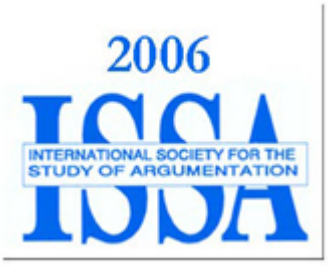
ISSA Proceedings 2006 – The Argumentative Framework Of Imperial Righteousness: The War Discourse Of George W. Bush



On May 25, 2006, U.S. President George W. Bush and British Prime Minister Tony Blair held a joint press conference in Washington, D.C. In response to a reporter's question whether either leader thought he had made any mistakes during the War on Terror, Bush said that his "tough talk" might have "sent the wrong signal to people." He noted that his use of phrases such as "bring it on" and "wanted, dead or alive" could have been "misinterpreted" in "certain parts of the world" (Bush, May 25, 2006). Bush's statement seemed to signal a new, more nuanced phase of rhetoric in the War on Terror. Yet with the exception of Bush's contrition on May 25, his rhetoric concerning the War on Terror during the first half of 2006 has supported a grand strategy that seeks to foster American empire. As the War on Terror continues in its fifth year, Bush's rhetoric has had to shift from the crisis response rhetoric he employed immediately after September 11th to a rhetoric that we call imperial righteousness. The rhetoric of imperial righteousness validates the American prerogative to utilize military power in the cause of right. This rhetoric features four themes: democracy and freedom, national security, the nature of the enemy, and American morality.

While American foreign policy objectives such as the quest to extend and maintain the American empire may remain stable, such objectives cannot be achieved without a grand strategy. A grand strategy "tells a nation's leaders what goals they should aim for and how best they can use their military power to attain those goals" (Art as cited in Brower, 2004, p. vii). Rhetoric is essential for the execution of a grand strategy and the rhetoric of imperial righteousness is a critical component of the Bush administration's grand strategy for the War on Terror. This paper will discuss the nature of American empire, examine the construct of a grand strategy, and describe the four rhetorical themes of imperial righteousness.

Bacevich argues that the drive toward empire is the controlling and unifying force underlying American foreign policy across every administration of the 20th and early 21st centuries. Spokespersons and critics of a presidential administration often argue that the administration is implementing new (either bold or misguided) foreign policy. Bacevich, however, argues, "Those who chart America's course do so with a clearly defined purpose in mind. That purpose is to preserve and, where feasible and conducive to U.S. interests, to expand an American imperium" (2002, p. 3) Historian William Appleman Williams called U.S. foreign policy "Open Door imperialism," naming it for Secretary of State John Hay's Open Door Notes in 1899 and 1900 (Bacevich, 2002, pp. 25-26). Contemporary American foreign policy continues in the Open Door tradition of seeking to expand and strengthen economic markets as well as monitoring traditional military and security issues.

The rhetorical nature of American empire rests on several premises. These include Americans' belief in the unique capacity and responsibility the U.S. has "not simply to discern but to direct history" (Bacevich, 2002, p. 33), the assumption of American good will and reluctance to become entangled, and faith in the military power of the U.S. These premises are also expressed within the framework of grand strategy.

Hart offers an explanation of the concept of grand strategy by positing that the role of a grand strategy is to "coordinate and direct all of the resources of a nation or a band of nations towards the attainment of the political object of the war" (as cited in Brower, 2004, p. viii). This implementation would employ the military machine but additionally rely on the economic power, diplomacy, and national will with a vision that encompasses a "farsighted regard to the state of the peace that will follow" (Hart as cited in Brower, 2004, p. viii). Hart defines grand strategy as the complete utilization of the implements a nation has at its disposal to wage war militarily and rhetorically. The balance of the two is important so that the destructive power of force that might produce a backlash in public opinion is buffered by the rhetorical strategies that justify a nation's use of power in the international arena.

Richards believes that a grand strategy should indeed include action that produces positive effects on morale and public/world opinion (n.d.). Boyd suggested four functions of a "sensible" grand strategy that should guide nations in their formulation of a grand strategy (as cited in Richards, n.d.). First, the grand strategy should support the national goal, and indeed Gaddis concurs when

he argues that *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* published almost a year after September 11th was evidence of a crisis begetting a "grand strategy of transformation", in this case signaling the most sweeping shift in U.S. grand strategy since 1947 (as cited in Hentz, 2004, p. 7). Second, Boyd believes a grand strategy should bolster a nation's resolve while diffusing the adversary's resolve and attracting the uncommitted. Third, it should end the conflict on favorable terms, and fourth, sow the seeds to prevent future conflict.

