analysis. In fact, in order to understand what specific constraints and opportunities are available to the arguer, it is necessary to take into account the specific context of argumentation (van Eemeren 2010).

In this relation a methodological premise is necessary, for which I am indebted to Marcelo Dascal**[ii]**. This author observes that, context is, *per se*, an infinite concept, and you cannot tell what is relevant to the interpretation of a certain communicative action in advance. Contextual details that are prima facie irrelevant to the context of a certain communicative interaction can turn out to be fundamental to explain some aspects of this latter. Contrarily, in some cases, very clear and prominent aspects of a certain institutional context may be unimportant for the interpretation of a communicative interaction taking place within it – because, as said above, the arguers' freedom always exceeds the constraints of the expected activity types. Methodologically speaking, thus, the interpretation of any text and the choice of what its relevant context is should be certainly done by starting from the text itself.

I would like to add, however, that in the case of contexts that are to some extent institutionalised, such as the legal context, the financial context, and also practices such as teaching, doctor-patient consultation, dispute mediation and many others, starting a textual analysis without first having a clear picture of the

main characteristics of the concerned context or practice would be unwise. To quote a very blunt example, knowing that mediators are expected to be neutral third parties is important to understand their somewhat reluctant behaviour during the argumentative discussion (see the definition of the mediator's role in van Eemeren et al. 1993 and Jacobs 2002). The same behaviour would seem incomprehensibly reticent to an analyst who were not familiar with this context. Even more clearly, in order to study argumentation in takeover proposals in the financial market, one must have a clear picture of what a takeover proposal is, which steps this process requires; and one must first acknowledge the surprisingly high number of communicative and argumentative activities embedded in this type of financial operation (Palmieri, this volume). It would be very difficult even to find out argumentation without a previous picture of the takeover proposal as a type of communication context.

Having clarified this methodological premise, it is now important to specify why understanding the specific features of a certain context is crucial for argumentation. In general, as van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004) put it, specific knowledge of the context where the argumentative interaction takes place is relevant to the *analytical reconstruction* of argumentation, achieved thanks to an *analytic overview* of the critical discussion, which helps bring to light "which points are at dispute, which parties are involved in the difference of opinion, what their procedural and material premises are, which argumentation is put forward by each of the parties, how their discourses are organised, and how each individual argument is connected with the standpoint that it is supposed to justify or refute" (ibid., p. 118). Context is relevant to the production of an analytic overview because it often sets up expectations and conventions which may justify a specific reconstruction. Knowledge of the specific context, thus, in terms of institutionalised and interpersonal relations, becomes a source for an accurate analytical reconstruction and also, we could add, for the evaluation of the argumentative discourse (Arcidiacono et al. 2009).

More specifically, numerous important relations between an accurate reconstruction of context and the argumentative analysis may be listed. Here, I would like to stress three fundamental aspects in particular.

First, it is necessary to consider context in order to provide a reliable interpretation of texts; context helps disambiguate terms and expressions and understand their meaning (Dascal 2003, 11ff). Frequently, knowledge of context

is extremely relevant to understand whether a given utterance is part of an argumentative discussion or not (Arcidiacono et al. 2009).

Second, analysts have to consider the context of an argumentative discussion if they want to evaluate whether the selection (or, respectively, the exclusion) of the debatable issues operated by the participants to the argumentative discussion is sound or not. It is clear that not every issue is appropriate to every context. Limitations can be due to constraints based either on the institutionalised or on the interpersonal dimension of context. In order to illustrate how the institutionalised dimension of context may impose constraints on the choice of issues, I will present an example from the process of dispute mediation. At the beginning of the process, the mediator looks for the roots of the parties' disagreement. He then guides the disputants in the exploration of their points of disagreement and differences of opinion that have made the conflict develop (Greco Morasso 2008). However, once identified these issues on which originally the disagreement was placed – for example, an unbalanced workload on one of two business partners; or a misunderstanding in the interpretation of an adoption agreement – the mediator does not allow the parties to continue discussing their responsibilities and faults. Assessing the individuals' responsibilities, in fact, would be a typical issue for a court trial, but it is not appropriate in a mediation process. Similarly, there is no room in mediation for the reconstruction of the deep conscious and unconscious motivations of the parties' actions – that would be an issue for a therapist, not for a mediator (Greco Morasso 2011).

So, after having brought the original issue of disagreement to the surface, what the mediator does is to shift the discussion from the disagreement to the possible options for its resolution. Possible conflict resolution *options* are typical issues admitted in the process of mediation, which is institutionally oriented to the resolution of the parties' conflict. Greco Morasso (2011) analyses a conflict in a university context originated from a harassment complaint advanced by a student against her professor and mentor. Now, provided that the episode originating this complaint was more a misunderstanding than a serious offence, the reasons of that misunderstanding and the parties' respective faults are *not* investigated during the mediation process. The mediator invites the parties to discuss about how they can *continue their academic relationship* in the future without being the victims of further misunderstandings. This is a typical constraint on the choice of debatable issues that is due to the institutionalised dimension of conflict and,

more precisely, to the *interaction scheme* of mediation.

Constraints over the choice of issues can derive from the interpersonal dimension too. A family, for example, may allow more or less room to the argumentative discussion; some issues may be unquestionable (Arcidiacono et al. 2009). Other forms of interpersonal relationships, like the relation between friends, or a religious community, may equally allow more or less freedom to discuss or limit the issues that can be debated.

A third point has been recently highlighted, in particular, in the research stream bound to the Argumentum Model of Topics (henceforth: AMT, see Rigotti 2006, 2009; Rigotti and Greco Morasso 2010). There is an inherently contextual dimension of arguments; thus, scholars studying argumentation in context must carefully consider how the general contextual framework of an argumentative discussion affects the actual argumentative moves put forward by the co-arguers. In particular, a method which has proven proficuous is to work at the level of reconstruction of explicit and implicit premises of single argumentative moves and see how much of these premises depend on context.

According to the AMT perspective, roughly speaking, each argument is based on an argument scheme in which one component is based on an abstract inferential connection (maxim), while another component is anchored in the *material* dimension of context, culture, etc (Rigotti and Greco Morasso 2010). Context, thus, is not just the blurred sphere in which argumentation is taking place. It has an effect on the premises of specific argumentative moves.

In dispute mediation, for example, context-bound premises like “we are friends”, “our business has a good bottom line” or “we want to continue our relationship” are very common in arguments that the parties advance about the opportunity to settle their conflict. The following example, taken from Greco Morasso (2011) and analysed below according to the AMT, shows how these contextual premises are part of the argument itself. Let us introduce the example first. It is a part of a mediation session in the context of a business relation in which a problem is occurred. In this case, as it emerges precisely in the following passage (Example 1), the business partners are friends:

The analysis of this extract according to the AMT is proposed in Figure 2. I shall not go into great detail in the discussion of the AMT now (see Rigotti and Greco

Morasso 2009 for a detailed presentation of the model). I shall rather focus on how the context affects the actual argumentation.

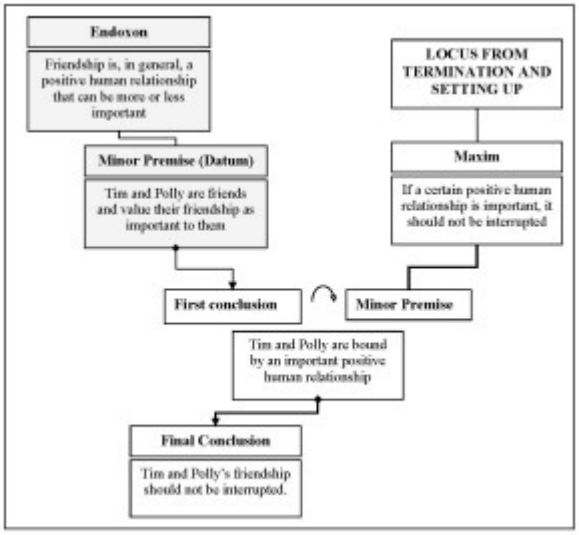


Figure 2: AMT analysis of Example 1

If we look at the premises on the left, represented in the grey textboxes (Endoxon and Datum), their *contextual nature* is quite evident. The endoxon represents a general assumption about the value of friendship, which is largely accepted, but still is cultural in nature (we could imagine cultural contexts in which such an assumption would have less hold). The Datum concerns some factual information about Tim and Polly's friendship: they value their friendship as important, at least to a certain extent, as it emerges from the discussion reported in Example (1). This is something bound to the close actual context of the parties' interpersonal relationship.

Taken together, Endoxon and Datum show how much the context of the parties' institutionalised and interpersonal relationship is relevant to arrive to the conclusion that it is worth solving the conflict. Indirectly, they also prove how much context affects the single argumentations put forward during an argumentative discussion. Knowing the context, thus, is necessary even to reconstruct the inner structure of the arguments advanced during the argumentative discussion. Conversely, distinguishing premises which are drawn from context is a challenge to be met in order to give a full account of how a specific communication context affects actual argumentative moves.

3.3. Being open to interdisciplinarity

In research truly focused on argumentation in context, the reconstruction of the specific features of the considered context calls for interdisciplinary integrations.

Interdisciplinarity is required in order to grasp the complexity of the considered context and to arrive to a reliable analytical reconstruction of argumentation. To stick to the example of dispute mediation, in order to reconstruct how this practice is structured, it is wise to rely on the different disciplines that have approaches this topic, including conflict resolution and mediation studies (Greco Morasso 2011), and other approaches dealing with conflict (Greco Morasso 2008).

Moreover, even the analysis of single argumentative moves often requires an interdisciplinary attitude. The explicit or implicit premises of contextual nature which emerge as constituents of an argument (see section 3.2) may turn out to be constituted by specialized knowledge (for example scientific knowledge), social representations, values which hold in a given community… In order to be correctly interpreted and to be evaluated against the standard of reasonableness, all these different types of premises challenge analysts of argumentation to acquire a deep understanding of the context they are analysing, possibly including some command of other disciplines beyond argumentation theory.

As a corollary, argumentation scholars could seize the opportunity to produce argumentative analyses whose relevance to the understanding of the different contexts considered can be appreciated by scholars dealing with those contexts from different disciplinary points of view. This type of challenge is important if we want the study of argumentation to become a practice that can have an impact at the level of society.

3.4 Identifying prominent features of argumentation in specific contexts

The fourth challenge which certainly emerged from my analysis of dispute mediation concerns the characterization of argumentation in specific context via the identification of prominent argumentative aspects. As van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2009: 6) remark, although in strategic manoeuvring the three aspects of *topical potential*, *audience demand* and *presentational devices* are connected inextricably, "in argumentative practice the one aspect is often more prominently manifested than another". Some important methodological advice about the study of argumentation in context can be easily drawn from this consideration. This means that, when dealing with actual (necessarily contextual) argumentative practices, we should look for prominent features of the arguers' strategic manoeuvring. Such features will contribute to define the role that argumentation plays in each specific context.

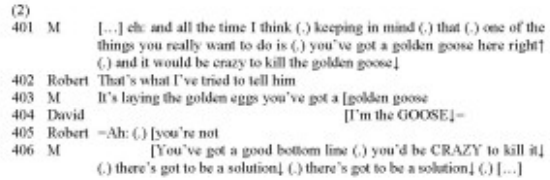
Considering dispute mediation, a particularly crucial role of the mediator's *topical potential* has emerged in relation to the parties' change in attitude and learning process that bring them to become co-arguers (Greco Morasso 2011). This is particularly evident in two respects.

First, in the choice of the issues that the parties are allowed to debate. Clearly, parties who enter in mediation have already had previous (generally unfruitful) discussion. What could change this situation is the mediator, who may help them focus on productive issues. As previously mentioned (section 3.2), for example, parties are not allowed to complain about their respective faults; they are expected to devote their attention to the options for the resolution of their conflict.

Second, at the level of argument schemes, the *locus from termination and setting up* has emerged as frequently employed in dispute mediation and tightly connected with the parties' decision to solve their conflict by means of mediation. In dispute mediation, the locus from termination and setting up is often applied starting from the premise (*maxim*, see Rigotti 2006) "if something is a value, it should not be terminated/interrupted". The use of arguments based on this premise is often solicited or proposed by the mediator. At a closer look, it appears that such reasoning scheme is determinant in a process like that of mediation, because it is strictly bound to its very nature. In fact, the conflict that parties are experiencing, by its very nature, endangers their relationship – be it interpersonal as a friendship, or more institutionalized, as the collaboration in a business corporation – and makes them fear that something they care for can be compromised or lost forever. In this sense, reflecting on the value of a relationship which risks to be jeopardized can be the key to the resolution of the conflict itself. Of course, the premise "if something is a value, it should not be terminated/interrupted" is an abstract principle that, in order to become effective, needs to be applied to some form of relationship or value that is *actually* worthwhile for the parties. This could be the parties' friendship, their business relation, their common values and aspirations, their children's happiness, and so on. During the mediation process, contextual data about what the parties consider worthwhile normally emerge thanks to the mediator's questioning. These data can then be exploited to construct arguments based on the locus from termination and setting up.

Let us consider a particularly representative example of how the locus from

termination and setting up comes into play in mediation. Example (2) is taken from a mediation process between two friends who are the two co-owners of a business corporation with a good bottom line. *The excerpt* reported here is a recommendation that the mediator makes at the end of the first session:


(2)
401 M [...] eh: and all the time I think (.) keeping in mind (.) that (.) one of the things you really want to do is (.) you've got a golden goose here right↑ (.) and it would be crazy to kill the golden goose↓
402 Robert That's what I've tried to tell him
403 M It's laying the golden eggs you've got a [golden goose
404 David [I'm the GOOSE↓=
405 Robert =Ah: (.) [you're not
406 M [You've got a good bottom line (.) you'd be CRAZY to kill it↓ (.) there's got to be a solution↓ (.) there's got to be a solution↓ (.) [...]

The excerpt

The mediator not only highlights the value of their business through the image of the golden goose, but he also explicitly says that it would be a pity (literally: it would be *crazy*) to lose such a value due to the parties' conflict (see turns 401 and 406). Such argumentation is clearly based on a *locus from termination and setting up*. The following AMT-based representation (Figure 3) shows that, in this case, the mediator evokes an Endoxon which reminds the parties of the extreme importance of profit in a business context. More, as pointed out explicitly by means of the metaphor of the golden goose, the parties' business is not just reaching its goal but it is even *exceeding* the expectations; this confirms and increases the persuasive force of the whole argumentation.

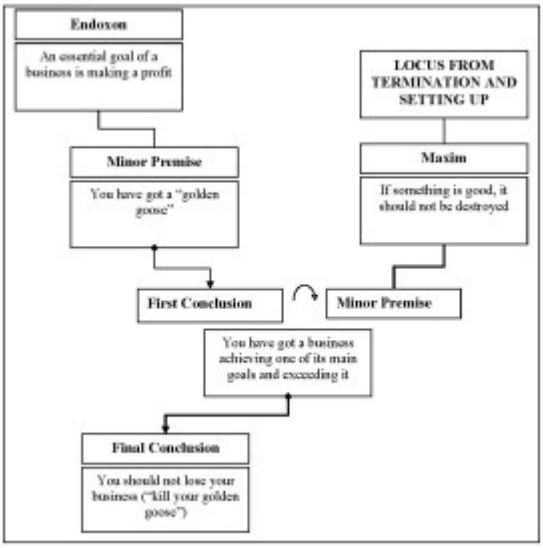


Figure 3: AMT representation of Example (2)

As said above, the locus from termination and setting up is frequently used by the mediator, or it is suggested to the parties as a possible "reasoning path" towards the resolution of their conflict. In a more general perspective, the discovery of such correlation between mediation and locus from termination and setting up may suggest the hypothesis that given loci may be characteristically associated to each communication context. Identifying characterizing loci, thus, would become an important part of the effort to elicit prominent features of the arguers' strategic manoeuvring in each context. This hypothesis needs, of course, to be verified by empirical studies in different contexts.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have proposed four challenges for the study of argumentation in context; these challenges open as many paths for further research on how argumentative practices are intrinsically bound to the communication contexts in which they occur. The relations between these four challenges may be represented as in Figure 4. Arrows indicate that taking a certain challenge into consideration is a necessary prerequisite for accomplishing another challenge; for example, being open to interdisciplinarity is necessary in order to reconstruct the specific context considered and to fully understand the prominent features of argumentation in the context considered; the two latter challenges are interdependent, and so on.

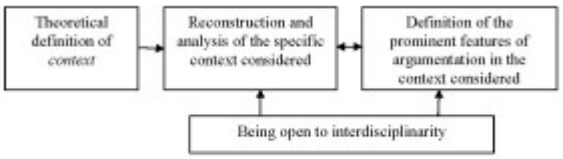


Figure 4: Connections between the four proposed challenges for the study of argumentation in context.

The choice of these specific four challenges is the result of what emerged from my personal research experience on argumentation in the context of dispute mediation. I am aware that the list is not exhaustive and that it should be discussed, amended and further enlarged. This can be only done through the dialogue between theoretical and empirical approaches to argumentation in context and through confrontation with other studies on argumentation in different contexts.

NOTES

[i] Van Eemeren (2010) emphasises the dependence of communicative activity types on specific cultural and institutional circumstances. As examples of communicative activity types, he proposes, for example, the British Prime Minister's Question Time or the presidential debate in the US. Following Rigotti and Rocci, I propose to further split the notion of activity type by considering that, in a communicative activity type like "business mediation" (as it is understood for example in North America) we still have to distinguish some features that are due to the interaction scheme of mediation, and which would be the same also in family mediation, environmental mediation, and so on; and some institutional features which are due to the interaction field of business and which we would not find in a family, in a school or in another interaction field. I believe that the distinction between *genres of communicative activity* and *communicative activity types* introduced by van Eemeren (2010) elaborates on a more abstract level of categorization and it does not overlap with the specification of the notion of activity type into interaction scheme and interaction field.

[ii] Marcelo Dascal discussed this topic during a PhD course named "From difference of opinion to conflict" held in Lugano on February 15-17, 2010, in the framework of the doctoral program Argupolis.

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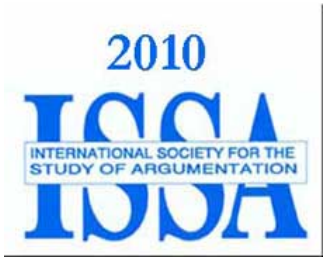
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Emotional Arguments: Ancient And Contemporary Views



1. Introduction

The prodigious development of argumentation theory over the last three decades has raised many issues that challenge some of the long held assumptions that characterize the traditional study of argument. One of these issues is the role of emotion in argument and argument analysis. While rhetoric has, with its emphasis on persuasion, always recognized that emotions play some role determining which arguments we accept and reject, a long tradition sees appeals to emotion as fallacies that violate the standards of rationality and objectivity reason and argument require.

A contemporary interest in natural language argument and the way it operates in different discourses of argument has, in many ways, challenged this view. A more receptive attitude to the emotional elements of argumentation has been encouraged by the study of rhetorical analysis, strategic maneuvering and many forms of argument (e.g., "visual arguments") that are prevalent in day to day discussion and debate. According to many authors, fallacies associated with emotion (appeals to pity, ad bacculum, etc.) are argument schemes which are not necessarily fallacious. Most significantly, Gilbert (2007) and, following him, Carozza (2009) have proposed a radical revision of our account of argument which grants "emotional arguments" a legitimate role in argumentation.

In the present paper, I want to show that the emphasis that Gilbert and Carozza have placed on emotional argument has a precedent in ancient times. In making the case for this thesis, I will argue that ancient thinkers were engaged in a rich discussion of the relationship between argument and emotion. A complete account of ancient views is not possible in a single paper, but I will try to demonstrate that two central principles that characterize this discussion have something to add to the debate that Gilbert and Carozza have very usefully begun. In the long run, reflections on ancient thinkers may help us better understand how to expand or modify our theories of argumentation so that they

more successfully account for the role emotions can and should play in argument.

2. The "Cognitive Account of Argument"

In his recent book, *Arguing*, Hample (2005) explores the relationship between arguments and emotions. In trying to explain "the absence of emotions in argumentation theory," he surmises that "the most fundamental problem" may be "that our culture has inherited a persistent and bad idea, namely that rationality and emotionality are opposites. Arguing is identified with reason, which is held to be the opponent and discipline to passion." (pp. 126-127)

The split between reason and emotion Hample criticizes is tied to a view of reasoning, argument and judgment I will call "the cognitive account." It sees reasoning as an attempt to judge truth and establish knowledge in a manner which purposely eschews the emotions and the passions. In enunciating this view one might rightfully point out that there are many circumstances in which the whole point of reasoning is to provide reasoned evidence *rather* than emotion as the basis for belief.

This is especially true in informal contexts that are highly charged with emotion. In judging who is likely to win the world cup of football, for example, the cognitive account implies that the ideal reasoner proceeds by marshalling *evidence* for their conclusions. This evidence will probably consist of information about the earlier performance of players and teams, knowledge of their current condition and circumstances, and so on. In contrast, the poor reasoner is likely to judge the situation in a way that is unduly influenced by their loyalty to a particular side, their sympathy or antipathy toward particular players or home teams, and their hopes and desires about the outcome. In the world of sport, which naturally engages the emotions, the tendency to draw conclusions on the basis of emotional reactions rather than objective evidence is prevalent and pronounced.

In examples like this one, the cognitive account reasonably points out that emotions *interfere* with cogent reasoning. The problem is that this is much less clear in other circumstances. When arguing for a particular social policy or initiative, for example, empathy for others has a legitimate role to play in our considerations. Compassion for those in distress properly supports conclusions about the right way to behave and it is difficult to separate love and affection from attendant moral sensibilities which support some conclusions and mitigate against others. The most important contexts for argumentation include mediation,

deliberation, alternative dispute resolution, bargaining, and judicial review – contexts which are inherently emotional, and probably inevitably so.

It is difficult to see how the cognitive account can properly deal with such cases. When we assess an argument, it suggests that our concern should be a dispassionate judgment whether its premises are true (or likely true) and whether they imply the truth of its conclusion. This leaves no room for accepting or rejecting premises or conclusions on the grounds that they move us emotionally; by generating excitement, fear, anger, hope, happiness, and so on. Instead, the cognitive account suggests that emotions like these distract us from the real business of argumentation, which is the dispassionate assessment of evidence. It is this conviction that lies behind the traditional view that appeals to pity, fear, and emotion are inherently fallacious. Elsewhere it is evident in a common distinction between argument and persuasion which sees the former as the crux of reasoning, the latter as a questionable attempt to use emotional means to instill belief.

3. The "Emotional Mode"

It bears repeating that there are situations in which the cognitive account of argument points the careful reasoner in the right direction. In the course of making and judging arguments we are continually enmeshed in emotionally charged situations in which desires, fears, anxieties, prejudices, hopes, pleasures, etc. may interfere with our ability to judge what is true or false. In such circumstances, the crux of careful thinking may be an effort to distance ourselves from our emotional inclinations: to stand back and judge a situation "objectively." This is the grain of truth in the cognitive account.

But we have already seen that the cognitive view of argument is also problematic. Even a cursory look at informal reasoning suggests that there are many circumstances in which the idea that we should remove emotion from reasoning is wrong headed. Whatever one makes of philosophical attempts to ground morality on purely rational grounds (attempts that are, at best, controversial), the suggestion that emotions have no proper role in moral, social, political and aesthetic arguments seems peculiar. It seems entirely appropriate to invoke the pity we feel for the victims of an earthquake or tsunami when deciding how we should respond to it. A studied lack of empathy is not a positive trait in thinking, but the characteristic feature of psychopathy, which we recognize as a mental disorder.

Emotions seem to play an essential role in making judgments in all kinds of circumstances: in arguments about a religious way of life, the performance of an opera, a political scandal, personal relationships, and conflicts in and outside the work place. As the cognitive account suggests, there is a danger that they may derail careful thinking and inquiry, but the notion that we should therefore banish emotions from the world of argumentation is a hasty conclusion. Instead, we might distinguish between proper and improper appeals to emotion, and proper and improper uses of argument in emotive contexts, by developing a more nuanced account of "emotional argument."

In argumentation theory, the most direct call for a theoretical account of emotional argument is found in Gilbert (1997). He expands the traditional view of argumentation by defining four different "modes" of argument. Though he grants the importance of the "linear" mode studied in traditional logic, he proposes an expanded compass for argumentation theory which incorporates three other modes. One of these modes is an "emotional mode" of argument which employs emotion as a reason for a conclusion or invokes them as a way of expressing an argument. In the emotional mode, a lover's outpouring of emotion may function as a good reason for accepting an entreaty to do what they desire. In such a case, the strength of an argument depends on "such elements as degree of commitment, depth, and the extent of feeling, sincerity and the degree of resistance." (pp. 83-84)

Building on Gilbert's theory, Carozza (2009) develops an "Amenable Argumentation Approach" to emotional argument. This approach suggests ways of administering, assessing and analyzing emotional arguments on the basis of personality theory, alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and the methods of restorative justice. In dealing with disagreements between individuals – situations that frequently produce emotional arguments – an understanding of personality types (understood in terms of Myers Briggs or other personality dimension theories) of the interlocutors is, for example, proposed as a way of understanding the proper response to argument. The theory of argument that results is one that embraces emotional means of communication and recommends, in the analysis of argument, a broader focus on the emotions inherent in the situations and the character of the interlocutors in concrete instances of argument.

In an examination of real examples taken from alternate dispute resolution, Carozza (2009) shows how a satisfactory resolution of the differences of opinion

expressed in opposing arguments requires something more than traditional argument analysis. As she puts it, "the implications of setting out a theory of emotional arguments requires that the motivations, needs, wants, desires, backgrounds, contexts, experiences, and so on of interlocutors involved are considered as well, since emotions are inseparable from these personal and social dynamics which inherently affect argumentation dialogues" (p. 221).

Carozza's (2009) work is grounded on contemporary philosophical and psychological discussion over such basic emotions as anger, disgust, fear, joy (happiness), sadness and surprise. As she recognizes, one might easily expand this list to include distress, guilt, shame, and other emotional states (p. 133). One might go still further, and include the so-called "social" emotions – sympathy, embarrassment, shame, guilt, pride, jealously, envy, gratitude, admiration, indignation and contempt (Damascio 2003, p. 43).

This discussion of these categories quickly raises complex questions about the nature of emotions, their relationship to feelings, their status as behavioral tendencies or states of mind, and so on. While these are important questions, they are beyond the scope of the current paper.

In the present context it suffices to say that emotions are affective influences that have a significant, sometimes profound, impact on our decision to accept or reject particular claims: because these claims resonate with our admiration or dislike of a particular person, because they make us feel socially secure, because they make us happy or unhappy, because we find them humourous or clever, and so on. The key point is that this influence lies outside the dispassionate assessment of truth and falsity the cognitive account of argument embraces. It is a commitment to the inherent legitimacy and the consequent analysis of such influence which is the hallmark of the development of a broader theory of the emotional mode of argument.

4. Ancient Sophism and Rhetoric: From Emotions to Arguments

The kinds of examples one finds in Gilbert (2007) and Carozza (2009) suggest that there is no way to understand, unravel and resolve the issues raised by informal arguments without some understanding of the ways in which these arguments are enmeshed in emotion. Insofar as it dismisses such considerations out of hand, this makes the cognitive account of argument inadequate, or at least significantly incomplete. In building an alternative to the cognitive account, Gilbert and

Carozza have begun the construction of a theory that can account for the emotional mode of argument. Here I want to explore the formation of a theory of emotional arguments in a different way, by taking a preliminary look at historical precedents for their commitment to emotions.

In the remainder of this paper, I focus on ancient ideas that show that the notion of emotional arguments has a long history and is not (despite a general antipathy to emotional arguments in modern logic, philosophy and science) a recent phenomenon. In particular, I want to consider the ways in which they manage the tension between the role that emotions play in actual argument and the view of ideal argument propagated by the cognitive account. While the scope of this paper does not allow a detailed excursion into specific instances of the ancient views I discuss, I propose them as theoretical perspectives which are of interest, not only from a historical point of view, but as still relevant attempts to shed light on the theoretical issues raised by the emotional mode of argument.

While it is impossible to fully describe ancient views in a short paper, a useful summary can begin by noting that the ancient discussion most relevant to argumentation theory tends to assume, illustrate, or build upon the principles that (i) emotions influence arguments and/or (ii) arguments influence emotion. Unlike the traditions built around the cognitivist account, the thinkers in question do not see this situation as something to be deplored, denounced or rejected. Rather, they view the implied connections between emotion and argument as an opportunity that should be explored, cultivated and properly seized upon. In doing so, they develop descriptive and normative accounts of the relationship between arguments and emotion.

The most obvious example of this ancient attitude is found in the notion, characteristic of ancient sophism and ancient rhetoric, that an adept arguer uses emotions as a vehicle to promote particular conclusions and in this way harnesses their emotional power in providing reasons for conclusions. Tindale (2010) provides a relevant reading of the sophists' views. Among them, Gorgias (1990) most clearly champions the emotional power of argumentative discourse. He claims that it accomplishes, with the least substance and the most secret means "miraculous works; for it can stop fear and assuage pain and produce joy and make mercy abound," producing "fearful shuddering and tearful pity and sorrowful longing" in its account of other peoples fortunes (sec. 9). Elsewhere he compares words to drugs, "For just as different drugs draw off different humors

from the body, and some put an end to disease and others to life, so too of discourses: some give pain, others delight, others terrify, others rouse the hearers to courage, and yet others by a certain vile persuasion drug and trick the soul." (sec. 14).

In a variety of famous arguments, Gorgias demonstrates the power of words by showing how they can be used to convincingly argue for the most unlikely conclusions. He defends Helen, proves that nothing exists, and is able to take on any topic (see Kerferd 1981 for a good overview). He obviously rejects the strictures on argument imposed by the cognitive account of argument, his own arguments suggesting that we cannot establish truth and falsity, undermining cognitive criteria for argument evaluation. One might compare Protagoras, who uses a similar commitment to the power of *logos* as the basis for a theory of truth which also undermines the cognitive account, rendering true whatever seems true to the individual, allowing no clear distinction between those claims that appear true for emotional and for cognitive reasons.

While sophism successfully demonstrates the power of emotions within argument, it does not provide a clear way to resolve the tension between cognitive and emotional considerations inherent in particular instances of argument. In ancient rhetoric, Aristotle (1996) provides a more mature resolution of this tension. In pursuit of 'persuasive speaking,' the rhetorical tradition he initiates develops detailed means of harnessing emotive power (and the "rhetorical force" of arguments). A recognition that someone who wants to successfully engage an audience must negotiate the emotional as well as the logical territory their arguments occupy is especially clear in the role it assigns to the *pathos* of an argument, a role that requires that the successful speaker skillfully invoke the affections (the *pathe*) of one's audience. One might locate other elements of emotion in the role that *ethos* plays in persuasive argument.

In making room for emotion, Aristotelian rhetoric devises one compelling way to reconcile the tension between the cognitive account of argument and its endorsement of the principle that emotions influence arguments. It does so by adopting an argumentative ideal that aims to be successful from the perspective of *logos* as well as *pathos*. The ideal argument is an argument that satisfies the criteria for good argument proposed by the cognitive account of argument *and* successfully invokes emotions in a way that speaks to one's audience (and establishes the *ethos* of the speaker).

Looked at from the point of view of argumentation theory, one might understand the core issue that this raises about emotion in argument as an issue of "premise acceptability." The latter has, within informal logic, been proposed as a key criterion for judging premises, in part because the uncertain nature of informal arguments makes it difficult or impossible to rely on premises that are clearly and definitively true. The contemporary debate about the emotional mode of argument raises the question whether a further element of acceptability should be "emotional acceptability."

This suggests a radical change in the way informal logic looks at argument, but one implicit in the rhetorical demand that one construct an argument with premises that are in keeping with the *pathos* of one's audience. Adopting this perspective, one might see a successful argument as a way of transferring the emotional acceptability inherent in its premises to a conclusion that follows from them. One might compare this "transfer" to the logical function of an argument, which transfers cognitive credibility from premises to conclusions – a comparison which is worth exploring from an empirical and a theoretical point of view.

By endorsing both *logos* and *pathos*, rhetoric allows an intriguing marriage of cognitive and emotive accounts of argument which provides some legitimacy for the emotional aspects of informal arguments. Overall, there is no doubt that this can help us construct a more complete account of effective argument than the cognitive account, but it also raises questions. Can all the emotional aspects of argument be reduced to aspects of the *pathos* of an audience? Are there aspects which cannot be accounted for in the ways that rhetoric suggests? Certainly the analysis of *pathos* one finds in texts in rhetoric must be developed further to fully account for all the factors that play a role in emotional argument. More deeply, one might ask whether the rhetorical marriage of emotive and cognitive demands can always be a happy one. Will there be times when these demands pull in different directions? In such circumstances, how does one choose between them? In trying to understand emotional arguments, it is especially important to determine when emotive considerations should trump cognitive considerations. Mediation situations of the sort Carozza 2009 discusses (see, e.g., pp. 303-315) may provide a case in point.

Ancient rhetoric provides the most obvious ancient source for ideas on the relationship between argument and emotion. These ideas are built upon the recognition that one will be a more effective arguer if one learns how to manage

the emotional elements that arise in argumentative situations. This is an important precedent for the contemporary recognition of the role of emotion in argument, but one cannot appreciate the depth of ancient discussion without turning to other thinkers that turn this approach to the issue on its head. In rhetoric the interest in emotion is founded on the conviction that emotions can be a route to successful argument. In other circumstances, the interest stems from the conviction that arguments can be a route to successful emotions. The most obvious trends in this direction are found in some of the strands that make up ancient moral philosophy.

5. Ancient Moral Philosophy: From Arguments to Emotions

Sophism and rhetoric revel in ways that arguments influence emotion. In this way, they exemplify a commitment to the first of two principles I identified as foundational in ancient discussions of argument and emotion. The second principle is the notion that arguments influence emotion. It is an important principle insofar as it recognizes that the relationship between arguments and emotions pushes in both directions: i.e. that emotions shape arguments and conclusions, and that arguments and conclusions shape emotions. In some contexts of argumentation, this means that the adept arguer uses arguments as an essential mechanism for producing, modifying or eliminating particular emotions.

In ancient rhetoric, this second principle is evident in the attempt to use argument, to instill, not only *beliefs* within audience, but specific emotions that strengthen, secure and embolden these beliefs. Especially in a context in which the aim is to rouse an audience to action, sympathy, anger or patriotic sentiments may be a key means of instigating it. In arguing that war should be waged, the rhetor's aim is, therefore, not a cognitive, dispassionate acceptance of the proposition that war should be waged, but the fostering of patriotism, pride and indignation. Insofar as the aim of the argument is action, the emotions this implies may be the most important element of the argument.

As significant as this aspect of rhetoric is, one finds a much more direct attempt to to use arguments to shape emotion in ancient moral philosophy, which frequently champions *logos* as a route to the good life. It does so because it sees argument as a tool that can be used to build the emotional profile essential to "happiness." In contexts such as these, the end of argument is not a simple assent to the truth of some proposition, but an emotional disposition that instills the

emotional perspective essential to a good life.

In ancient times, one classic illustration of this idea is the life of Socrates' follower, Phaedo (whose name became the title of one of Plato's famous dialogues). He was as famous for his life as his "philosophy," their integration demonstrating extent to which it can be difficult to separate ideas and action in ancient moral philosophy. The standard story is that he fell into a dissolute life in a brothel and then met Socrates, who changed his life by introducing him to philosophy. In the aftermath, he established a school at Elis, writing a book called *Zopyrus*, in which he argues that the Socratic logos can overcome even the most rebellious natures and the strongest passions. This is precisely what his own life is supposed to illustrate, the account of it serving as a parable for the moral that argument can change our passions, desires and emotions (Reale 1987, pp. 286-287).