Boyd does not clearly specify how the functions of the grand strategy are to be achieved; however, he does suggest a three-part approach that should be useful in the attainment of a grand strategy: a nation must address itself, it should discuss its adversaries, and it should evaluate the uncommitted and potential adversaries. The rhetorical dimensions of this construct are carried out in a multi-dimensional process. Our position in this paper is that the rhetoric of imperial righteousness is a means to achieve the goals of empire as part of the grand strategy of transformation formulated after September 11th.

Initially, Boyd suggests that when a country articulates the functions of a grand strategy it should give respect to itself by living up to its ideal, emphasizing its cultural traditions and experiences. We argue that the concepts of democracy and morality, as parts of imperial righteousness, allow Bush to simultaneously advance global democracy and espouse the virtues of America and the American character. Here the rhetoric is imperial in its philosophical and political hegemony and in its sometimes pompous displays of bravura, as well as righteous in its careful reflections of the nature of humanity and the American people.

Second, a country's leader should address its adversaries. Boyd believes that a nation should publicize the adversary's harsh statements and threats to highlight that the nation's survival is at risk. A nation should also critique the political agenda to show that it is not "in accord with any social value based either on the value and dignity of the individual or on the security and well being of society as a whole" (Boyd as cited in Richards, n.d.) We argue that this is precisely what the rhetoric of imperial righteousness achieves in the descriptions of the enemy and security. Here the rhetoric is imperial because it utilizes power and elevates the nation to a socially responsible guardian. It is righteous from a good-versus-evil dimension as well as on a Christian altruistic level.

We will examine four themes of imperial righteousness: democracy and freedom, national security, the nature of the enemy, and American morality.

The first theme of imperial righteousness concerns the twin concepts of democracy and freedom. Gaddis observed:

President Bush has insisted that the world will not be safe from terrorists until the Middle East is safe for democracy. It should be clear by now that he is serious about this claim; it is neither rhetorical nor a cloak for hidden motives. Democratization, however, is a long-term objective. (2005)

As America plows on with the conflict in the Middle East it is still not clear if the planting of democracy in Iraq will sprout a government that fully embraces democratic principles. However, the American empire, under direction of President George W. Bush, continues to spread the cause of democracy abroad and entrench it as a fundamental tenant of the American imperium.

The democracy theme is closely tied to the concepts of freedom and security and Bush replays those messages frequently to audiences. The theme of democracy argues that the United States embraces its democratic ideologies and seeks to promote that democratic agenda worldwide. In the 2006 State of the Union Address Bush came out quickly with the admonition that "We will choose to act confidently on pursuing the enemies of freedom" (January 31, 2006). He explained that freedom is continually threatened and that "Abroad, our nation is committed to an historic long-term goal – we seek the end of tyranny in our world" (Bush, January 31, 2006). He reasserted this concept in a radio address marking the formation of a national unity government in Iraq. Bush said, "By helping the Iraqi people build their democracy, America will deal the terrorists a crippling blow and establish a beacon of liberty in the Middle East – and that will make our Nation and the world more secure" (April 29, 2006). The confluence and interplay of the emotional connotations of duty, freedom, liberty, and security are the basic workings of Bush's symphonic ode to democracy and essential in creating the rhetoric of imperial righteousness with the democratic melody played in counterpoint to tyranny and freedom juxtaposed against terrorism and dictatorships. Bush said,

Dictatorships shelter terrorists, and feed resentment and radicalism, and seek weapons of mass destruction. Democracies replace resentment with hope, respect the rights of their citizens and their neighbors, and join in the fight against terror. Every step toward freedom in the world makes our country safer – so we will act boldly in freedom's cause. (January 31, 2006)

And again, to be sure the message was heard, Bush repeated, "We love our

freedom, and we will fight to keep it" (January 31, 2006).

In order to fulfill the imperial nature of this rhetoric Bush needs to prove the desire of others to seek freedom and the importance and duty involved in achieving the advancements that have been made in this international quest. He did so by saying that "Raising up a democracy requires rule of law, and protection of minorities, and strong, accountable institutions that last longer than a single vote" (Bush, January 31, 2006). Additionally, Bush conceded "Democracies in the Middle East will not look like our own, because they will reflect the traditions of their own citizens" but he insisted, "liberty is the future of every nation in the Middle East, because liberty is the right and hope of all humanity" (January 31, 2006). Bush restated this position at Kansas State saying, "I'm not saying to any country, you must have a democracy that looks like America. I am saying, free your people" (January 23, 2006). Additionally, Bush's belief that freedom is a right given to everyone by a higher power guides the action that he takes in international arenas. He confessed:
Part of my decision-making process is my firm belief in the natural rights of men and women; my belief that deep in everybody's soul is the desire to live free. I believe there's an Almighty, and I believe the Almighty's great gift to each man and woman in this world is the desire to be free. This isn't America's gift to the world, it is a universal gift to the world, and people want to be free. (Bush, January 23, 2006)