Pheado's famous treatise, *Zopyrus*, was named after an ancient physiognomist who was said to be able to judge the moral and intellectual character of a person from their physical appearance. In a famous incident Zopyrus examined Socrates and found him dull-witted, dissolute, and profligate. While others laughed, Socrates himself is said to have defended Zopyrus, saying that these vices were his natural tendencies, but he managed to reverse them by applying *logos* and philosophy.

From Phaedo's and Socrates' point of view, argumentative investigation is the proper way to overcome, eliminate and modify the kinds of emotional states which precipitate the negative tendencies Zopyrus claimed to see in Socrates. The Emperor Julian has this connection between argument and emotion in mind when he writes that: "Phaedo maintained that anything could be cured by philosophy, and that in virtue of it, all could detach themselves from all kinds of lives, from all habits, from all passions, and from all things of this kind" (Reale 1987, p. 288).

In ancient moral philosophy, such views are commonplace, especially in Hellenistic philosophy, in which various versions of scepticism, Stoicism and Epicureanism embrace personal contentment as a moral goal. In the pursuit of this goal, argument is an essential ally. It is not too much to say that it is the major weapon Hellenistic philosophers use in shaping their emotions. The most influential ancient text in this context is probably Epictetus' *Enchiridion*, which continues to enjoy a popular following (see Epictetus 2005). It is, quite literally, a

soldier's "manual" which instructs the Stoic recruit on the way to think about their life. The aim is to use argument to inculcate a view of things that will ensure that they are not perturbed by events and circumstances that others find disturbing. The result of all this argument is supposed to include some conclusions, but the real aim is the strength of character and the constancy of spirit that made Stoicism famous.

Philosophies like Stoicism promote radically different values than those that tend to characterize ancient rhetoric, but they share with the rhetorical view of argument a stance that embraces the link between argument and emotion. In both cases, this link is purposely exploited, making argument a tool to use in shaping our emotions. In the present discussion, in a study of the emotional mode of argument, the important point is that such views provide a radically different perspective than the cognitive view, which sees argument as a vehicle to be used in a dispassionate quest for truth.

6. Conclusion (and Forward)

I want to finish this discussion with an example from ancient moral philosophy which can illustrate the extent to which ancient philosophy can be predicated on a commitment to the relationship between argument and emotion. It is found in Hellenistic philosophy, which is notable for its pronounced skeptical tendencies. In keeping with our own tendency to understand argument and philosophy in cognitive terms, we tend to characterize these skeptical trends in terms of their commitment to a set of arguments for the conclusion that claims to truth cannot be justified.

It goes without saying that this is a central component of ancient skepticism, but its goals are much broader, encompassing emotional as well as cognitive conclusions (for an overview of ancient scepticism, see Groarke 1990; Mates 1996; and Inwood & Gerson 2009). Looked at from this point of view, one of the goals – at times the central goal – of scepticism is emotional quietude. This facet of skepticism is most clearly seen in ancient Pyrrhonism. According to our most authoritative source, Sextus Empiricus, it is a method for attaining a peace of mind which is founded on the skeptical ability to oppose arguments for belief that disturb one ("I am dying, which is a terrible thing") with equally forceful arguments to the contrary ("I cannot be sure, I have lived a good life, and everyone should accept death with grace"). This opposition establishes *isosthenia*, the equal force of opposing points of view, which forces one to suspend judgment

on the correctness of the belief that disturbs one's peace of mind. This undermines its emotional effect and produces the tranquillity (*ataraxia*) the skeptic seeks.

Sextus explains the psychology that lies behind this method in the first book of his *Outlines of Pyrrhonism*, where he writes that:
…the man who opines that anything is by nature good or bad is forever disquieted: when he is without the things which he deems good he believes himself to be tormented by things naturally bad and he pursues the things which are, he thinks, good; which when he has obtained he keeps falling into still more perturbations because of his irrational and immoderate elation, and in his dread of a change of fortune he uses every endeavour to avoid losing the things which he deems good. On the other hand, the man who determines nothing as to what is naturally good or bad neither shuns nor pursues anything eagerly; and, in consequence, he is unperturbed." (1933, lines 1.26-29).

I don't give this example as a prelude to a discussion of the details of the Pyrrhonean point of view, but to illustrate how detailed and refined the ancient discussion of argument and emotion can become. In this and other cases it is much more than a general commitment to a relationship between argument and emotion, propounding very detailed strategies that exploit this relationship for specific emotional ends. In this case, opposed arguments become a method for instilling an uncertainty which precipitates a laissez-faire emotional state which brings with it the peace of mind the Pyrrhonean seeks. The care (not a lack of care) with which the sceptic calibrates his response to emotional upset is seen in Sextus' explanation "Why the Sceptic Sometimes Purposely Employs Arguments Lacking in Persuasiveness." Sextus answers that he does so on purpose, since they are frequently what is called for in an attempt to balance weak arguments which favour the beliefs that upset us (1933, lines 3.280-281). Here argumentative discourse functions as a refined mechanism for inducing a particular emotional effect.

The Pyrrhonean use of argument is a prime example of the second principle that characterizes ancient accounts of the relationship between argument and emotions, i.e. the principle that argument influences emotion. It goes without saying that there is a great deal more to be said about both principles I have discussed in the context of the issues raised by a renewed interest in the emotional mode of argument. Now that Gilbert and Carozza have raised the

broader issues associated with arguments and emotions, one of the compelling tasks for argumentation theory will be the extension of the discussion they have begun. One fruitful way to do so is by re-engaging with those thinkers in ancient philosophy who move in the same direction.

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ISSA Proceedings 2010 – Dutch Parliamentary Debate As Communicative Activity Type

1. Introduction

The debate in Dutch parliament can be characterized as a rather formal discussion.**[i]** Techniques of persuasion are only being used moderately. These characteristics of Dutch parliamentary debate originate from the shaping of the modern Dutch parliament during the second half of the 19th century. Historical analyses of the origin and development of modern Dutch parliament and its culture have shown how much their 19th century liberal founding fathers under the leadership of the much respected politician J.R. Thorbecke have aimed at a dialectical ideal while shaping the new parliament (Turpijn 2008, te Velde 2003). In their ideal parliament, the members of the Chamber would attain the 'truth' via worthy, free and rational debate (Turpijn 2008, p. 79). It is with this perspective in mind that the formal and informal rules for the conduct of the debate were shaped, and it has remained basically unchanged to this very day, notwithstanding the great societal and political changes that have taken place since.

At several periods in history this dominant culture with respect to Dutch parliamentary debate has been challenged by some left – or right – winged political parties as a whole or by some individual members of parliament; these parties or individual representatives make a substantial use of persuasive techniques, and in doing so, exasperate many Dutch members of parliament. Nowadays for example, the dominant debate culture in Dutch Parliament is challenged by the *Partij voor de Vrijheid* (PVV, Party for Freedom), a political party on the extreme right that focuses on one issue in its political program: the danger of Islamization of Dutch society. In the elections for Dutch Parliament, held on June 9th 2010, this political party was the big winner: it gained 24 of the

150 parliamentary seats and became The Netherlands' third political party in size. It is generally assumed that this enormous election success is a direct consequence of the way the leader of this party, Mr. Geert Wilders, operates in Dutch parliamentary debates. Mr. Wilders is not only well-known for what he says. He also draws attention with the way in which he puts his message into words. On the one hand he is criticized for using words like 'bonkers', 'insane' or 'completely nuts' to characterize his opponents in parliamentary debates. On the other hand, he is able to formulate his standpoints very clearly, as is for instance indicated by the fact that he won a 'plain language award' in 2007.

So, Mr Wilders' way of debating has aroused questions and meta-political and meta-communicative discussions amongst citizens, journalists, opinion leaders and also members of parliament, on the nature of the debate in the Lower Chamber of Dutch Parliament, and on which contributions to a parliamentary debate are allowable or reasonable in a very broad sense. These two questions are also the central ones in a project of the Dutch political-historian Henk te Velde and myself, that studies the development of the rules in Dutch parliamentary debate since the middle of the 19th century both from an argumentation-theoretical and a political-historical perspective.

The project focuses on the historical development of *conventions* and *norms* for parliamentary debate, including conventions and norms for parliamentary language use. As in the case of many other activities, many of these rules and conventions are implicit and thus not all articulated in the Rules of Order, for example. Besides, these implicit rules and conventions are often highly culturally biased, and have been shaped in a long period of time. This means that one needs to perform an empirical and praxeological analysis of parliamentary debates over the years to find these rules and conventions.

This all is still work in progress, and I will not report about very concrete results of research in this paper, but I will deal with some basic argumentation-theoretical assumptions of the project. More specifically I would like to speculate on one fundamental aspect of this project, namely the characterisation of (Dutch) parliamentary debate as 'communicative activity type', a concept discussed by van Eemeren (2010).**[ii]** I will do so on the basis of a case study.

2. A case study: a sub-discussion in Dutch parliament

In a speech during a debate on 'Islamic activism' in the Dutch Lower Chamber on

6 September 2007, Mr. Wilders incited a ban on the Koran, and argued that what he calls 'the Islamization of the Netherlands' has to be stopped.**[iii]** The speech caused quite some commotion, especially because Wilders called the then Minister of Integration and member of the Social Democrats, Ella Vogelaar, 'insane', see the excerpt of it under (1).

(1) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: Minister Vogelaar babbles that the Netherlands will know a Jewish-Christian-Islamic tradition in the future, and that she wants to help the Islam to strike roots in Dutch society. As for me, she thereby proves that she is going bananas. She thereby proves that she is betraying Dutch culture. She thereby proves that she does not understand that many Dutch do not want the Islamic tradition. I find this terrible, and I now ask her to take back these words. I ask her to oppose Islamization and to take back that the Netherlands will, albeit within some centuries, know an Islamic tradition. If she does not comply with this – which is her right – we will be obliged to vote against her.

The speech is quite representative for the way in which Wilders presents himself in addresses, and for the way in which he operates in a parliamentary debate: with radical standpoints, breaking through political etiquette, and in wordings which can impressionistically be described as 'clear' (van Leeuwen 2009).

After his speech a sub-discussion (or, as others would say: 'a meta-discussion'; see van Eemeren 2010, pp 257-261) was initiated by some fellow-representatives which is illustrative for the uneasiness his way of debating creates in the minds of his fellow-members of parliament. The participants in this sub-discussion are, besides Mr. Wilders: Mr. Slob, member of the *Christen Unie* (CU, the Christian Union), a small, more progressive Christian party; Mr. van der Staaij , member of the *Staatkundig Gereformeerde Partij* (SGP, the Calvinist Party), a small conservative Christian party, and of Mr. de Wit, member of the *Socialistische Partij* (SP, the Socialist Party), a left wing party. This sub-discussion runs as follows:

(2) *Mr. Slob (CU)*: You are talking about values and norms. You want to lead a debate and start off in a sharp way. You certainly have the right to do this. It is our duty as representatives to do so, but when we do it, we are supposed to show respect for others. We should always seek for goodness and peace in society, as well as in our mutual relationships. It is in this respect that I consider it very inappropriate to contest the cognitive capacities of the minister, instead of discussing the contents with her. This applies to everything you say to Islamic

people. You do sometimes point out questionable issues. You may do so, but we are always bound to keep Dutch society together in all its diversity. We ought to seek the good things for society. These constitute what I consider values and norms. This is what I want you to account for. The way in which you operate, in which you relate to colleagues (…) and direct society, only results in division. This is overshooting the goal.
(3) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: I do not divide. I simply say the truth. If I (…) believe that, because of the contents of a proposal, the minister has gone bananas, I shall just say it. Division has nothing to do with it. If only more people would say what bothers them. If only more people would say that they are fed up with the cabinet looking in another direction when problems arise with Muslims and Islam. If only more people would say that the borders have to be shut finally because the immigration policy since the sixties is responsible for the fact that the Netherlands do not remain the Netherlands. More people should say that!
(4) *Mr. van der Staaij (SGP)*: I have heard you make positive comments about the Jewish-Christian tradition. That is a good thing, but according to the Jewish-Christian tradition, in whatever interpretation, it is obvious that one should never, never qualify a minister as 'gone bananas', and certainly not in a parliamentary debate. Would you go back to the norms of decency of the Jewish-Christian tradition and take back that qualification?
(5) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: Whether tradition or not, the minister has, in my view, by mentioning a future Christian, Jewish and Islamic tradition, gone bananas. I am not going to take that back, I am going to repeat it.
(6) *Speaker*: You have made that point. (…) You maintain that word. We have heard it several times now. You have heard the reactions of the colleagues, and I propose that you do not use this word further.
(7) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: When I am being asked, I name it, it is as simple as that.
(8) *Speaker*: You have done so a number of times now.
(9) *Mr. de Wit (SP)*: What does mister Wilders think that the effect of his speech will be in society? Like me, he is preoccupied by the oppositions which affect ordinary neighbourhoods and areas, which we are all dealing with. What is the effect of his speech and the qualifications with which he addresses Islam?
(10) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: I hope that I express the opinion here, and in fact I am quite sure of it, of very many Dutch, who feel that we have had enough Islam in the Netherlands, who feel that we have enough problems with Islam in the Netherlands, who feel that we should not brush these problems aside, and that one is nearly being called a racist, when one dares to comment on this. Mister de

Wit, these people are not racists, they are decent, fine people that find it a problem to be beaten up on the streets, who find it a problem that their country is not their country anymore, that their neighbourhood is not their neighbourhood anymore, that their street is not their street anymore. I am proud to express this view and the anger of these people here.
(11) *Mr. de Wit (SP)*: I recognize the problem that you sketch, I have said so earlier, but what concerns me is the effect of your speech and of the qualifications that you give of Islam and all the people who are believers of this religion. You do make a difference between moderate and not-moderate, but your story seems to show that this is a very difficult problem. You have hurt these people in the deepest of their heart. Do you think that the problems in these neighbourhoods, which I do recognize – again – will be solved in any way or even partially, by your speech or your qualifications? It will lead to a sharpening of the oppositions, causing people to radicalize even more, under the influence of your words.
(12) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: The purpose is that people are going to think and that Muslims as well are going to think: 'Damn, what is it with the Koran?'. Does that make sense? What is in it? What is being said in it? How do we deal with it? It would definitely help if you and others would support my proposal to ban the Koran and would assert that horrible things are said in it. I am quite sure that mister De Wit finds these things awful as well. So these things should not be open to discussion as the word of God and as a possible incentive to action, calling for murder, instigating to hatred. If one fights against these things, and is doing its best for them, this can only have a very positive effect. If this weren't the case, then it shows once more to what extent people there are wrong.
(13) *Mr. de Wit (SP)*: You know that you are also dealing with a large group of people that are turning to radicalism and who will be incited by this type of speeches to follow a wrong course. That should make you reflect on the tone which you use in debate and on the way in which you qualify everybody.
(14) *Mr. Wilders (PVV)*: Madam Speaker, I do have a fantastic tone, so I will do nothing to alter it.

The extended pragma-dialectical argumentation theory – the framework that is adopted here – assumes that people engaged in argumentative discourse are maneuvering strategically. 'Strategic Maneuvering' refers to the efforts arguers make in argumentative discourse to reconcile rhetorical effectiveness with the maintenance of dialectical standards of reasonableness. In order not to let one objective prevail over the other, the parties try to strike a balance between them

at every stage of resolving their differences of opinion. Strategic maneuvering manifests itself in argumentative discourse (a) in the choices that are made from the topical potential available at a certain stage in the discourse, (b) in audience directed framing of argumentative moves and (c) in the purposive use of presentational devices. Although these three aspects of strategic maneuvering can be distinguished analytically, in actual argumentative practice they will usually be hard to disentangle (van Eemeren 2010, pp. 93-127).

From the quotations of Mr. Wilders it becomes clear that he makes uses of strategies such as, (a) putting pressure on the other party by threatening with sanctions, (b) a direct personal attack, (c) referring to the opinion of the majority of the Dutch people, (d) polarising the difference of opinion, etc.**[iv]** In doing so he makes uses of many rhetorical techniques. In his wording he often uses concrete nouns and verbs which have a strong connotation, often accompanied by intensifiers, adjectives and adverbs which denote an endpoint on a semantic scale; they leave nothing to the imagination. Another characteristic of Mr. Wilders' speech is that he makes uses of a lot of rhetorical figures of speech: all kinds of parallelisms and figures of repetition give his speech a clear structure. Furthermore Mr. Wilders makes uses of clear imagery to present his ideas (van Leeuwen 2009).

The way in which Mr. Slob, Mr.van der Staaij and Mr. de Wit react to the statements of Mr Wilders, makes clear that they consider his way of strategic maneuvering at odds with the norms and conventions which hold for Dutch parliamentary debate in general. Their critique seems to address a lot of the choices which Mr Wilders makes from the topical potential, his audience-directed framing of argumentative moves, but most of all his purposive use of presentational devices. According to them the strategic maneuvers of Mr. Wilders are not allowable and are thus fallacious. But then one could ask: what norms and conventions are violated in this specific context of a Dutch parliamentary debate?

3. Dutch parliamentary debate as communicative activity type

As van Eemeren (2010) points out, in practice, argumentative discourse takes place in different kinds of *communicative activity types* which are to a greater or lesser degree institutionalized, so that certain practices have become conventionalized. The concept 'communicative activity type' is intended to contribute to a better grasp of argumentative reality in the analysis of argumentative discourse. In the various communicative activity types that can be

distinguished in argumentative practice, the conventional preconditions for argumentative discourse differ to some extent, and these differences have an effect on the strategic maneuvering that is allowed.

So, in order to answer the question *Which strategic maneuvers are allowable in a debate in Dutch parliament?* it is necessary to find out what the characteristics of this specific communicative activity type are. To do that, we will first have to discover what the specific institutional goal or goals of a parliamentary debate are. This specific institutional goal affects the pursuit of both dialectical and rhetorical aims for the participants in an activity type by posing constraints and providing opportunities for them to win the discussion while maintaining certain standards of reasonableness (see Mohammed 2008).

Crucial to the characterization of (Dutch) parliamentary debate as communicative activity type, is the concept of *representative* or *indirect democracy,* a form of government in which the population chooses representatives to execute political ideas. The aim of indirect democracy is to achieve compromises between several civil groups with opposed interests. In this system, the majority will be able to impose its views, but not without taking good care of the interests of minorities. It is generally assumed in political theory that (free) representation consists of two layers: one of them being the individual responsibility or autonomy, the other the formulation of problems which exist in society. In this sense a parliament of representatives can be characterized in one way as an organisation with rules and rituals which enable its members to formulate civil questions in a way acceptable to the public, and in another way as a public discussion arena which opens possibilities to engage the public so as to bridge the gap with the voters (Te Velde 2003, p. 18). This entails that a representative should keep a balance between on the one hand her or his independence (albeit not isolation), and on the other hand her or his focus on the public (albeit not surrender to the public) (te Velde 2003, p. 28). This duality inherent in representation affects the institutional goals of parliamentary debate in a representative democracy: such a debate does not only aim at reaching decisions independently according to the prevailing rules and procedures, an aim that is connected with the autonomous position of the representative, but it also aims at giving an account to the public, at legitimizing politics and formulating the civil or societal problems which deserve political priority, the goals which are linked to the representative's relation to public or voters (te Velde 2003, pp. 26-27), see (15).

(15) *Institutional goals of (Dutch) parliamentary debate:*
(a) reaching decisions according to the prevailing rules and procedures *(the goal which is connected to the autonomous position of the representative)*;
(b) accounting to the public, legitimizing politics, formulating and selecting civil problems which deserve political priority *(the goals which are connected to the representative's relation with society or voters)*.

Following the sociological analysis of the political field by the French sociologist Bourdieu (1991), one could say that a representative plays a 'double game': the representative is simultaneously playing a game in the political field of the parliament, against the government or her or his fellow-representatives, and a game in the social field in which she or he represents her or his electorate. In a very interesting paper on 'Legitimation and Strategic Maneuvering in the Political Field' Ietcu-Fairclough relates the theory of Bourdieu to the theory about strategic maneuvering. According to her there is a 'homology' between the two games of Bourdieu, in the sense that a successful move in one game is also a successful move in the other game (Ietcu-Fairclough 2008, p. 411).

Putting this line of reasoning a bit further, one could argue that the dualistic institutional goal of parliamentary debate in a representative democracy and the ensuing role and task of representatives entails that they will always and simultaneously have to deal with two audiences: the parliament, of which they are part themselves, as well as the society which they represent. This means that in the strategic design of their argumentative moves – that is: in their choice from the topical potential, in their audience-directed framing of argumentative moves, and in their purposive use of presentational devices – members of parliament have to deal with the specific rules for the debate in the Lower Chamber but also with their responsibility for society.

This entails that a participant of a parliamentary debate has to maneuver strategically in a more complex way than a participant of most other communicative activity types; she or he should not only make efforts to reconcile aiming for rhetorical effectiveness while maintaining dialectical standards of reasonableness, but she or he should also perform this, given the complexity of the public, while sharply observing her or his own double task and role, the latter being perceived as a specific constraint within this communicative activity type. In principle then, representatives can thus lose their balance in a debate contribution in two possible ways: they can disturb the balance between the

dialectical standards of reasonableness and the rhetorical effectiveness, as well as the balance between their independence and their public focus. This entails that a parliamentary debate contribution can derail in a more complex way than a contribution to another kind of activity type.**[v]**

The sub-discussion between Mr. Wilders and his fellow-representatives discussed above shows that they are well aware of the dual institutional goals of parliamentary debate described under (15) and of the constraints on parliamentary argumentative discourse that are associated with them. The core of the reproach seems to be that Mr Wilders' strategic maneuvers in parliamentary debates in general have negative consequences for society as a whole. In this line of reasoning, stating that minister Vogelaar is going bananas for example is not only a personal attack on an opponent in a specific speech event but also an attack on the wellbeing of society as a whole. According to his fellow-representatives Mr. Wilders endangers by his language use the goal of parliament to arrive at socially acceptable solutions. So according to his fellow-representatives Mr. Wilders' contributions to the debate are not allowable because they endanger both objectives of a parliamentary debate and violate constraints which are associated with them.

But it is also clear from the case study that Mr. Wilders and his fellow-representatives have a difference of opinion about how the two games should be played. According to the dominant norms, a moderate discussion in parliament is also the best for society, whereas Mr. Wilders seeks polarisation both in parliament and society. In this sense Mr. Wilders seems to challenge the norms and conventions for Dutch parliamentary debate of the majority of the representatives.**[vi]** For this majority however it is more or less impossible to sanction Mr. Wilders for violating these norms. Because of a representative's relation with his voters and his obligations to them it is very difficult to forbid him to choose his own topics, his ways of audience adaption and his words within a parliamentary debate. The detached way in which the speaker reacts to Mr. Wilders argumentative strategies, illustrates this.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried – on the basis of a case study – to characterize Dutch parliamentary debate as a specific type of communicative activity by pointing out its double institutional goals: such a debate does not only aim at reaching decisions independently according to the prevailing rules and procedures, an aim

that is connected to the autonomous position of the representative, but also aims at giving an account to the public, at legitimizing politics and formulating which civil or societal problems deserve political priority, the goals which are linked to the representative's relation to public or voters.

This entails that a participant of a parliamentary debate has to maneuver strategically in a more complex way than a participant of most other communicative activity types: representatives in a parliamentary debate should ideally not only make efforts to reconcile aiming for rhetorical effectiveness while maintaining dialectical standards of reasonableness, but they should also perform this, given the complexity of their public, while sharply observing their own double task and role. Further research has to prove whether this is a fruitful approach for analyzing Dutch parliamentary debates.

NOTES

[i] I would like to thank Henrike Jansen and an anonymous reviewer for their valuable comments on an earlier version of this paper.

[ii] In this paper, I restrict myself to Dutch parliamentary debate, but I do not want claim that the tradition and the conventions and norms of Dutch parliamentary debate are unique. There are of course a lot of similarities between Dutch parliamentary debate and parliamentary debates in other countries. But there are also differences which can be observed, also from an historical perspective. Generally, Dutch parliaments had little regard for attempts to impress the members by emotional or grandiloquent language. Many of the orators who were held in high esteem in Great Britain or France would not have made much of an impression in the Dutch Lower Chamber. There, what counted was the force of legal arguments and authority based on restrained superiority. (See: Te Velde 2010, pp. 97-121). The comparison between parliamentary debate in the Netherlands and those in other countries from the perspective of the theory on communicative activity types is a very interesting topic of research, but is not dealt with in this paper.

[iii] The excerpts (1) – (14) are taken from this debate; see: TK 93-5268 (translation TvH).

[iv] In the Pragma-Dialectical Argumentation Theory, these (and other) discussion strategies are analyzed as *potentially* fallacious, see Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992, pp. 107-217. It depends on several micro- and macro-contextual determinants whether a discussion strategy derails and becomes

fallacious, and to what extent it does. In this paper I circumscribe the discussion strategies instead of referring to them by their 'classical' names like *ad baculum* (strategy (a)), *ad hominem* (strategy (b)) or *ad populum* (strategy (c)), because these names are often solely associated with the fallacious variants of these discussion strategies.

[v] An anonymous reviewer of this paper has remarked aptly that in many other communicative activity types a speaker could pursue two or more goals and address two or more audiences at a time and hence accordingly has to shape her or his strategic maneuverings in a rather complex way. The point I want to make in this paper is that a representative who is engaged in a (Dutch) parliamentary debate not only *could* but also *should* do this, because the institutionalized communicative activity type demands it. There are perhaps other institutionalized communicative activity types which demand the same. Judicial debates in courtroom could be an example. As the reviewer notes, in this communicative activity type the aim of decision-making in the special case at stake under the specific norms and rules applying is often concomitant to broader goals of social accountability and the setting and developing of social norms.

[vi] An anonymous reviewer of this paper has observed correctly that there are differences in the *types* of argumentation of the opponents of Mr. Wilders involved in the sub-discussion. The Christian Union representative mainly argues based on social harmony, on "keeping society together" and on seeking the "good things", the Calvinist representative uses arguments which are based on the Jewish-Christian tradition as well as on decency, whereas the Socialist representative entirely focuses on the "effect" of Mr. Wilders's speech "in society", on the dangers of exasperation and radicalization. These very different argumentation types very clearly reflect the different basic political or ideological standpoints of the debaters, as one would expect. It is an interesting topic for further research how these standpoints relate to the (historical development of) norm and conventions of Dutch parliamentary debate.

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ISSA Proceedings 2010 – The World Schools Debate Championship And Intercultural Argumentation

"It's only in debates you can express yourself. It's only in debates you can tell somebody something and the person does not think you are arguing, so it gives you that freedom of speech." – Mayambala, from Uganda.

Although money is pouring in for international debate training and tournaments, little attention has been paid to the student participants. Even less attention is paid to the students who do not win. This study asked twelve student debaters

from Uganda, Mongolia, Estonia, Russia, and Malaysia, countries that are not usually in the final rounds of this tournament, to reflect upon their participation at the 2010 World School Debate Championship (WSDC) in Doha, Qatar. This investigation addresses the argumentation formats, skills, and linguistic shifts employed by English-language learners. I am interested in students' motivation to participate in an international tournament where their chances of winning are exceptionally slim.

This essay argues that international debating events explicitly encourage students from non-native English speaking nations to make their arguments utilizing examples and research exclusively from the West. Further, due to their focus on international competition over domestic debates, students emerge from their training with skills to debate on the international circuit but with diminished experience or expertise for debating within their home nations. Yet, despite these downfalls, students are eager to participate in these debates, facing a plethora of competitors and expressing opinions not commonly voiced in their native countries.

This is not the first study to address students' motivations to participate in debate. Indeed, in the United States there is a wealth of discourse about national debate formats, student participation, approach to topics, and the effect of those debates on their future lives. Yet, even the most in-depth studies such as Gary Fine's *Gifted Tongues: High School Debate and Adolescent Culture,* Joe Miller's *Cross-X,* and Robert Littlefield's "High School Student Perceptions of the Efficacy of Debate Participation" investigate only American debate culture. There are also non-U.S. studies, such as Narahiko Inoue's dissertation "Ways of Debating in Japan**",** Takeshi Suzuki's "Bakhtin's Theory of Argumentative Performance: Critical Thinking Education in Japan", and Frans van Eemeren and Rob Grootendorst's "Teaching Argumentation Analysis and Critical Thinking in the Netherlands"**.** While these studies investigate a diversity of debate styles, each does so only within one nation.

The entire November 2009 issue of *Argumentation* focused on comparative studies of debate, yet those only focused on schools from England and Scandinavia. Those articles, just like Van Eemeren and de Glopper's 1995 article, focused on cross-cultural textual analysis of student class work. These studies, while important to understanding the status of argumentation, leave little space for student voices.

I have not been able to find any previous analysis of international participation in debate tournaments by students. My study addresses this perceived gap in two ways. First, it addresses student debaters from a diversity of countries who are typically excluded from educational argumentation and debate analysis. Second, instead of basing my analysis on written texts or survey forms, I have engaged each of the students in oral history interviews that encourage them to narrate their individual histories of participation in debate.

This essay makes three arguments. First, the topic selections and research expectations at the WSDC are biased against non-western debaters, but the same non-western students often appreciate the WSDC debate format over their own local formats. Second, non-western students perceive a lack of understanding of their own nation among competitors and find themselves acting as cultural ambassadors. Finally, despite the fact that they are unlikely to win the tournament, students from non-western states appreciate the chance to participate in the cultural exchange created by the WSDC. A brief description of this study's methodology and the WSDC will be presented to foreground a three part of the debater's narratives: team and debate format, debating, and competitive success.

1. Methodology

All oral history interviews for this project were conducted at the 2010 WSDC championship held in Doha, Qatar from February 9 to 19. The tournament was attended by 57 nations and approximately 450 participants. It would have required an army of oral historians to record the stories of every participant at the tournament. This however, was not my intention. I was interested in the stories of student debaters from developing nations who do not have a strong chance of reaching the elimination rounds, let alone winning the tournament. This essay should not be read as a representative sample of the entire tournament.

I obtained permission from both the WSDC Board of Directors and the Qatar Foundation to conduct interviews at the tournament. However, because of the difficulty in contacting team coaches before the tournament, the WSDC suggested that I wait until arrival in Qatar on February 9, 2010 to begin meeting with coaches and selecting students to participate in oral history interviews. The only exception was the Mongolian Team, for which I am the coach and was able to arrange permissions before the tournament began. Upon arrival in Qatar I met with coaches and provided them with a packet of information concerning my

project that included example release forms, a written introduction to oral history, an explanation of the open-ended questioning format that I would use in the interviews, and a sheet of example topics for the interviews. Initially I contacted twenty teams. However, as the parameters of my project required that students be of the age of majority in their home country and accompanied by a coach or team manager during the interview, I found that I would not be able to interview teams from nations such as Nepal, Somalia, the Sudan, and Japan. Despite this restriction, I was able to interview students representing Mongolia, Uganda, Russia, Estonia, and Malaysia.

The interviews were undoubtedly impacted by the presence of the student's coach, yet the students and I felt more comfortable having a familiar adult attending the interview. The interviews were digitally recorded, transcribed, emailed to the students. Limited editing was done to remove "ums" and "likes" from the student's narrations, but the words, grammar, and ideas are entirely their own.

2. History of the WSDC

The World Schools Debate Championship began in 1988 with teams from Australia, Canada, England, Hong Kong, New Zealand, and the United States. It is important to note that these were all native English-speaking teams from British Colonies that shared cultural similarities. Since then the tournament has expanded to fifty-seven countries from six continents, pressing the tournament to adapt to English language learners and a plethora of cultural norms. All debates are in English using the "world schools" debate style that places two teams of three members against each other in a structured format that contains three constructive speeches and a reply speech. Students are able to give points of information, known as POI's, during the constructive speeches. The debate is judged by a panel of three adjudicators from a diversity of nations and trained by the tournament.

The WSDC is attended by teams of 5 students who debate eight preliminary rounds, each on a different topic. Four of the topics are announced a month before the tournament, giving students time to prepare, while the others are announced only one hour before the debate. Because the students are not informed which side they will be assigned to for the preliminary rounds, they must prepare for both the proposition and opposition sides of each topic. This training for multiple angles of an argument, regardless of a student's personal

opinion is designed to "serve as a bulwark against fundamentalism of all stripes"(English et al. 2007, p. 224). As such, the topics are designed to encourage students to deal with issues on politics, economics, culture, and the environment.

The 2010 topics ranged from "This house supports military intervention in Somalia" to "This house would legalize the use of performance enhancing drugs". Students are expected to research the topics before the tournament and to support their arguments with a variety of examples derived from mass-media publications, government reports, and legal studies. The topics for this tournament are hard- hitting and preformed before a local audience of students and community members. This is a political event, from the selection of a national team, to speeches on the public stage. Politicization is inherent to debate, as Gordon Mitchell states "Debate has always been a political activity, and no amount of academic insulation will ever be able to shield it completely from the political currents that swirl outside the august halls of contest round competition" (Mitchell, 1998, p.12). Indeed, the tournament does not try to shield the students from political topics, but rather provides a public forum for them to work through the complexities of political argumentation before a panel of judges who have been trained in international debate pedagogy.

3. Team and Debate Format

Student debaters at the WSDC have been trained in their home countries in a variety of debate formats, each having different standards for speech length, evidence, and questioning. In my experience as coach of the Mongolian team, debaters are often frustrated that their best arguments are misunderstood or misrepresented by their opponents. Sometimes this misrepresentation is strategic, but often it is symptomatic of a clash between debate styles. While the WSDC claims to use a unique format, the format closely resembles the British Parliamentary Debates and students trained in Karl Popper or national formats have difficulties adjusting.

Although all students interviewed for this study were accustomed to debating on local issues, each student was trained in a different format of debate Their records at the tournament indicate a higher win ratio on topics that could be localized to their communities, such as "we should require physical education in all schools" than on specific topics such as "we should support military intervention in Somalia". Mayambala (Uganda) and Aruka (Mongolia) both

discussed the difficulty they had preparing for debates on western topics such as "terrorist suspects should have the right to a trial in civilian courts." Yet, not all teams faced these difficulties. To best understand how the students navigate the space between their home debate styles and the WSDC style, I will address them by nation and then indicate instances where their narratives coalesce.

While in their native country, the Estonian team primarily debates about local topics in a way that Paul says makes it "easier to talk about these things locally and because we encourage people to participate and jump in." When comparing English debate to that in Estonian he said: "In Estonian it is harder, or at least it is easier for me to express my ideas in English and talk about public discourse. Whereas in Estonian I don't even know what public discourse would mean. So the terms that you use normally in English are just not comparable in Estonian." His teammate Karmen agreed: "Many of the ideals that you study in English for example everything philosophical you read about them in English so it is easier to transmit them to others in English." As such, the Estonian team was well prepared to use English language resources in their research, and their preference for local topics may be seen as just that, a preference based on fare comparison.