At the joint news conference with Blair in May, Bush said that "Because I believe that freedom will yield the peace. I also believe freedom is universal. I don't believe freedom is…a concept only for America or Great Britain; it's a universal concept" (May 25, 2006). There is no hidden rationale in this theory. If freedom is universal then the US is justified in promoting freedom in countries where they perceive freedom to be lacking – a simple warrant for the advocacy of American political hegemony and empire justified via imperial righteous. The rhetoric advocates empire in the cause of what is right. Success in the conflict can only be achieved by securing liberty and democracy in other countries to stifle terrorist tendencies and therefore make America more secure.

Bush defined success as: . . . a country where the terrorists and Saddamists can no longer threaten the democracy, and where Iraqi security forces can provide for the security of their people, and where Iraq is not a safe haven from which the terrorists – al Qaeda and its affiliates – can plot attacks against America. (January

23, 2006)

This self-serving altruism is designed to sell the imperial ideology by evoking the emotional themes implied within universal rights. Indeed, Bush does not attempt to defend the inherent philosophical constructs of democracy as a preferred political form, but instead side-steps the issue by diametrically positioning democracy with the enemy's philosophy that itself remains semi-defined. In almost condescending terms Bush said:
We got to step back and ask why. Why would they [al Qaeda et. al.] want to stop democracy? And the answer, because democracy stands for the exact opposite of their vision. Liberty is not their credo. And they understand a defeat to their ideology by the establishment of a free Iraq will be a devastating blow for their vision. (January 23, 2006)

The rhetoric of imperial righteousness does attempt to rationalize the benefit of democracy. For instance, Bush argued, "Democracy is the exact opposite of what they believe. They believe they can impose their will. They believe there's no freedom of religion. They believe there's no women's rights. They have a dark vision of the world" (May 25, 2006). Bush has set up an us-versus-them mentality where the adversary is generalized and is frequently referred to merely as "they."

Freedom is held up to fairly lofty standards in the rhetoric of imperial righteousness. It becomes the warrior that will defeat the enemy so vividly portrayed in the discourse. The overlap of democracy with a delineation of enemy, along with a history lesson, is used to demonstrate the conflicting ideologies. Bush said:
In the Middle East, freedom is once again contending with an ideology that seeks to sow anger and hatred and despair. And like fascism and communism before, the hateful ideologies that use terror will be defeated. Freedom will prevail in Iraq; freedom will prevail in the Middle East; and as the hope of freedom spreads to nations that have not know it, these countries will become allies in the cause of peace. (March 20, 2006)

Furthermore, the promotion of democracy is manifested and showcased by the holding of elections. Bush observed that in Iraq: In three different elections, millions of Iraqis turned out to the polls and cast their ballots. Because of their courage, the Iraqis now have a government of their choosing, elected under the most modern and democratic constitution in the Arab world. (May 25, 2006)

Bush concluded that, “the political track has been a vital part of having a country that can govern itself and defend itself” (May 25, 2006).

The second theme of imperial righteousness concerns national security – the nature of the threat and the scope of the activities necessary to defend against the threat. Bush first must articulate the threat. In one instance, he highlighted the threat by placing it in the context of an American narrative that emphasized peace and security from outside attacks. He observed, “We never felt there would be another attack like Pearl Harbor on our lands. And yet September the 11th changed all that” (Bush, April 6, 2006). Because this historical narrative has been violently interrupted, Bush warned, “When we see a threat, we have got to take the threat seriously before it comes to hurt us” (April 6, 2006). The threat to security that the September 11th attacks represent offers a lesson in how vulnerable Americans are. Bush observed, “The first lesson is that oceans can no longer protect us” (March 22, 2006).

The terrorist network spreads throughout the world, and thus necessitates a broad spectrum of security measures internationally and domestically. Bush is careful to address both fronts of engagement. Speaking in North Carolina, he said, “We must defeat the enemy overseas so we don’t have to face them here again” (Bush, April 6, 2006). He later described a two-pronged strategy for this international effort, enumerating that Americans would, “one, hunt down the enemy and bring them to justice, and take threats seriously; and two, spread freedom” (Bush, April 10, 2006). The need to spread freedom to other countries, such as Afghanistan and Iraq, in the interest of protecting U.S. security gives Bush a rhetorical basis for supporting a variety of U.S. efforts. This is consistent with Bacevich’s observation that, during the 20th century, “the architects of U.S. policy expanded the scope of concerns falling under the rubric of security” (2002, p. 121). Bush characterized the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan by arguing, “The decision to liberate Afghanistan was based first and foremost on the need to enforce the doctrine that I thought was necessary to protect the American people” (April 6, 2006). Bush also defended the continued U.S. engagement in Iraq by saying, “By defeating the terrorists in Iraq, we will bring greater security to our own country” (March 18, 2006). As he noted, “In the long run, the best way to defeat this enemy and to ensure the security of our own citizens is to spread the hope of freedom across the broader Middle East” (Bush, March 20, 2006).
The U.S. effort to conduct foreign and military relations in order to protect U.S.