While Paul and Karmen had experience debating in the World Schools Format, the majority of the teams expressed a lack of preparation for debate and a lack of cohesion concerning the research training within their own nations. For example, Liz (Uganda) described her early training in what she labeled the "Ugandan Format. It is between schools and we each have six to seven speakers on a side and you have first speakers and then Points of Information come from the audience and the speakers use their time to answer all of the questions. And then there are all these other points…it just looks like a big painting." Comparing the formats that they use at home to the WSDC, Liz's teammate Mayambala indicated that he likes the WSDC format better than both the domestic Ugandan formats and the Karl Popper format because it allows the speaker to revise and perfect their arguments as the debate progresses. The existence of POIs is critical to this difference. He said: "though Karl Popper is good, I think that World Schools is a better format. Because in World Schools you choose when to take POI's and so you can even get a chance to correct the mistakes you made as you are speaking. When a POI comes you can even build your case immediately. But in Karl Popper it's like someone has put you in a dock in a courtroom and is really beating you,

asking you questions and you must answer them. If you explain they say 'no, I want yes or no [answer]". This capability to revise arguments became critical when the Ugandan team debated Australia and was tested on knowledge that they were not prepared for. The capability to ask questions during the debate allowed them to find the answers they needed to prepare better speeches.

Beyond the format changes, the Ugandan team also remarked on the novelty of the international topics at the WSDC tournament. Liz said at home "we don't really base the topics on terrorism; it's more like topics that affect the schools. Like if single sex schools should be abolished because the government is thinking about abolishing them". The immediacy of these local topics is similar to that of the Estonian team's and works well in a national context because it draws students into the decision making process of their own school.

The Mongolian team was not capable of making such comparisons between their native debate styles and the WSDC's because they were all new to debate. The debaters began training in October 2009. Mongolian-language debate tournaments do exist in Mongolia, but these students attend a private school that does not participate in the requisite organizations that would allow them to gain access to those trainings. As such, the students were on their own to prepare and they designed a public debate tour that would both give them training and raise money for their flights to the WSDC. The student's favorite debate was on a Mongolian uranium mining law. Namu reflected on it: "It was cool… we said that we should not dig out the uranium of Mongolia in front of a huge audience and we just talked for an hour or longer." Granted, a topic specific to Mongolia would not work well during an international tournament. Yet, the Mongolian team's preference is indicative of the student's experiences and knowledge. They are not opposed to debating fine tuned policy debate topics. Their preference is similar to Elizabeth's (Uganda) to focus on topics and ideas that relate to their lives and their nations.

4. Debating

When they discussed their preparations for the WSDC, the Estonian, Ugandan, and Mongolian teams focused on the Somalia topic (The other topics included "that every country should have the right to possess nuclear weapons", "doctors should report evidence of marital abuse to the police," and "terrorist suspects should have the right to a trial in civilian courts".) Paul (Estonia) said "I found it interesting to look at what the situation is there and if intervention would actually

be a good idea in real life as well as in the debate world, which is kind of different." The capability to look at both the debate world and the real world policymaking indicates a heightened level of research and analysis. Paul and Karmen were not simply looking for any evidence they could find, but systematically sifting though documents to put together a complex strategy for their debate rounds. While they were most at home discussing European examples, they indicated that they had used advanced search engines such as Lexis/Nexis to acquire their information on international subjects.

Mayambala's (Uganda) narration was quite different. He was switching not only formats but also from continental to international examples. "During the training we'd use [examples] from Africa. But from the training we learned that actually those examples may work, but its better when you use examples from different places. And I think it's a good idea because it opens you to research and getting information." And yet, when I asked him where that research was coming from both Mayambala and Liz indicated that they primarily used Google to search for evidence. They just made sure that they included non-African examples in the search.

The Mongolian team expressed greater difficulty preparing for the debate, both because of their research skills and their opponents' unfamiliarity with Eurasian geography. Aruka discussed his approach to research as "For example, on the topic about Somalia. I would not know exactly when the BBC would know something about Somalia, so I would have to watch all of the BBC, and I became interested in the news and what was happening."

It is frustrating when your team uses television as their primary research tool. Yet, my attempts to secure access to Internet search engines for the Mongolian team proves an interesting lens into international debate preparation. These students lag behind not because they do not have access to the Internet, but because they do not have the tools to properly use that access to acquire research for their debates. In the case of Mongolia, an access account to Lexis/Nexis only provided more confusion and frustration. The most successful option was for me to arrive in Qatar, days before the tournament with suitcase full of printouts to help the students prepare for their debates. This method allowed the team to appear prepared, and indeed they did learn from the articles that I selected, but they also missed out the research portion, a critical element of debate training.

On a cursory level, the difference made by this lack of skills is clear. When the topic is international and announced weeks in advance so as to allow for research, the Mongolian team is likely to lose the debate round. When the topic was impromptu, with only an hour and an almanac or one volume encyclopedia to prepare, Mongolia has a good chance of winning. The same pattern repeats itself with other non-western teams. They have a much greater chance of winning if their research skills are not a deciding factor in the debate round.

Yet, this analysis is one done by a coach, after the tournament has finished and the team's record can be compared to previous tournaments. I wanted to learn if the students perceived the difference between topics, or their research skills. When the students narrated their experience against a diversity of teams they focused on the opponent's knowledge of their nation and culture. The Mongolian team was frustrated by the lack of geographic knowledge among their competitors. "A lot of teams did not know where Mongolia was, and they were surprised we are between Russia and China… They are really surprised there are kids that can speak English like this. They expect if they have never heard of a country that it will be very rural and not developed country." This lack of knowledge about Mongolia prevented the team from using Mongolian-centric examples, yet, it also indicates the extra level of work that the team had to do to become recognized and viewed as full participants at the tournament.

The Malaysian team faced a completely different problem. I sat with the team through several elimination rounds, including one on paying retributions to those who have been harmed in the past. The team was obviously rigid as Malaysia's race problems became the focus of the debate. Although they agreed "it's in Wikipedia, so we cannot deny that Malaysia has some racism problems", the debaters were concerned that an example from Malaysia had taken over the entire debate. Ahamad, the oldest Malaysian debater felt that the debaters could have done better, and not used Malaysia "as the only example, of this problem because then the students from other places will think we are the problem, but they are problems in their own countries too". Ahamad's reflections are interesting because he found it acceptable for his own team to use Malaysia as an example in the debates, but wanted to make sure that other teams did not use his country as the mainstay of their arguments.

The diversity of problems experienced by my narrators, ranging from other teams' lack of geographical knowledge to their highlighting embarrassing national

problems, put the narrators in a unique space as both cultural ambassadors and competitors. To be accepted by the judges and win rounds the students were pressed to use more western examples. After a round between Mongolia and Nepal on "performance enhancing drugs" one judge remarked "we thought it was a debate that we would have expected teenagers to know quite a lot about… it is true with American football and cycling and all kinds of things that drugs is a significant issue". Neither Nepal nor Mongolia are known fans of American football, and cycling in either of those nations would get you killed either by altitude or traffic. And yet, this is the standard set for the students by their judges. Competitors for the WSDC are encouraged to watch past rounds of debate, a practice that only entrenches the expectation that students will be familiar and conversant with topics of particular importance to Western Europe and North America.

5. Competitive Success

I presented a version of this paper focusing only on the Mongolian team at the 2010 Mongolian Society Annual Meeting, and the most frequent question I received was, if you know these students have no chance of winning the competition why would you go through the financial expense and heartache of sending them to an international competition? Indeed, these students are champion debaters in their home nations. Ahmad's school has won the Malaysian Prime Minster's Cup ten times. Paul and Karmen were selected to represent Estonia through a rigorous elimination process; and yet, on the international circuit they are not winning debates. Even still, the students were not lamenting their losses or planning to boycott the tournament in future years.

Several advantages to this type of diverse competition have been identified by argumentation scholars. As Steve Llano writes "since audiences can be vastly different, with polarities one has never thought of, debate training encourages increased respect for other people as more than targets. They are sources of inspiration and information. They help one overcome difficulties in phrasing and developing arguments" (Llano, 2010). The students in this study did experience quite a bit of difficulty phrasing and expressing their arguments in a way that their opponents and judges would understand. And yet, even though we know that the students might not win, and that the judges might be exceptionally biased, it is imperative that they continue to represent their nations and communities in the continual development of public debate.

These students gain from both the participation and the wins. Aruka (Mongolia) was proud of the improvement he and his teammates had made at the tournament: “it’s obvious that we are getting better and better at debate and you see it in the fact that first we losing on everything, then we are taken when we lose by split decision. And then the next one we win by a split and then the next one we win unanimously.” Beyond his record, he was interested in debating against students from different nations instead of just his own. “Nationality matters a lot. Especially the fact that you are a native English speaking country does give you a lot of advantage …[and] would say it makes a lot of difference in the debating. But outside of debating, they seem to act differently… I mean…I debated the Nepali team and they were really friendly… I just hugged the coach, which is normal for me but I doubt you would hug the coach from Sweden.” Varvara from Russia echoed that even though her team had lost all of their rounds, this was a rare opportunity to meet students from other countries and they were pleased to have had the opportunity to participate.

And yet, some students are in it simply for the game. As Paul put it, “These skills allow you to manipulate people. That’s always a great skill to have in this very competitive and dog eat dog world.” Perhaps they also help students to recognize and resist manipulation. Students are interacting with each other in an event that transcends international power hierarchies. For example, Mayambala (Uganda) described the thrill of “meeting Australia. That was a wake-up call… our points were really well organized, but the way they kept on bringing in examples and ideas that really gave us a hard time and we had to think … things we had not even thought about…it opened up our reason.” He concluded that the Australian team was not innately better, “they were good, and very well prepared, but next time we will beat them.”

Mayambala’s determination to participate in the tournament again signifies both his interest in and acceptance of the format, despite its differences from how he debates and researches in Uganda. The other students echoed his response. They all wanted to attend the tournament again and Liz went so far as to tell me that she learned more at the WSDC than she ever did in school.

6. Conclusion

The students interviewed for this project were eager to make their mark in academic debate. When they head to college they plan to study Electrical Engineering and Accounting. Only one student was interested in the Humanities.

They would like to, but do not expect to, have the opportunity to debate after they finish high school. Debate has crafted the way they think, act, research, and view the rest of the world. It has indicated the inherent differences between their preparations and that of students around the world. For some of them this is only a game, but for those like Mayambala, this is a rare space where they are free to express their political opinions without worrying about the political implications for themselves or their families. Future research projects should continue to track the WSDC, and continue to invite the students to speak for themselves alongside analyzing their essays and speeches. These students are eager to narrate their experiences and are ready to make serious contributions to the study of argumentation.

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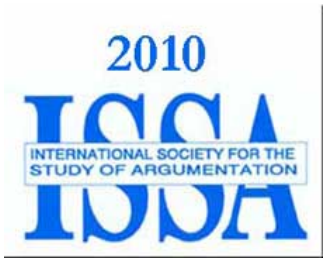
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – "Toulmin's Analytic Arguments"



1. Introduction

In this paper **[i]** I explicate and evaluate the concept of "analytic arguments" that Stephen E. Toulmin articulated in his 1958 book, *The Uses of Argument*. Throughout this paper I will refer to the 2003 Updated Edition, the pagination of which differs from the original, but aside from a new preface and an improved index, the text of which has remained unchanged.

My thesis is that Toulmin's definition of analytic arguments, and his corresponding distinction between analytic and substantial arguments, is unclear: it is therefore a mistake to employ the analytic-substantial distinction as if it is clearly established. Furthermore, I suggest that the distinction is not a crucially important component of Toulmin's model of argument layout, *contra* his claim that it is. I find that the agenda that Toulmin helped to inspire, of rejecting formal and other deductive standards as the paradigm of argument cogency and inference appraisal (cf. Gerristen, in van Eemeren, 2001; and Govier, 1987 and 1993), can safely proceed without trying to redeem Toulmin's definition of analytic arguments, or the analytic-substantial distinction. We should therefore bracket Toulmin's concept of analytic arguments, untroubled by the analytic-substantial distinction or its confusing formulation, while continuing to investigate the still contentious, but more valuable aspects of his theory of argument macrostructure, such as the nature of warrants and their field-dependent authorization.

My motivation is threefold: 1) Toulmin called the distinction between analytic and

substantial arguments a "key" and "crucial" distinction for his 6-part model of argument macrostructure, attempting to ground that model in an anti-deductivist framework; 2) when they mention it at all, commentators of Toulmin's model (early and contemporary, critical and sympathetic, alike) usually gloss the distinction too simplistically, tacitly suggesting that it can be unproblematically explicated while nevertheless giving diverse interpretations of it; 3) when scholars neglect to take account of Toulmin's conception of analytic arguments and of the analytic-substantial distinction, they still illuminate other aspects of Toulmin's model, profitably moving scholarship forward concerning issues such as Toulmin's influential concept of "warrant" (e.g. Freeman, 1991 and 2006; Hitchcock, 2003 and 2005; Bermejo-Luque, in Hitchcock (Ed.), 2005; Pinto, 2005; Klumpp, 2006; Verheij, 2006).

This paper will proceed as follows: First, because of considerations of space, I will provide only a brief synopsis of the problematic glosses of analytic arguments that commentators of Toulmin's model put forward.

Second, I will explicate and evaluate the "tautology test" for analytic arguments, showing that Toulmin inconsistently offers it as being *un*-authoritative. I indicate the confusing way formal validity is tied up with this first test for analyticity, showing that the tautology test does not help us to identify analytic arguments, as Toulmin asserts it sometimes does.

Third, I will explicate and evaluate the "verification test", showing that Toulmin inconsistently offers *this* formulation as being the *authoritative* one for analytic arguments. I suggest that like the tautology test, it also does not always help us to identify analytic arguments.

Finally, I will offer a summary of and response to Freeman's insightful comments on my interpretation (private correspondence, 2010). While his proposed interpretation of Toulmin's formulation of analytic arguments via the tautology test is interesting, I am reluctant to embrace it, without recourse to a broad interpretation of Toulmin's thought beyond his early articulation of analytic arguments as such, found in *The Uses of Argument*. Furthermore, I find that even if one accepts Freeman's interpretation, Toulmin's formulation of analytic arguments still suffers from a debilitating lack of clarity. My conclusion is that when appealing to Toulmin's 1958 articulation, we should conclude that it is irredeemably opaque. We may therefore safely put aside Toulmin's conception of

analytic arguments, without trying to redeem it, while continuing to investigate the still controversial but at least more promising elements of the model of non-deductive argument macrostructure that Toulmin put forward in *The Uses of Argument*.

2. Problematic glosses

I want to very briefly mention some eminent voices who have implied through their analyses of Toulmin's model that analytic arguments can be clearly and summarily explained, whether they agree with Toulmin's conception or not; I respectfully disagree with these readers of Toulmin, and think they may have missed just how confusing Toulmin's articulation of analytic arguments is.

First (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, and Krugier, 1987), and (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, and Snoeck Henkemans, 1996), though they thoroughly investigate the bulk of Toulmin's model in their authoritative treatments, nevertheless neglect to spend too much time explicating analytic arguments. In their briefest of comments on this element of Toulmin's theory, they imply that analytic arguments are in great part identified by their formally deductive character, while acknowledging that Toulmin "thinks that analytic arguments are [not] always formally valid." The three principal "tests" Toulmin offers for determining analyticity (the tautology test, the verification test, and the self-evidence test) are not scrutinized in their treatments, though they seem to paraphrase Toulmin's tautology test in their gloss.

Some interpret analytic arguments in terms of the tautology test (e.g. Manicas, 1966; Korner, 1959; Cowan, 1964), but who also spend too little space explicating it. These scholars, like van Eemeren, et al., spend the majority of their effort critiquing other aspects of Toulmin's theory.

There are also those who gloss analytic arguments in terms of the verification test (e.g. Hardin, 1959; Cooley, 1960; Castaneda, 1960; Hitchcock and Verheij, 2006; Bermejo-Luque, 2009); but these scholars by and large also do not dedicate much space to its explication, and pass over the other ways Toulmin suggests to go about identifying analytic arguments.

(McPeck, 1991) simply equates analytic arguments with formally valid ones, without providing any analysis. He does not mention any of Toulmin's tests for identifying analytic arguments. (Will, 1960) similarly says that "neglecting a few

non-essential refinements", an analytic argument is one in which "the data and the backing together entail the conclusion."

Some sympathetic and early reviewers (e.g. O'Connor, 1959), and interpreters who are tellingly not in Philosophy departments (e.g. Brockriede and Ehringer, 1960), pass over talk of analytic arguments altogether, these latter scholars being impressed more by Toulmin's model and less by the theory behind it.

Finally, (Freeman, 1991) is worth mentioning, because in his extremely detailed and influential discussion of "Toulmin's Problematic Notion of Warrant", he avoids ever referring to analytic arguments. Here is an example of authoritative scholarship concerning Toulmin's model that effectively ignores the analytic-substantial distinction, while fruitfully analyzing other distinctions that Toulmin makes. Whether agreeing or disagreeing with the substance of Freeman's analysis, the fact that he neglects to draw the reader's attention to the analytic-substantial distinction should be seen as a virtue of his essay, since if he had included such a discussion, it might have confused matters, and would in any case have been a divergent discussion from the topics he took on. This conclusion seems warranted when considering that none of the other scholars mentioned above were able to do justice to Toulmin's definition of analytic arguments. Almost all of them portray the analytic-substantial distinction as being more perspicacious than it really is, whether endorsing it or not, but in any case without sufficiently explicating it. A try at an adequate explication is in order, to which I now turn.

3. The initial formulation of analytic arguments: the tautology test

Toulmin's first attempt at articulating analytic arguments, and the analytic-substantial distinction, comes in the section "Analytic and Substantial Arguments", from pages 114-118. It is in these first formulations that Toulmin immediately sets the reader up for confusion, because his initial definition of analytic arguments via the tautology test seems to cast it in terms of formal validity, which he later (e.g. pp. 118, 125, 132, and 134) claims is an entirely different distinction.

I begin with Toulmin's statement on page 114 that even though "as a general rule" only arguments of the form "data, warrant, so conclusion" may be set out in a formally valid way, whereas arguments of the form "data, backing for warrant, so conclusion" may never be set out in a formally valid way, there is still "one

special class of arguments which at first sight appears to break this general rule": Analytic arguments, according to Toulmin's initial conceptualization, are a special class of argument that "can be stated in a formally valid manner" (p.115), even when the argument is articulated as "data, backing, so conclusion". Toulmin illustrates:
Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair;
So, Anne has red hair.

The second statement of this argument is the backing for the warrant, and is obtained by starting with what would have been the traditionally termed "major premise" in a syllogistic argument: "All Jack's sisters have red hair." When this statement is "expanded" (cf. pp. 91, 101, 102, 104, 108, 110, 115, 116), we can, according to Toulmin, eliminate the ambiguity as to whether it is a factual piece of data or a generalized rule expressing an (in this case, implied) inference license, choosing to phrase it as the latter, what Toulmin calls a "warrant": "Any sister of Jack's will (i.e. may be taken to) have red hair." Then by a further act of expansion, providing the "authorization" for the warrant in an explicit articulation of why it should be accepted as a legitimate inference license, Toulmin generates a statement of "backing": "Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair." Here is the second statement in the argument above, the argument that has the form "data, backing, so conclusion" (p.115).

Toulmin claims that this is the kind of argument that breaks the general rule (he says) of formally valid arguments only being able to be expressed in the form "data, warrant, so conclusion". Here, Toulmin claims, is an argument that goes "data, backing, so conclusion", and that is also formally valid; thus, according to Toulmin, it is an analytic argument.

But Toulmin is not content to define analyticity only according to the formally valid layout of a "D; B; so C" argument. He says the argument above is also analytic because "if we string datum, backing, and conclusion together to form a single sentence, we end up with an actual tautology". Toulmin seems to imply on page 115 that an argument passing the tautology test will thereby have its formal validity indicated, when he claims that "when we end up with an actual tautology . . . [we find that] not only the (D; W; so C) argument but also the (D; B; so C) argument can – it appears – be stated in a formally valid way". In this way he seems to explicitly tie formal validity to analytic arguments.

Toulmin then provides the strongly stated definition on page 116 that does *not* mention formal validity: “an argument from D to C will be called analytic if and only if the backing for the warrant authorizing it includes, explicitly or implicitly, the information conveyed in the conclusion itself.” Toulmin repeats this definition on page 116, qualifying it by saying it is “subject to some exceptions”, and then reiterates that “we have to bring out the distinction between backing and warrant explicitly in any particular case if we are to be certain what sort of argument we are concerned with on that occasion.”

If we combine these criteria (that of formal validity and satisfying the tautology test) for analytic arguments, then we may say that Toulmin’s first formulation is that an analytic argument is one which, 1) when the backing of an implicit warrant is explicitly articulated in the argument, then the argument is formally valid; and 2) when all the statements of this expanded, formally valid argument are expressed in a single statement, then that statement is repetitive, i.e., tautologous.

4. Problems with the tautology test

I remarked earlier that (Manicas, 1966) interpreted the concept of analytic arguments through Toulmin’s tautology test. But we should remind ourselves that this test was meant as only a “provisional” definition of analytic arguments, and Toulmin explicitly called it such (p.118). Manicas’ brief criticism of Toulmin’s concept of analytic arguments thus is not too helpful, as it acknowledges only the provisional formulation of the concept, and does not recognize the different formulations Toulmin gave for analytic arguments in the second half of Chapter III. But is the tautology test really just a first try at defining analytic arguments? Does Toulmin ever truly abandon it in favor of the verification test (as Cooley and many others think is the case), or in favor of some other criteria? Does Toulmin retain the tautology test as a legitimate way to demarcate analytic arguments from substantial ones? These questions should not just be brushed aside, but I wonder if any of them can be answered with any kind of consistency according to Toulmin’s book, because even though he offers the tautology test tentatively, and then explicitly rejects it as being an exhaustive criterion for analyticity, he nevertheless refers to analytic arguments later via this conception: How then to reconcile Toulmin’s assertion on the one hand, that “in some cases at least, this criterion [the tautology test] fails to serve our purposes” (p.124), with his statement on the other hand, made fifteen pages later, that “[i]n the analytic

syllogism, the conclusion must in the nature of the case repeat in other words something already implicit in the data and backing" (p.139)? These considerations make the concept of an analytic argument difficult to penetrate. Readers should be left wondering to what extent the tautology test is authoritative, and to what extent it is not, since Toulmin seems to say it is both.

Aside from the ambiguity throughout the text as to whether and to what degree Toulmin endorses the tautology test, what to my mind is odd in all this is that the argument Toulmin has set out as his example, with what would have been the major premise "expanded" to be phrased as the backing of the associated warrant, is not at all formally valid, as Toulmin claims it is. Here is the expanded, supposedly formally valid, argument again:
Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair;
So, Anne has red hair.

But the truth of this conclusion is not formally entailed by the truth of the premises adduced in its support, due to the parenthetical clause in the backing. What if we adjust it to make it formally valid, and thus make it analytic, and thus render Toulmin's formulation consistent with his example? In order for the conclusion to follow formally (what Toulmin later will call "unequivocally"), the conclusion would have to read: "Anne has (been checked individually to have) red hair". Then the argument would read:
Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair;
So, Anne has (been checked individually to have) red hair.

But it would seem this is an illegitimate move, as retaining *in the conclusion* the parenthetical statement *found in the backing* changes the meaning of the conclusion: instead of being the claim that Anne *actually has* red hair, we have a claim that Anne has only been *checked* to have red hair. We want to keep the conclusion as it is: a statement about Anne in fact having red hair right now. So, Toulmin says that if Anne was right in front of someone, and that person was *right now* looking at Anne's hair, and it appeared red to her, then the argument would be analytic:
Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Each one of Jack's sisters (it is now being observed, i.e., it now appears) has red
So, Anne has red hair.

In fact, Toulmin says this argument is “unquestionably analytic”; however, this version of it, with the modified parenthetical clause in the backing, suffers from the same problem as the one with the unmodified parenthetical clause in the backing: It is only formally valid so long as the parenthetical clause in the backing is also included in the conclusion. The reason is that just because the color of someone’s hair has been checked at one time, this does not mean it is now the color the person who first checked it saw it to be. Toulmin is right to see this as a shortcoming of the strength of the argument in question. He thinks of this as a “logical type jump”, from backing concerning the past to a claim concerning the present, and proposes to fix the type jump to show the argument’s analyticity by making the backing refer to a concurrent time as the conclusion. But Toulmin does not address what actually makes it not analytic *according to his own definition*, and that is its formal invalidity. Because it is also true that the person who is (right now) checking the hair might be color blind, or she might see blonde or brunette or every other color as red, or her senses could otherwise be distorted. So the strongest formally valid conclusion someone could draw from her observation of looking at Anne’s hair, even if she is looking at it right now, is that Anne’s hair *right now appears* red to her! So, if we are being utterly candid, as Toulmin urges us to be, the revised argument would retain the parenthetical statement in the conclusion, and would be:
Anne is one of Jack’s sisters;
Each one of Jack’s sisters (it is now being observed, i.e., it now appears) has red hair;
So, Anne (it is now being observed, i.e., it now appears) has red hair.

Of course, no one usually looks at the color of someone’s hair, and only allows herself to say that the hair she sees *appears* some color: usually, we uncontroversially believe someone’s hair *is* some color based on our current perception, so long as no countervailing concerns intercede that might speak against that belief. So altering the conclusion this way seems illicit. Still, if formal validity is a criterion of analyticity (so that an argument D; B; so C breaks the rule of *not* being formally valid), then however believable is the claim in Toulmin’s example that Anne has red hair, and however reliably it is reached via the backing, it would still *not* be “unquestionably analytic” (as Toulmin says it would be if Anne was standing right in front of someone) because even if she were standing right there, it would not be unquestionably formally valid without altering the conclusion by including the parenthetical clause.

Another way for the argument to be formally valid, instead of carrying over the parenthetical clause in the backing down to the conclusion and thus altering it, would be to *omit* the parenthetical clause from the premise and the conclusion altogether. Then either version of the argument (with or without the type-jump) would read:
Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Each one of Jack's sisters has red hair;
So, Anne has red hair.

This is surely formally valid. But without the parenthetical statement, we just have the major premise, unadulterated ("unexpanded" as Toulmin might have said). And so the argument above is just an unexpanded traditional syllogism. But Toulmin wanted to show how an argument could be formally valid when an *expanded* premise was articulated in the argument as backing (cf. pp. 91, 101, 102, 104, 108, 110, 115, 116), that such an argument might also pass the tautology test, and that such an argument would therefore be analytic. So eliminating the parenthetical statement to gain formal validity just turns the argument back into a traditional syllogism, where according to Toulmin the unexpanded major premise is ambiguously phrased. Therefore this is not the kind of argument Toulmin would test for analyticity.

What I conclude as a result of these reflections is that either Toulmin's example is poor, in which case he has inaptly illustrated his conception of analytic arguments, or his conception of analytic arguments is flawed. In either case, the concept of analytic arguments is not doing the job Toulmin purports it to do, which is to theoretically inform our understanding of his model of argument macrostructure. What Toulmin has shown in these examples is that his first articulation of analytic arguments does not hold, because from the beginning, his example does not "break the general rule", as he says it does, of an argument of the form "data, backing, so conclusion" being formally invalid. So instead of showing (as he suggests he has) that it is doubtful whether any arguments with an expanded major premise can ever be properly analytic, what he has shown is that we still don't know what properly speaking an argument's being analytic even means! This is especially telling when one considers that for the remainder of the book Toulmin uses the terms "analytic" and "substantial" as if he had established a clear conception of what those terms meant, even though he contemporaneously adapts their definitions while working with them. Far from

being a candid treatment, Toulmin's distinction at first blush obscures more than it reveals.

To summarize what I think I have thus far established: according to his illustration, Toulmin was wrong to say that analytic arguments break the rule of "data, backing, so conclusion" arguments being formally invalid, since those expanded arguments are *as they stand* formally invalid: expanded arguments with backing in place of warrant do *not* yield formally valid arguments unless one modifies the statements in the arguments. This shows that expanded arguments are not analytic, but only if analyticity is just synonymous with formal validity, which Toulmin later claims is too crude a line to draw. These considerations are all made in light of the ambiguity as to whether Toulmin is consistent in his assertion that the tautology test is un-authoritative, which he explicitly maintains throughout his articulation of the verification test, but which he inconsistently implies *is* authoritative later in the book.

These reflections might be enough to show how unhelpful Toulmin's concept of analytic arguments is, due to its opaque initial formulation via the tautology test, but problems are compounded when we look at Toulmin's verification test, to which I now turn.

5. The verification test of quasi-syllogisms: the revised criterion of analytic arguments

As I mentioned at the beginning of this paper, and at the beginning of the last section, Toulmin ostensibly introduces the tautology test only provisionally, and then seems to reject it in favor of the verification test (though he later seems to adopt the tautology test partially). Still, according to the verification test, an argument is "analytic if, and only if . . . checking the backing of the warrant involves *ipso facto* checking the truth or falsity of the conclusion" (p.123).

I think I have shown that the tautology test should be rejected as a reliable indicator of analyticity because Toulmin's example never fulfilled what he purported it to, namely, an method of identifying analytic arguments. While Toulmin thought the tautology test shows that expanded arguments are rarely analytic, what he actually showed was that expanded arguments are rarely formally valid. In any case Toulmin wants to reject the tautology test for different reasons: because, he says, it does not allow us to determine the analyticity of an argument that has a quasi-syllogistic form (p.121). A quasi-syllogism is like a

traditional syllogism except that instead of its major premise being expressed categorically, that statement is expressed in a qualified way (ibid).

Looking at the verification test by way of Toulmin's example of a quasi-syllogism, we find the following (by now hackneyed) argument:
Petersen is a Swede;
Scarcely any Swedes are Roman Catholic;
So, almost certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

According to Toulmin the (formal?) validity of this argument is self-evident, so it should be classified as an analytic argument (p.122). Ignoring this further criterion of analyticity (the "self-evidence test") that seems to further complicate Toulmin's definition, if we interpret this argument's second statement as being ambiguous (which Toulmin claims we should do), then we can rephrase it to produce a generalized statement that allows us to infer the conclusion on the basis of the first statement; as an explicit warrant it might thus read: "If someone is Swedish then you may take it that he or she is not Roman Catholic". Then in a further act of expansion, if instead of an inference license, we state the backing that authorizes the warrant we get:
Petersen is a Swede;
The proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is less than 5%;
So, almost certainly, Petersen is not a Roman Catholic.

Now this argument too, is analytic, though not because its validity is self-evident, nor because it is tautological when the statements are strung together, and certainly not because it is formally valid. It is analytic, for Toulmin, because if we were to check the truth of the backing, we would in effect be checking the truth of the conclusion. In other words, checking (exhaustively) to see that the proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is less than 5% would be to check if Petersen is or is not a Roman Catholic. As such, according to the verification test, this argument is analytic, whereas according to the tautology test, it is not.

But there are few problems with this test for analyticity as I see it. First, to take the (Cooley, 1960) criticism: the verification test seems to be too broad, because it would call any argument analytic where backing-checking involves conclusion-checking. But this will include many arguments that, in Toulmin's own words are "not just implausible but incomprehensible" (p. 122) such as Toulmin's example:
Petersen is a Swede;

The proportion of Roman Catholic Swedes is less than 5%;
So, almost certainly, Petersen is *Roman Catholic.*

Here is an implausible (and perhaps incoherent) argument. But it is *still* analytic, according to the verification test, as checking the truth of the backing would involve checking the truth of the conclusion. But if this argument is analytic, then surely that speaks against the claim that formal logicians are wedded to the analytic paradigm, for they would not want to be wedded to a model of argument that allows one to infer the opposite of what one would expect to, on the basis of the reasons one adduces. So, as with the tautology test, either the test is not authoritative, or formal logicians are not really wedded to Toulmin's conception of analytic arguments as he says they are.

Perhaps one could respond to Cooley by insisting that analyticity is a distinction made within the class of arguments that have good warrants and backings for those warrants, so this complaint would not hold (Hitchcock, 2010, private correspondence). But even if Cooley's objection can be handled in this way, then another problem with the verification test still remains: while some quasi-syllogisms that fail the tautology test might still be analytic by virtue of the verification test, it could also be the case that some quasi-syllogisms pass the tautology test, yet fail the verification test. If this is so, then passing the verification test is not only not a sufficient condition for an argument being analytic, as Toulmin says it is, it is not at all a necessary condition for an argument being analytic. Take this one premise argument:
Petersen is a Swede with blonde hair and blue eyes;
Therefore Petersen is a Swede of European descent.

The implied major premise might be "All Swede's with blonde hair and blue eyes are of European descent", which, when expanded, might become a warrant such as "On the basis of a person being a Swede with blonde hair and blue eyes, one may take it that such a person is of European descent". As such this is a quasi-syllogism that according to Toulmin's formulation should be tested via the verification test, as it is expanded from a universal affirmative major premise. In a further act of expansion we might obtain the backing for the above warrant, authorizing it as an inference license via a claim such as: "Every Swede whom I have met with blonde hair and blue eyes is a Swede of European descent". Then, when we include the backing in the original argument, we have the argument that is to be tested for analyticity:

Petersen is a Swede with blonde hair and blue eyes;
Every Swede whom I have met with blonde hair and blue eyes is a Swede of European descent;
Therefore Petersen is a Swede of European descent.

Does this argument pass the verification test? No it does not, as checking the truth of the backing will never involve checking to see if Petersen is a Swede of European descent, so long as my experience in dealing with Swedes with blonde hair and blue eyes has never included dealing with Petersen. This argument is not analytic, then, according to the verification test, so long as I have never met Petersen.

But does this argument pass the tautology test? I think it is plausible to claim that it does, if, instead of assuming the argument to have been made *before* meeting Petersen, the argument is uttered *after* having met him. The ambiguity of the context as to whether Petersen is someone whom I have not yet met, or someone whom I have met, changes how the argument measures up to the verification test and the tautology test. For stringing the statements together is now repetitive, so long as the implication of the first premise is that Petersen is a Swede whom I have met:
Petersen is a Swede with blonde hair and blue eyes (whom I have met)
and *every Swede whom I have met with blonde hair and blue eyes is a Swede of European descent*
and *Petersen is a Swede of European descent.*

This argument is repetitive because conjoining the conclusion with the word "and" merely restates what is expressed in the first premise coupled with the second. So is the argument analytic? According to the tautology test: yes; but according to the verification test: no. Either may result depending on an ambiguous feature of the argument. It seems we can't be sure whether the argument is analytic, then, according to Toulmin's formulation, because even though it might pass the tautology test, that test is not meant to be a reliable test for quasi-syllogisms in the first place, and was the very reason why Toulmin introduced the verification test (p.121). Furthermore, this argument is not formally valid, as Toulmin seems to say it should be if it passes the tautology test.

So at this point we should be confused. First, it is not the case that on their own, either the tautology test or the verification test provides both necessary and

sufficient conditions for determining an argument's analyticity: Toulmin's strong formulations are misleading. But furthermore, Toulmin introduced the verification test because in the case of quasi-syllogisms, it was supposed to more reliably indicate an argument's analyticity than the tautology test (pp.123-124). But it does not, as the above example shows: A quasi-syllogism may pass the tautology test but not pass the verification test. So it seems that two of Toulmin's principle tests for determining analyticity are flawed, and that neither can reliably determine an argument's analyticity. It therefore seems to be a mistake to use Toulmin's concept of analytic arguments as if it is clear. And considering that many scholars simply pass over the concept without their analyses suffering as a result, this should suggest that analyticity does not represent the crucial component of Toulmin's model that he claims it does.

6. Freeman's comments

James Freeman graciously agreed to read and remark on an earlier version of this paper. Further quotations belong to this correspondence (2010). The most telling observation from his numerous helpful comments regards a rejoinder to the argument I offer whereby I claim that the parenthetical clause included in the backing "Each one of Jack's sisters has (been checked individually to have) red hair" destroys the formal validity of the argument in question and so according to Toulmin's own definition, forces a failure of the tautology test (see pp. 5-8, above). He suggests that we could interpret Toulmin as meaning (while not explicitly claiming) that in our adding of the parenthetical clause in the backing, we are really "simulat[ing] universal quantification through conjunction", and if so, that the following version of the argument (which is equivalent to the one Toulmin explicitly formulates) "is formally valid and its associated conditional is a tautology:

Anne is one of Jack's sisters;
Anne has red hair & Sister # 2 has red hair & … & Sister # n has red hair;
So, Anne has red hair."