security must also include non-military strategies, according to Bush. In his State of the Union speech, he said, “To overcome dangers in our world, we must also take the offensive by encouraging economic progress, and fighting disease, and spreading hope in hopeless lands” (Bush, January 31, 2006). Bush observed that the “global war on terror is fought on more fronts than just the military front” (April 6. 2006). He therefore recommended gathering and sharing intelligence and taking steps necessary to “cut off [the terrorists’] money” (Bush, April 6, 2006).

The effort to defend U.S. security must also take place in the U.S., according to Bush. In his State of the Union he advised, “Our country must also remain on the offensive against terrorism here at home” (Bush, January 31, 2006). Bush later defended his domestic surveillance program, saying, “ I’m not going to apologize for what I did on the terrorist surveillance program” (April 6, 2006).

The third theme of imperial righteousness is the nature of the enemy. One of Bush’s rhetorical challenges since September 11th has been to create and personify an enemy. Edelman noted that political enemies can “give the political spectacle its power to arouse passions, fears, and hopes” in audiences (1988, p. 66). The rhetorical creation of an enemy in a war situation helps motivate the people who fight the war because the enemy represents a dangerous force that must be defeated. The definition of the enemy also helps determine the purpose, strategy, and outcome of the war. We fight because the enemy threatens our values, we will use whatever strategies are most damaging to the enemy, and we know when the war is over because the enemy has been vanquished. The terrorist as enemy is not an individual who can be easily personified and therefore does not serve these rhetorical purposes suitably. Furthermore, the terrorist enemy resists traditional identification by office, political party, or even nationality. In addition, in his rhetoric Bush has tried not to conflate terrorism with Islam, so he must spend time in his rhetoric making careful distinctions rather than solely calling for action.

Bush has therefore had to work diligently to identify an enemy who can arouse strong emotions and give the War on Terror a clear focus. In his 2006 speeches he has used some of the more predictable descriptors of an enemy. The United States’ enemy in the War on Terror is “brutal”, “savage”, “cold-blooded”, and “relentless”. Bush describes them as “thugs,” “assassins,” and “killers.” While these labels establish that the enemy should be feared, they still do not describe exactly who the enemy is and how the enemy can be distinguished from friends or

allies.

In his recent rhetoric Bush has introduced a signifier to define the enemy in the War on Terror: ideology. Bush told an audience at Kansas State University, “It’s very important for the students here to understand that there is an enemy which has an ideology and they’re driven by an ideology. They make decisions based upon their view of the world . . .” (January 23, 2006). In West Virginia, he said he viewed the enemy “as people that believe in something; they have an ideological base” (Bush, March 22, 2006). At his press conference with Blair, Bush said about the enemy, “They have a point of view. They have a philosophy. And they want to impose that philosophy on the rest of the world” (May 25, 2006). In his remarks, Bush has variously described this ideology as “dark,” “totalitarian,” and “the opposite of our view of the world.” But he places as much emphasis on the existence of this ideology as he does on what the specific beliefs of this ideology are. This achieves a rhetorical goal: “ideology” serves as an umbrella term that denotes institutional forces such as the Taliban as well as amorphous entities like terrorists or insurgents. By stressing that ideology unites these different parties, this rhetoric also calls forth the idea of a network. Just as an ideology is a system of ideas, so are the enemies in the war on terror a network of people who work methodically to destroy other systems of belief and governance.

This means that people must be on guard against the enemy even if the terrorists or their work is not visible. As Bush noted at Johns Hopkins University: Some view the [September 11th] attack as kind of an isolated incident. I don’t. I view it as a part of a strategy by a totalitarian, ideologically based group of people who’ve announced their intentions to spread that ideology and to attack us again. (April 10, 2006)

The belief that the terrorist network is out there means that Bush must and can discern threats even when things appear calm. Bush argued that past foreign policy was reactionary and did not acknowledge festering problems. According to Bush, this outlook “provided a fertile ground for a totalitarian group of folks to spread their poisonous philosophy and recruit” (April 6, 2006).