Freeman says that "[f]or such arguments, the backing can be stated in the form of a conjunction which simulates a universally quantified statement because the backing concerns the objects in a finite set all of which have been observed and found to have a certain property and the backing statement simply reports this fact."

If Freeman is correct, then it seems there is an interpretation of Toulmin's

example that does indeed pass the tautology test, and so is coherently analytic, according to Toulmin's own definition. If so, my critique on this front fails, and my claim that Toulmin's definition is opaque is rendered less convincing.

Unfortunately, my reply to Freeman's analysis must be very brief.

My response is that even if he is correct, and we justifiably construe Toulmin's backing in his example as being a conjunction of observation reports that simulates universal quantification, and so we see the example as correctly exemplifying the tautology test, we would still have to reconcile Toulmin's confusing articulation concerning the degree to which the tautology test is authoritative; this is a significant interpretive hurdle to clear, if one wishes to defend Toulmin's definition of analytic arguments from the charge of opacity. It is no small thing that Toulmin was decidedly unclear concerning the degree to which the tautology, verification, and self-evidence tests each reveals arguments that are analytic. So even granting that the tautology test is a valid test on its own terms, in relation to the other tests, we still cannot say whether Toulmin took it as being authoritative or not, or the degree to which he took it to be authoritative, when dealing with the quasi-syllogism.

Furthermore, Freeman's reading of Toulmin's example of an argument that passes the tautology test seems to go beyond *The Uses of Argument,* attributing to Toulmin more than Toulmin explicitly admits in the text. While I yield to Freeman's expertise as an interpreter of Toulmin's body of work beyond *The Uses of Argument*, and am happy to hear Freeman's interpretation offered "as a suggestion which might help clarify what Toulmin has to say", still, because Toulmin was less than clear on this point in *The Uses of Argument,* it seems his explicit formulation in that text is not saved.

In a word, Freeman's interpretation does not redeem the tautology test, nor Toulmin's definition of analytic arguments in *The Uses of Argument*.

7. Conclusion

I would like to suggest, in closing, that Toulmin's concept of analytic arguments found in *The Uses of Argument* is irredeemably opaque. If Toulmin's goal, through his conceptualization of the analytic-substantial distinction, was merely to motivate his model of argument macrostructure with an anti-deductivist approach, by showing that arguments can sometimes be cogent without being

formally valid, then he succeeded: His examples all point to the idea that a conclusion may be reached legitimately, even if it is not reached formally. But if he meant to say something more subtle in the theoretical support for that model, then his formulation of analytic arguments and the analytic-substantial distinction does not accomplish that goal clearly. Perhaps it should not bother those who read Toulmin that his conception of analytic arguments in *The Uses of Argument* might be irredeemable: as inquirers interested and inspired by his anti-deductivist project, it seems possible to pass over Toulmin's analytic-substantial distinction, and yet to profit from examining his other, still contentious and provocative, but at least more clearly articulated ideas.

NOTES

[i] My sincere thanks go to James Freeman, for his correspondence and for his permission to include that correspondence in this paper. My thanks also go to David Hitchcock, for his guidance, and for his comments on earlier drafts. Finally, thank you to the organizers and reviewers of ISSA 2010. Whatever errors or omissions found in this paper are my own.

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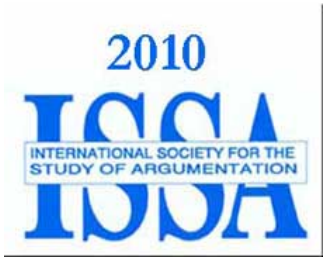
ISSA Proceedings 2010 – The Costs And Benefits Of Arguing: Predicting The Decision Whether To Engage Or Not



1. Introduction

Pragma-dialectical theory (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004) explains that a critical discussion has four stages: confrontation, opening, argumentation, and concluding. In the confrontation stage, two people discover that they have a disagreement, and in the opening stage they decide how to pursue it. This study focuses on the transition from the confrontation stage to the opening stage. Not all disagreements are explored or even expressed. When circumstances invite disagreement and then argument, sometimes we move

forward and sometimes we move away. This is an investigation of the decision to engage or not. What factors predict engagement and which predict that no argument will be voluntarily forthcoming?

2. A Theory of Engaging in Arguments

Recent work (Paglieri 2009; Paglieri & Castelfranchi 2010; see Hample 2009) has analyzed the circumstances in which face-to-face arguments are most likely to escalate out of control, suggesting that people take these factors into account in deciding whether or not to argue at all. This paper takes that work as a theory of argument engagement. Our most general claim is that people are predicted to engage in an argument when the expected benefits of doing so exceed the expected costs.

The essential model being tested here is

Beh ~ BI = f (S, P, C, B), (1)

where Beh represents behavior, BI is behavioral intention, S is the situation, P represents various aspects of the person, C is the expected costs of the behavior, and B is the expected benefits of the behavior. Our interest here is in a particular behavior, engaging in an interpersonal argument. While our design does not include a direct observation of arguing behavior, meta-analysis shows that behavioral intentions are highly correlated with behaviors (r = .83, Kim & Hunter 1993), and so BI serves us as a suitable proxy – that is, Beh is approximated by (~) BI. We theorize that behavioral intention to engage in a face-to-face argument will be a function of the characteristics of the situation that might or might not invite an argument, individual differences among people, and anticipated costs and benefits of arguing. S, P, C, and B can be operationalized in many ways. We will test only one set of instantiations, one collective example of how the model might be applied.

Equation 1 is essentially a cost-benefit model that makes room for personal and situational influences on the assessment of costs and benefits. Cost-benefit models are common in the social sciences and have a good record of accurate predictions in many domains. They go by various names, such as Subjective Expected Utility models, Predicted Outcome Value theory, Social Exchange Theory, Utility Theory, and others (e.g., Lave & March 1975; Thibaut & Kelley 1959; Uehara 1990).

Several particular applications of this general theoretical orientation are

supportive of our current project. The literature shows, for example, that some formulation of costs and benefits predicts behavioral intentions, relational engagement, conflict engagement, and conflict resolution. Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) showed that an algebraic combination of positive and negative beliefs predicts attitudes, and that similar combinations of attitudes and norms predict behavioral intentions. Marek, Wanzer and Knapp (2004) found that the costs and benefits implied in one's first impression of another person predicted whether roommate relationships would persist and be constructive. Similarly, the positivity of one's expectations about a relationship predicted one's emotional engagement in the relationship, the amount of interaction, and the intimacy of exchanges (Ramirez, Sunnafrank, & Goei 2010). Bippus, Boren, and Worsham (2008) found that people who felt they were under-benefitted in a relationship were angrier, more critical, and more avoidant during conflicts, compared to people who felt properly- or over-benefitted. Vuchinich and Teachman (1993) analyzed data indicating that the likelihood of ending riots and family arguments increases as they go on because their costs increase; in contrast wars and strikes become entrenched. Both pairs of results were predicted from the premise that the prospects of concluding a conflict can be projected from the momentary and projected costs of continuation. These findings encourage us to theorize that people's intentions to argue or not will be predictable if we know how the people project their costs and benefits if they were to argue.

The S, P, C, and B elements of Equation 1 can be operationalized in a great number of ways, with each set of instantiations essentially providing a separate specification and test of Equation 1. Here, our main situational variable is the type of argument topic: whether it is personal, public, or occupational. Johnson (2002; Johnson et al. 2007) has shown that whether an argument concerns a personal or public *topic* (i.e., whether the argument is about something that directly affects the nature or conduct of the arguers' personal relationship or not) predicts how people think about and react to the argument. This is a distinction between whether the topic is internal (private) or external (public) to the conduct of the interpersonal relationship. Which of us should drive the car to the polling place is a private topic but who should be the next senator is a public one. We add workplace topics to Johnson's list in the expectation that these are also common topical sites for arguments, and seem to us to have a character intermediate between personal and public matters. The key person variables here are *argumentativeness* and *verbal aggressiveness* (Infante & Rancer 1982; Infante &

Wigley 1986), which are important to many arguing phenomena (Rancer & Avtgis 2006). Argument topic (S) and both argumentativeness (P) and verbal aggressiveness (P) are variables that have been very useful in understanding and predicting argument behaviors and beliefs.

Our understanding of the costs and benefits of engaging in arguments is taken from Paglieri's (2009) work. He identified nine factors that should affect people's decision whether to engage or not. We have reduced these to seven, making use of previous concepts and scales whenever possible. The *cost* of arguing refers to the cognitive effort involved, one's emotional exposure, and one's estimates of unwelcome relational consequences. The *benefits* of arguing immediately index what an arguer might get out of the interaction if it were to go well. The likelihood of *winning* is important in projecting possible benefits to an argument. A key consideration in whether outcomes might be attainable is whether the other arguer is expected to be *reasonable*, or might be stubborn or truculent. The *civility* of a possible argument has to do with whether it would be pleasant and productive, or angry and destructive. Whether an argument is thought to be *resolvable* or not has important consequences for relational satisfaction and other valued outcomes (e.g., Johnson & Roloff 1998). People feel that it is *appropriate* to engage in some arguments but not in others, and this has implications for whether participation would be more or less costly.

Expected costs (C) and benefits (B) are measured with essentially the same scales, arranged so that if a high score represents an estimate that an argument would be costly, a low score would imply that it would be beneficial (or vice versa). At this point in our theoretical development, we suppose that these are continuous linear matters rather than, say, threshold or step-function considerations. These cost and benefit measures are discriminable on their face, and if they should prove to be highly correlated, this will be substantively informative without endangering our test of the basic model. Dividing the general ideas of cost and benefit into several specific measures makes it empirically possible for a person to project engagement as being both highly beneficial and very costly, low in both respects, or high on one and low on the other.

Equation 1 specifies only that behavioral intentions will be some function of S, P, C, and B, without indicating the exact functional form. Our theory predicts that intention to engage will be heightened when benefits are expected to be substantial and decreased when costs become predominant. We predict that the

intention to argue will be highest when the argument is expected to be resolvable, civil, low in effort, successful, appropriate, and beneficial, and when the other person is anticipated to be reasonable. We expect people to prefer non-engagement in the opposite conditions. Estimates of costs and benefits are specific to a particular argument and we understand these estimates to be the proximal causes of the decision to engage. But those estimates may well vary according to the type of argument topic (S) and the arguers' predispositions for argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness (P). Furthermore, the size of the effects of C and B on the decision to engage may also be moderated by S and P (i.e., cost estimates may be more forceful in one situation rather than another, or for one type of person rather than a different one). We expect to replicate findings indicating that people high in argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are more likely to engage. Since Johnson has shown that personal topic arguments are more involving that public topic ones, we expect that the causal system will reflect this difference, because public topic arguments have been found to be less costly (especially in emotional terms) than personal issue arguments. We make no hypotheses about the job topic arguments, since these have not previously been compared to personal and public arguments. While the P variables might have direct causal effects on the engagement decision, we expect that their effects will tend to be indirect, influencing and then being mediated by the cost and benefit estimates. We test our expectations by means of a structural equation model (SEM) that will reveal both the direct and indirect effects of P, C, and B on the intention to engage in arguing. The S variable's influence should be apparent when we contrast the structural equations predicting intention to engage for personal, public, and workplace topics.

3. Method

3.1 Procedures

Data were collected online. Respondents filled out the argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer 1982) and verbal aggressiveness (Infante & Wigley 1986) instruments, along with demographic items. Each participant then read stimuli describing a situation that invited an argument with a close friend, dealing with a personal, public, or workplace topic. Each participant responded to all three stimuli. The responses had to do with costs, benefits, and behavioral intentions. The study was approved by the Institutional Review Board at the first author's institution, where the data were collected.

3.2 Respondents

A total of 509 undergraduates at a large public Mid-Atlantic university in the U.S. provided data in exchange for extra credit in undergraduate communication classes. 207 (41%) were men, and 302 (59%) were women. Their average age was 20.1 years (SD = 1.83). Freshman constituted 11% of the sample, sophomores 32%, juniors 31%, and seniors 25%. Most (53%) self-categorized themselves as Euro-Americans. Asian-Americans (11%), African-Americans (10%), and Hispanic-Americans (5%) were also common in the sample. The other respondents were scattered among other ethnicities and national origins, or declined to answer.

3.3 Argument Topics

Three argument topics were used in the study. All three were designed to invite but not require the respondent to participate in an interpersonal argument. In other words, they each constituted the first half of a confrontation stage (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004). All described the other potential participant as a "good friend" to control for relationship with the other person. The public topic concerned musical preferences: the friend remarks that the respondent's preferred sort of music is "awful." The personal topic dealt with the friend's new romantic partner. The respondent has not been enthusiastic about the relationship, and the friend says that the respondent has been holding back and should be more supportive. In the workplace topic, the respondent and friend work together, and the friend says that the respondent has not been doing his or her share of the work, placing more burden on the friend. In each case, the respondent might plausibly have engaged in a disagreement with the friend's standpoint or might have found some way to avoid an argument. The topics represent the S element in equation (1). The full text of the three topics is reported below:

PUBLIC TOPIC: You and a good friend are both very fond of music. Besides just listening to lots of music over the radio and on iPods, when you have a little extra money, both of you like to go to fairly expensive concerts. You really like different sorts of music, however, and always have. One day when you're just spending a little time together, your friend makes a remark about how good the sort of music s/he likes is, and says that the kind of music you like is awful.

PERSONAL TOPIC: You and a good friend have just had a third person come into your lives because your friend has been dating him/her. The problem is that you and the third person really don't get along very well. You don't like him/her

because you don't trust him/her to treat your friend well, and he/she doesn't seem to like you, either. You and the third person have made some effort to be pleasant to one another for the sake of your common friend, but your friend has begun to notice that you seem to be holding back a little. One day when you're just spending some time together, your friend makes a remark about how you don't seem very sincere about liking the third person, and that you really should make more of an effort.

WORKPLACE TOPIC: You and a good friend work together in an office. You have essentially the same job and your common boss gives the two of you similar work to do. Your boss pays attention to how you're doing on your current tasks, and when one of you has finished, your boss gives that person the next set of assignments. You think that the two of you work at about the same pace and do about the same quality of work. But your friend has apparently begun to feel that you're not quite doing as much as he/she does. One day at work when you're just spending a little time together without much to do, your friend makes a remark about how you don't seem to be doing your share and that he/she is a little resentful about having to do extra work.

3.4 Measures

The P elements in Equation 1 were argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. As is the case with the other measures in the study, they were assessed with five-choice Likert items. Both are twenty item scales supposed to be composed of two ten-item sets. Argumentativeness (Infante & Rancer 1982) measures the motivation to attack another person's position, and resolves into a measure of argument-avoid and another of argument-approach. Verbal aggressiveness (Infante & Wigley 1986) is an index of one's predisposition to attack another arguer's character or qualities, and has been shown to have a two-factor structure (Levine et al. 2004). One factor measures pro-social impulses and the other, which Levine et al. suggested is the more genuine measure of verbal aggressiveness, measures anti-social inclinations.

The C and B elements of Equation 1 were measured in several ways. *Cost* of arguing was measured with ten items, dealing with the time and effort expected, complexity of the anticipated argument, likelihood of emotional exposure for self and other, and the possibility of damaging the friendship. *Benefits* of arguing involved six items asking globally whether the respondent would regret the argument or find it beneficial. The other's expected *reasonability* was

operationalized with six items that referred to whether the friend would be stubborn, reasonable, open-minded, and mature. *Resolvability* refers to the estimate of whether the argument could be productively concluded (Johnson & Roloff 1998). The likelihood of *winning* asked for projections about who would win the argument and who had the better supporting evidence and reasons. *Appropriateness* included seven items asking whether this was the right time, place, topic, and person for an argument. *Civility* (Hample, Warner, & Young 2009) is a set of ten items asking the respondent to say whether the argument would be cooperative, hostile, open-minded, and so forth.

The dependent variable is behavioral intention to engage in an argument, and this was assessed separately for each of the argument topics (S). Seventeen items were used. These expressed the respondent's willingness to argue, to exchange reasons and evidence, to confront, to concede, and so forth.

Descriptive statistics including Cronbach's alphas for all these variables are presented in Table 1. Table 2 shows the correlations between the trait measures and the other variables for each topic type. These are provided for the benefit of future meta-analysts, and readers should notice that these variables are calculated by simply averaging their component items, with reverse scoring as appropriate. Other results in this report concern the latent variables calculated as part of our structural equation modeling.

4. Results

4.1 Measurement Model

Structural equation modeling (SEM) has two steps. First, the measurement model must be evaluated. The measurement model refers to our theorized connections between particular response items and the concepts they are supposed to measure. Although we planned that a particular set of items (e.g., for appropriateness) would represent the general concept we specified, whether those items measure it properly is an empirical question. In SEM terms, the individual items are indicators and the general concept (e.g., appropriateness) is a latent variable. Latent variables are unmeasured and are understood as the unobserved causes for the values of the indicator items. Only with a passable measurement model can the theoretical model (here, Equation 1's instantiations) be properly assessed.

We conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA) on our measures. Because

LISREL (a standard SEM software package) does not permit missing data, our sample size for these and other SEM analyses is 473. Given the number of parameters involved in the study compared to our sample size, we conducted separate CFAs on the trait and then the cost, benefit, and intention measures. We parceled indicators for each measure (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman 2002). This involves averaging two or more indicators to create a composite indicator. The purpose of parceling is to permit some of the random measurement error to cancel out before the indicators enter the model. Each parcel had two to five indicators, and we created three or four parcels for each latent variable. Details on the parcels are available from the authors.