The terrorists’ membership in a network also suggests strategies used by the terrorists and those who fight them. One of the reasons the terrorists are dangerous is that they utilize their own network to infiltrate and weaken other networks. Bush observed that the members of al Qaeda “plot and plan . . . from the far reaches of the world. They’re good at communications. They’re good at deception. They’re good at propaganda. And they’re about to strike again” (April

6, 2006). The terrorists engage in their conflict by weakening networks such as cities or local governments. Discussing the city of Tal Afar, Bush noted that the terrorists "exploited a weak economy" and "skillfully used propaganda to foment hostility toward the coalition and the new Iraqi government" (March 20, 2006). Of the attack on the Golden Mosque, Bush noted, "By attacking one of Shia Islam's holiest sites, they hoped to incite violence that would drive Iraqis apart . . ." (March 20, 2006). Terrorists understand and exploit human systems to advance their agenda.

In order to make these attacks, terrorists rely on their own networks to hide them. As Bush noted, "this kind of terrorist network that is ideologically bound needs safe haven. They need a place to hide. They need a symbiotic relationship with governments that will enable them to plot, plan and attack" (April 6, 2006). Those who oppose the terrorists must try to sever this network or, at the very least, not facilitate its work. Bush reminded an audience in January, "If you harbor a terrorist, you're equally as guilty as the terrorists who commit murder" (January 23, 2006). By defining the enemy in terms of a network, Bush can rhetorically commit other countries to either supporting or fighting this network.

While it is important to understand how terrorists use ideology to achieve their ends, it is also important for the president to construct an argument as to what motivates these terrorists. In Bush's case it is simple: the terrorists' ideology runs counter to "freedom" and "democracy." "Why would they want to stop democracy?" Bush asked. He answered, "because democracy stands for the exact opposite of their vision. Liberty is not their credo. And they understand a defeat to their ideology by the establishment of a free Iraq will be a devastating blow for their vision." (Bush, January 23, 2006). To put it simply, according to Bush, the terrorists "can't stand freedom" (March 22, 2006).

Among the network of terrorists who share this ideology, Bush also spoke specifically of two people who cut more traditional figures as enemies: Saddam Hussein and Abu Musab al Zarqawi. As described by Bush, both of them participate in the terrorist ideology and network. Both of them are also easy to personify in frightening terms. It is worth mentioning, however, that he has not dwelled on the enemy figure of Osama bin Laden, other than naming him as a correspondent of al Zarqawi.

American morality is the final component of the rhetoric of imperial righteousness. The religious nature of the rhetoric is undeniable as it postures a

Christian ethic as right, both morally and politically. But the rhetoric also suggests that we look to what is good and socially responsible as an obligation of empire. Bush provided a generalization of this morality in a speech at Kansas State University noting that his optimism about the future is tied to the American ethic testifying that "I'm optimistic about our future, and the reason I am is because I believe so strongly in what America stands for: liberty and freedom and human rights, and the human dignity of every single person" (January 23, 2006).

One factor that demonstrates the moral fabric of the American cloak is its resolve in the cause of right. In the 2006 State of the Union Bush bluntly asserted, "The United States will not retreat from the world, and we will never surrender" (January 31, 2006). In March Bush reiterated this theme by stating, "The United States will not abandon Iraq.… We will leave Iraq, but when we do, it will be from a position of strength, not weakness. Americans have never retreated in the face of thugs and assassins, and we will not begin now" (March 20, 2006). In terms of the vigilance of this resolve he continued by marking the obligation that the U.S. shoulders as a formidable superpower. He said, "Once again, we accept the call of history to deliver the oppressed and move this world toward peace. We remain on the offensive against terror networks" (Bush, January 31, 2006). As if to conjure the victory and make it appear, the mantra of victory is repeated. Bush said, "I am confident in our plan for victory, I am confident in the skill and spirit of our military. Fellow citizens, we're in this fight to win, and we are winning" (January 31, 2006). And at Kansas State University he said, "Look, this enemy cannot beat us. They cannot defeat us militarily. There's no chance" (Bush, January 23, 2006). Resolve is also used as a personal reference to Bush's own convictions. When the United Nations passed a resolution telling Saddam to "disarm, disclose, or face serious consequences," Bush remarked that "I'm the kind of fellow, when I – when we say something I mean it, like I told you before. And I meant it" (January 23, 2006).

The one element of morality that is evoked is the depiction of the soldier as hero and as the embodiment of the social responsibility that creates in America a sense of sacrifice and service. Bush frequently praises the armed forces for these sacrifices they make and "showing a sense of duty stronger than fear" (January 31, 2006). He believes that the heartening and inspiring sacrifices were worth it and that they are necessary, and also that there "will be more tough fighting ahead in Iraq and more days of sacrifice and struggle" (Bush, April 29, 2006).

Taking a cue from past State of the Union Addresses Bush read a letter from Marine Staff Sergeant Dan Clay who was killed in Fallujah. Sergeant Clay wrote:
I know what honor is.… It has been an honor to protect and serve all of you. I faced death with the secure knowledge that you would not have to.… Never falter! Don't hesitate to honor and support those of us who have the honor of protecting that which is worth protecting." (Bush, January 31, 2006)

On the third anniversary of the beginning of the "Liberation of Iraq" Bush noted that "And it's a time to reflect. And this morning our reflections were upon the sacrifices of the men and women who wear our uniform. Ours is an amazing nation where thousands volunteer to serve our country" (March 19, 2006). One of the more moving tributes to the soldiers is from Bush's speech in Cleveland where he read a letter written by Mayor Najim of Tal Afar who called the American troops "lion-hearts" and spoke of a "friendship sealed in blood and sacrifice" (March 20, 2006). The letter continued:
To the families of those who have given their holy blood for our land, we all bow to you in reverence and to the souls of your loved ones. Their sacrifice was not in vain. They are not dead, but alive, and their souls are hovering around us every second of every minute. They will not be forgotten for giving their precious lives. They have sacrificed that which is most valuable. We see them in the smile of every child, and in every flower growing in this land. Let America, their families, and the world be proud of their sacrifice for humanity and life. (Bush, March 20, 2006)

This expression of gratitude lifted the American soldier to the status of liberator and guardian.

American leadership is another trait of the morality rhetoric found in imperial righteousness. Bush explained the value of our leadership by explaining that the "only alternative to American leadership is a dramatically more dangerous and anxious world. Yet we also choose to lead because it is a privilege to serve the values that gave us birth" (January 31, 2006). In the conclusion of the State of the Union Address he again discussed leadership as an American obligation. He said that America "has been called to leadership in a period of consequence. We've entered a great ideological conflict we did nothing to invite" (Bush, January 31, 2006). Bush then linked this leadership with the courage necessary to fulfill the mission thrust upon the United States. In the press conference with Blair, Bush again noted the socially responsible nature of America's courage. He closed the

State of the Union by reiterating the prediction of victory in the name of freedom, saying, “We will lead freedom’s advance. And so we move forward – optimistic about our country, faithful to its cause, and confident of the victories to come” (Bush, January 31, 2006).

Bush also describes Americans as compassionate people who believe that every life counts and who want to make the world a better place. Bush believes that this belief system will contribute to world peace. Bush argued that the American philosophy, “that every person matters, that there are such things as human dignity and the basic freedoms that we feel, that becomes a huge catalyst for change for the better” (January 23, 2006).

Personally Bush’s morality is guided by a strong sense of faith. When asked what sustained him he replied, “I would summarize it: faith, family, friends. I am sustained mightily by the fact that millions of citizens – pray for me. I guess it’s just called faith” (Bush, January 23, 2006). Bush added that he believed in what he was doing and that he thought he was right. In the press conference with Blair, Bush said, “I strongly believe we did and are doing the right thing” in dealing with Saddam Hussein (May 25, 2006). A couple of moments later he reemphasized this by saying that “The decision to remove Saddam Hussein was right” (Bush, May 25, 2006).

Humility should also be a part of the American morality and while the saber rattling and boasting and threatening rhetoric may have its place, there is also a time to admit when plans went awry. Bush has never liked apology but when asked what regrets he had about the Iraqi situation he replied:

Saying, “Bring it on”; kind of tough talk, you know, that sent the wrong message to people. I learned some lessons about expressing myself maybe in a little more sophisticated manner, you know. “Wanted, dead or alive”; that kind of talk. I think in certain parts of the world it was misinterpreted. And so I learned from that. (May 25, 2006)

He continued, “And, you know, I think the biggest mistake that’s happened so far, at least from our country’s involvement in Iraq, is Abu Ghraib. We’ve been paying for that for a long time” (Bush, May 25, 2006).

In defining the rhetoric of imperial righteousness, three implications become apparent. First, the Bush administration uses the rhetoric of imperial righteousness to justify their policies to American and international audiences and to garner support for these policies. Second, the rhetoric of imperial

righteousness serves as a counterpoint to the terrorists' rhetoric that seeks to vilify American actions. The Bush administration uses this rhetoric to define America as an innocent and ethical party in world politics. While these implications are true of any administration's war rhetoric, there is a third implication that derives from the arguments used in the rhetoric of imperial righteousness. The use of universal terms such as freedom and democracy is a rhetorical device for unifying support for the administration's actions while defusing criticism. The premise that supports the use of these terms is the assumption that if one is against the war one must be against freedom and democracy. While some audience members support this premise, this rhetoric has a polarizing effect on both the American and international audiences. Others resent being placed rhetorically in the category of being against universal concepts such as freedom and democracy because they object to the war. The rhetoric of imperial righteousness thus helps explain the sharp division among Americans and the international community in support for the Bush administration's War on Terror.