The trait measures were argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness. Hamilton and Hample (in press) have recently shown that two of the argumentativeness items (items 16 and 18 in the standard numbering) seem to form an ability factor. Items 16 and 18 loaded poorly on the proposed ability factor in this study and so these items were dropped from our analyses. This left four trait measures: argument-approach, argument-avoid, VA-prosocial, and VA-antisocial. The CFA was reasonably successful in spite of a significant overall fit test: c^2 (48, N=473) = 129.49, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .061, c^2/df = 2.70, NFI = .96. All of the parcels had substantial R^2s with their latent variables, ranging from .45 to .80.

The remaining variables assessed the costs, benefits, and intentions for the three argument topics. All these variables were included in a single CFA. The third parcel for *winning* had an R^2 less than .10 for all three topics, and so was dropped from the analyses. In addition, one item from *benefits* performed badly in the exploratory factor analysis used to inform the parceling, and that indicator was dropped as well for one topic. The CFA was again reasonably successful in spite of a significant fit test:

$\chi 2$ (2208, N=473) = 5934.75, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .071, c^2/df = 2.69, NFI = .89. The R^2 between the parcels and their latent variables ranged from .21 to .87.

Tests of the measurement model showed it to be a reasonable fit to the observed data. The latent variables (e.g., argumentativeness) are well defined by their indicator variables (i.e., their response items). If there is a problem in the overall analysis, it will be attributable to the underlying theory and not to the

measurement techniques.

4.2 Structural Model

The second phase in SEM is usually more theoretically interesting than the measurement step. The theory (here, our instantiation of Equation 1) specifies a set of causal relations among the latent variables. This causal system is called the structural model. It models the possibility of causal influence from exogenous variables (those not theorized as caused by any other variables in the system) to endogenous variables (those that have at least one cause in the system). The idea is to test the theorized set of relationships among the latent variables against the observed relationships. If the observed and theorized relationships are similar (i.e., they "fit" one another), the structural model is successful. A successful structural model is in turn good evidence for its generative theory.

Our initial structural model defined the P variables (the subscales for argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness) as causes of the cost and benefit estimates, and the cost and benefit variables then were modeled as causing the behavioral intentions. Fit statistics for this model were χ^2 (3291, N=473) = 9541.24, $p < .001$, $c^2/df = 2.90$, RMSEA = .076, NFI = .84. However, the most notable result was a null one. None of the P variables had significant effects on any of the cost-benefit variables. Without exception, the paths from the P variables to these estimates were nonsignificant. Prior to discarding the P variables entirely, we explored the possibility that they might instead have direct effects on the behavioral intention measures. One of them did, although only for the public issue topic. Therefore we retained the P measures in the model, but placed them in the same causal phase as the cost-benefit variables. An interesting implication of the lack of influence of P variables on the C and B elements is that the estimates of cost and benefits in argumentative contexts seem to be fairly person-independent matters, at least insofar as argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness are concerned.

After trimming the model by eliminating the nonsignificant paths between the exogenous and endogenous latent variables, we obtained a reasonably good fit for the new model: χ^2 (3090, N=473) = 7485.53, $p < .001$, $c^2/df = 2.42$, RMSEA = .064, NFI = .88, CFI = .92. The main results are best conveyed by the structural equations. All the coefficients detailed below are statistically significant. The coefficients are unstandardized. Error terms are omitted. All the variables are

measured on the same 1 – 5 metric.

BIPub = .12*ArgApp + .18*Civil – .10*Reason + .53*Win – .18*Inapprop (2)

BIPers = .54*Win – .14*Inapprop + .07*Benefit (3)

BIWork = -.17*Unresolv + .15*Cost + .70*Win – .08*Inapprop (4)

The R^2 for each equation was substantial. The behavioral intention to argue on a public topic was predicted with an R^2 of .66. For personal topics, the figure was .61. For workplace topics, the R^2 was .73.

Table 3 reports the correlations among the endogenous variables as well as those within each topic's set of cost-benefit exogenous variables. The BI intercorrelations indicate that intention to engage in argumentation had some consistency from topic to topic (about 10% – 20%), with the public and personal topic intentions least strongly related. The correlations among the exogenous variables reveal that for the most part, these latent variables had quite consistent covariation across topic types. Particularly strong relations appeared between these pairs: unresolvability/civility, civility/cost, unresolvability/reasonability of other, civility/reasonability, and reasonability/cost. Given the direction of scoring, all of the correlations seem to be reasonable. Several other pairs also had noticeable relationships. As a consequence of these correlations, the exogenous variables that lack a direct path to intention had indirect effects that passed through other exogenous variables. The strength and consistency of several of these relationships suggest that it may be possible to simplify future models by condensing some of the cost and benefit conceptions.

As Equations 2, 3, and 4 imply, the intention to engage in arguing has different causes depending on the topic type. The public topic argument was the only one to show any effects for a P variable, engagement being more likely for those having high argument-approach scores. Public topic arguing was also more likely when the argument is projected to be civil, the respondent feels confident of winning, when arguing would be appropriate, and when the other party is expected to be unreasonable. This last finding was unexpected. We had supposed that engagement would be more attractive when the potential arguing partner is projected to be reasonable. These are not the same considerations as for the other two topic types. For the personal topic (Equation 3), the strongest

consideration was whether one would win the argument, somewhat supplemented by a sense of potential benefit, and inappropriateness was again a deterrent. In the workplace (Equation 4), intention was highest when one expected to win, even at some cost, and when the argument was projected as being resolvable and appropriate. The positive coefficient for cost was also unexpected. We projected that higher costs would make engagement less likely.

The only predictors that appeared in all three equations are winning and appropriateness, and of the two, regression coefficients show that winning was far more important; in fact, it is the most important predictor in all three equations. These two variables had the same sign in each equation. The other person's expected reasonability was relevant for the public topic, but not for the other two types. Benefit was mainly a consideration for the personal topic, and cost only in the workplace. So although intention to engage was well predicted for all three topic types, the intention-relevant considerations were quite different. In this study, the S variable for Equation 1 was far more important than the P variables: The P variables had little predictive effect, but distinguishing among the topic types produced different structural equations. Two effects (cost in Equation 4 and reasonability in Equation 2) were unexpected. Below we will revisit our initial understandings of cost and other's reasonability.

5. Discussion

People do not have to argue whenever arguing is invited. One can be challenged, or provoked, or confounded, and any of these makes arguing possible but not necessary. In pragma-dialectical terms (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004), we can find ourselves partway into a possible confrontation stage, needing to make the next move. In response to the protagonist we might change the topic, fall silent, concede, or otherwise avoid engagement. Or we might express disagreement. Should that occur, the original protagonist might then move away from the matter, or might initiate the opening stage of discussion. In the opening stage arguers make joint decisions about how to proceed. However, somewhere in the confrontation stage or in the transition to the opening stage, people must decide whether or not to engage in arguing. This has been a social scientific investigation of when the decision to engage is made and when it is rejected.

The most general statement of our theory is in Equation 1, which posits that the engagement decision will be influenced by one's general predispositions, situational features, projected costs, and projected benefits. Given the

innumerable possible ways of implementing this general view, we adapted Paglieri's (2009) theory for empirical use. We operationalized personal variables as argumentativeness and verbal aggressiveness; situational variables as topic (public, personal, or workplace); and costs and benefits as resolvability, civility, other's reasonability, costs, prospects of winning, appropriateness, and possible benefits. Several variables – most notably the traits – fell out of the model. Others had only indirect effects rather than the direct ones we expected. Two had effects that we did not anticipate. A fair judgment is that we have not confirmed our model, but have begun to develop it.

Our final structural equation model was a reasonably good match to our data. The most stringent assessment of fit is the c^2 test, but it tends to report significant departures between a model and a data set when sample sizes are large and so is often discounted. Here we know that while our measurement model was reasonable it was also imperfect, with the consequence that its departures were carried forward into the fit test for our structural model. In our view, the most important results were the R^2 results for Equations 2, 3, and 4. They indicate that our structural model is able to account for about two-thirds of the variance in engagement intentions.

The most influential predictor in Equations 2, 3, and 4 was winning. The expectation one would win the argument had a very strong and positive relationship to one's willingness to engage. We suppose that the prospect of winning carries two sorts of rewards. One is the likelihood of achieving whatever instrumental aims are involved in the argument – getting agreement on music, on the dating partner, or on workload. The other is a positive feeling – perhaps of pride, superiority, dominance, or the thrill of victory. A glance at Table 3 shows that winning has some connection to benefits, although other pairs of exogenous variables are more closely associated. So both sorts of motive – personal and instrumental – may well be in play here.

The other exogenous variable that appeared in all three structural equations was inappropriateness. While not as influential as winning, it has a consistent effect on the intention to engage. Appropriateness scales involved the propriety of arguing on that topic, with that person, and at that time. We conceived inappropriateness as a cost of arguing, but it obviously has some connection to the situation as well.

In fact, all of our cost and benefit measures reflect the circumstances of the potential argument. This is because an actual argument is always situated and always takes place in concrete reality. In that sense, everything in our model except the traits can be understood or re-understood as situational. One might win against one opponent but not against another; more benefits might accrue in one argument compared to another; one antagonist might be reasonable and another truculent; and so forth. It is interesting that the P variables essentially disappeared from our models (excepting the relevance of argument-approach to the public topic). Other scattered evidence has suggested that the influence of personality tends to evaporate once an argument is joined (Hample 2005), and the present results imply that our participants responded in that way instinctively. Cost and benefit estimates appear to be situationally calibrated without much influence from the personal traits we have studied here.

Two of our results were unexpected. For the public topic engagement was more likely the *less* reasonable the other person was thought to be. In the workplace, the *higher* the costs the more likely the respondent was to decide to argue. We thought that other's reasonability would promote engagement and that high costs would discourage it. Our best explanations of these unexpected findings have to do with the argument topic types.

Public topics can be about social issues, ideas, or minor interests (Johnson 2002). Here, the public topic was about musical taste. For some people some of the time, arguments might be taken up for the sake of entertainment (Hample 2005). Perhaps on a topic such as musical preference, it might be more fun to argue with a stubborn opponent who would keep the interaction going.

Another possibility – one that is of more methodological concern – concerns how people interpret the word "argue." Commonly arguments are seen as nasty episodes, unproductive and threatening (Benoit 1982; Gilbert 1997). Benoit showed that when people expect an exchange of reasons and disagreements to be pleasant and constructive, they call the episode a "discussion." The place of other's reasonability in Equation 2 is consistent with the idea that one can only engage in an "argument" with an unreasonable opponent; otherwise one will be discussing. If this is so, we will need to be very careful in working with these ideas in other languages (a Romanian data collection is under way, and one in Italy is planned).

High costs encouraged arguing on our workplace topic (Equation 4). The particular topic we chose – the accusation of laxity and the consequent over-burdening of one's friend – may have been seen as having notable costs to begin with. Light complaints (implying minor costs) might be disregarded at work or might call out some sort of conciliation, just to smooth things over. If this reasoning is correct, perhaps high costs are a prerequisite to workplace arguing. However, the same line of thought might make a similar prediction for personal topics, and we did not see a positive loading for cost in Equation 3. Another possible explanation of this result is that the very fact of being ready to suffer high costs in arguing is an effective way of rebutting the accusation of laxity, by demonstrating with one's own behavior that the person does not fear efforts but rather embraces them when they are in the common interest. Conversely, the actor may feel that avoidance might lead, in this particular case, to confirming the opponent's accusation ("You see? You avoid committing to argue when it is too effortful, the same way you skirt your workload and let me struggle on your behalf!"). Since the accusation of laxity is specific to our workplace scenario, this line of reasoning may explain why a positive association between high costs and intention to argue is not observed in the other situations. Moreover, if this explanation is correct, it implies that such an association will emerge whenever an accusation of laxity is launched, regardless of whether this happens in a public, personal, or workplace context.

This investigation did not offer much support for the importance of the P element in Equation 1, but the S variable was quite important. Situations can be distinguished on many grounds. Here we chose to feature Johnson's (2002) distinction between personal and public topics, and added workplace topics to her list. We found the distinction among topic types to be important. The intention to engage had only modest consistency from one topic to another (varying from 10% to 20%), and our structural equations were noticeably different from one topic to another. Although winning was a predominant predictor and appropriateness a lesser one for all three topics, the effects of civility, other's reasonableness, the argument's perceived resolvability, benefit, and cost depended entirely on which topic was in play. We only instantiated each topic type with a single example in this study, so we are a long way from offering firm conclusions. But we are encouraged that topic type will prove to be an important consideration in understanding why people engage in arguing and why they don't.

Finally, using scenarios to manipulate situational variables proved to be effective, but it also inevitably introduced other variables that were not contemplated by the model and yet may have had an impact on the respondents' estimates. If we look carefully at the scenarios used in this study, some potentially relevant factors appear: for instance, the personal and workplace scenarios involve an accusation against the respondent, who is supposed to have done something wrong, whereas nothing of the sort is present in the public scenario; similarly, in the public and personal scenarios the matter of the dispute is fairly subjective (tastes in the first case, feelings in the second), while the workplace scenario is about settling an objective matter (whether or not the respondent did a fair share of work); moreover, the attitude of the respondent towards the friend is characterized differently across all scenarios, as an attempt to help in the personal case (respondent tried to get along with his/her friend's partner, even though the friend was not satisfied by the effort), while in the workplace scenario the respondent was just doing a fair share of work (although the friend does not think so), and in the public scenario the topic of discussion was musical tastes, with no pro- or anti-social attitude towards the friend. The fact that these and other similar factors may have influenced the participants' responses is no reason to abandon scenario-based manipulations of situational variables. It simply suggests that further research is needed to provide more robust and fine-grained assessment of the model, including studies that use other methods to operationalize situational factors.

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Appendix Tables

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Multi-Item Measures

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Multi-Item Measures

	Cronbach's Alpha	N	Mean	SD
Argument-avoid	.85	509	2.70	.65
Argument-approach	.84	509	3.37	.57
VA – prosocial	.78	509	3.29	.53
VA – antisocial	.82	509	2.69	.60
Behavioral Intention				
Public	.87	509	3.56	.52
Personal	.84	490	3.22	.49
Workplace	.90	490	3.48	.57
(Un)Resolvability				
Public	.75	508	2.82	.64
Personal	.80	488	2.71	.64
Workplace	.80	489	2.58	.62
Civility				
Public	.84	508	3.58	.58
Personal	.80	489	3.35	.54
Workplace	.80	489	3.38	.55
Reasonability				
Public	.68	509	3.23	.62
Personal	.74	490	3.13	.62
Workplace	.71	489	3.24	.57
Costs				
Public	.80	508	2.72	.61
Personal	.80	489	3.23	.57
Workplace	.79	489	2.99	.55
Winning				
Public	.69	490	3.19	.51
Personal	.66	480	3.16	.48
Workplace	.76	478	3.29	.55
(In)Appropriateness				
Public	.87	508	2.63	.70
Personal	.84	490	2.69	.66
Workplace	.85	489	2.85	.70
Benefits				
Public	.83	507	2.94	.66
Personal	.80	487	3.24	.65
Workplace	.80	489	3.25	.61

Note. Means and standard deviations are on a 1 to 5 scale.

Table 2

Correlations Between Exogenous and EndogenousVariables

	VA Prosocial	VA Antisocial	Arg-Avoid	Arg-Approach
VA Prosocial				
VA Antisocial	-.38			
Arg-Avoid	.32	-.00		
Arg-Approach	-.04	.26	-.51	
BI Public	-.05	.10	-.31	.44
Uresolv Public	-.15	.24	.00	.02
Civility Public	.33	-.33	-.02	.10
Reasnbl Public	.23	-.19	.07	.01
Cost Public	-.12	.23	-.02	.11
Win Public	.09	.06	-.13	.27

Inapprop Public	.00	-.02	.30	-.24
Benefit Public	.07	.03	-.22	.24
BI Personal	-.06	.06	-.14	.19
Ureslv Personal	-.15	.17	.11	-.10
Civil Personal	.23	-.29	.02	.05
Reasnbl Persnl	.28	-.14	.07	.08
Cost Personal	.01	.13	.05	.03
Win Personal	.12	.09	.06	.20
Inapprop Persnl	-.00	.11	.17	-.12
Benefit Personl	.13	-.01	-.12	.18
BI Work	.05	-.01	-.23	.33
Uresolvbl Work	-.12	.17	.06	-.06
Civility Work	.20	-.27	.02	.06
Reasonbl Work	.19	-.09	.05	.02
Cost Work	-.05	.15	.02	.06
Win Work	.10	-.02	-.09	.18
Inapprop Work	-.04	.04	.16	-.16
Benefit Work	.10	.02	-.15	.17

Note. Correlations with absolute values of .09 or higher are significant at $p < .05$.

Table 3

Correlations Among Endogenous and Exogenous Latent Variables

Endogenous Variables, All Topics						
	BIPub	BIPers				
BIPers	.31					
BIWork	.44	.42				
Exogenous Cost-Benefit Variables, Public Topic						
	Unreslv	Civility	Reasnbl	Cost	Win	Inappr
Civility	-.59					
Reasnbl	-.66	.70				
Cost	.47	-.67	-.63			
Win	-.05	.28	-.05	-.11		
Inappr	.25	-.34	-.08	.25	-.38	
Benefit	-.13	.02	.13	.06	.23	-.18
Exogenous Cost-Benefit Variables, Personal Topic						
Civility	-.64					
Reasnbl	-.52	.66				
Cost	.37	-.39	-.75			
Win	-.01	.26	.01	.21		
Inappr	.35	-.42	-.20	.04	-.37	
Benefit	-.34	.40	.36	-.10	.52	-.45

Exogenous Cost-Benefit Variables, Workplace Topic						
Civility	-.76					
Reasnbl	-.53	.74				
Cost	.45	-.55	-.65			
Win	-.25	.27	.08	.09		
Inappr	.29	-.28	-.20	.14	-.21	
Benefit	-.27	.35	.38	-.20	.39	-.18