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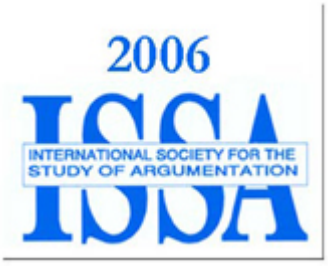
ISSA Proceedings 2006 – The Domain Of Rhetorical

Argumentation



Several contemporary argumentation theorists have tried to define a relationship with rhetoric, or even to integrate rhetoric in their theories. This is of course a welcome development seen from a rhetorician's point of view. However, I am going to argue that these theories miss important insights because they tend to define rhetorical argumentation too narrowly.

Typically, they define it with reference to the attitude that the arguer takes to arguing; being rhetorical means that one aims to win. In defining rhetoric this way, they overlook the fact that rhetorical argumentation as conceived by its leading thinkers, notably Aristotle, is defined with reference to a particular *domain of issues*. As a result, rhetorical argumentation has particular properties and a particular set of rules.

These properties which follow from the essential identity of rhetorical argumentation are the ones that modern theorists single out, mistakenly, as its essential features.

I will comment on three important contemporary theories of argumentation. I shall consider them in ascending order of their "friendliness" towards rhetoric.

First, there is Ralph Johnson's theory as set forth, primarily, in *Manifest Rationality* (Johnson, 2000). Johnson is one of the originators of "Informal logic" and has made valuable contributions to theory, focusing on the "dialectical" aspect of rhetoric; particularly well known is his distinction between the "illative core" and the "dialectical tier" of argumentation. I wish to emphasize that I see these contributions as highly needed and insightful; however, in this paper I concentrate on Johnson's attempt to define the difference between the rhetorical view of argumentation and the Informal Logic that he represents; here, I think Johnson's theory is inadequate.

He sees three main differences between the two views. First, Rhetoric emphasizes "the need to take into account the role of Ethos and Pathos. To be effectively rational, rhetoric will insist that the argument takes account of the human environment and that it, as well, connects with human sentiment. Informal Logic, on the other hand, sees the *telos* of rational persuasion as governed especially by Logos" (269). Secondly, "Rhetoric will not generally require a dialectical tier in

the argument" (270). And thirdly, "Informal Logic should tend to favor the truth requirement over the acceptability requirement, whereas rhetoric will, I believe, take the reverse view" (271). So let us call a spade a spade: "rhetorical" argumentation as Johnson sees it involves a willingness to set aside truth for the sake of acceptance by the audience, i.e., for efficiency.
This view is arguably tantamount to saying that rhetoric is (at least partly) defined by an unethical attitude; what matters in the present context is mainly that Johnson sees rhetorical argumentation as defined by the *arguer's attitude* rather than by a distinctive domain.

Secondly, I will take a look at some of the recent writings of Frans van Eemeren and Peter Houtlosser, dealing with the integration of rhetoric into argumentation theory (van Eemeren & Houtlosser 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002). What we see here is a stage in the development of the pragma-dialectical theory. With a background in "speech act" philosophy and a belief in the rational resolution of disputes that has much in common with Habermas, this school has taken an increasingly friendly stance towards rhetoric, and one that seems a good deal friendlier than Johnson's. But essentially they take the same view as in Johnson's third point: they see rhetoric as persuasive efforts aimed at "winning", i.e., at resolving a difference of opinion in *one's own favour*. As a result of this wish in the arguer to "win", rhetorical argumentation involves what they call "Strategic Manoeuvring", which manifests itself in three respects: 1) topical selectivity, 2) audience adaptation, and 3) presentational devices.

These three points clearly capture important aspects of rhetoric. But because they equate rhetorical argumentation with Strategic Manoeuvring, driven by the motive of winning, van Eemeren & Houtlosser, like Johnson, neglect how the dominant tradition in rhetoric itself tends to define rhetorical argumentation not in terms of the arguer's attitude or resources, but in terms of the *domain* covered. And in doing so they risk being caught on the horns of a dilemma: they envisage the peaceful coexistence of two ultimately irreconcilable motives. On the one hand, there is the bedrock belief of pragma-dialectics, the dialectical obligation to resolve a difference of opinion; and this entails an obligation for at least one of the debaters, possibly for both, to retract or modify their original standpoint. On the other hand, there is the motive, in the "rhetorical" arguer as defined by van Eemeren and Houtlosser, to resolve the difference of opinion in his own favour. It is obvious that if the two parties in a discussion both come to their common

dialectical enterprise with a "rhetorical" attitude, defined as a wish to win, then in at least one of them the dialectical motive and the rhetorical motive will clash. Hence, van Eemeren and Houtlosser's attempt to show how arguers may "meet their dialectical obligations without sacrificing their rhetorical aims" (1999, 481) is, I suggest, doomed to failure. They emphasize that the Strategic Manoeuvring by the rhetorical arguer must not be "derailed"; both parties must be committed to "maintaining certain standard of reasonableness" (2001, 151). But even without any derailment, we can predict a collision of two unstoppable trains here.

This is because van Eemeren and Houtlosser do not, any more than Johnson, see rhetorical argumentation as belonging to a certain domain of issues. Instead, they have a general model of argumentation which predicts that if all the rules of reasonableness are followed, consensus should ensue. Then how can both parties remain rhetorical in the sense that they wish to win? This question their theory cannot answer. They face this dilemma because they are unaware that rhetorical argumentation is rooted in a domain of issues regulated by other rules than dialectic.

The same is true of our third contemporary theory, that of Christopher Tindale (1999, 2004). His is by far the most rhetoric-friendly of the three theories we consider here. In fact, his view is that only a rhetorical theory of argumentation can be adequate. He states: "as a central human activity, argumentation is essentially rhetorical in ways that far exceed methodology alone" (19). Essential features of what Tindale understands by a rhetorical approach include the notion of "addressivity", i.e., the idea that argumentation essentially relates to and involves its audience; it is always, as he phrases it, "in audience". Similarly, it is always "in language", addressing and anticipating its audience in every linguistic choice that is made

While Johnson and the Pragma-dialecticians broadly agree to see argumentation in its entirety as a dialectical enterprise, Tindale sees argumentation, in its entirety, as fundamentally rhetorical. But like Johnson and van Eemeren & Houtlosser, Tindale fails to acknowledge that there might be a particular domain of issues that is natural or particular to rhetorical argumentation. Like them, he believes that one general theory accounts equally well for all kinds of argumentation, regardless of domain.

By contrast, the most important thinkers in the rhetorical tradition itself *do see* rhetorical argumentation as rooted in a certain domain of issues. This domain is

that of action: rhetorical argumentation is rooted in deliberation about choice, i.e., choices between alternative courses of action.

First and foremost among rhetorical thinkers is Aristotle. In the *Rhetoric* as well as in several other writings, particularly those on ethical and political subjects, Aristotle develops a theory centered on the notion of *deliberation*. In these writings, we find dozens of passages in which Aristotle analyzes its distinctive nature. Deliberation is what we do with Rhetoric; the two terms are in effect co-extensive.

In all his references to deliberation Aristotle consistently uses words derived from the word for will, determination, council or decision (*boulê*). The verb, in the infinitive, is *bouleuein/bouleuesthai* (debate, deliberate).

The key formulations in the Rhetoric are the following: "we debate about things that seem to be capable of admitting two possibilities" (Kennedy's translation); "we only deliberate about things which seem to admit of issuing in two ways" (Freese's translation) [*bouleuometha de peri tôn phainomenôn endechesthai amphoterôs echein*] (1357a). What this means is brought out in the following passage, which makes it clear that the stipulation about things which admit of issuing in two ways does not refer to all those things in the world on which people may argue and have two opinions, but only to those things that we may either choose to do or choose not to do:

As to whatever necessarily exists or will exist or is impossible to be or to have come about, on these matters there is no deliberation. … the subjects of deliberation are clear; and these are whatever, by their nature, are within our power and of which the inception lies with us (1359a).

The ethical works, which set forth Aristotle's teachings on virtue and character, are even more explicit in demarcating the activity of deliberation and the issues on which we may deliberate. The main passage is probably this from the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book III, iii (1112a; Rackham's translation):

As for Deliberation, do people deliberate about everything – are all things possible objects of deliberation -, or are there some things about which deliberation is impossible? The term 'object of deliberation' presumably must not be taken to include things about which a fool or a madman might deliberate, but to mean what a sensible person would deliberate about.

Well then, nobody deliberates about things eternal, such as the order of the universe, or the incommensurability of the diagonal and the side, of a square. Nor

yet about things that change but follow a regular process, whether from necessity or by nature or through some other cause: such phenomena for instance as the solstices and the sunrise. Nor about irregular occurrences, such as droughts and rains. Nor about the results of chance, such as finding a hidden treasure. The reason why we do not deliberate about these things is that none of them can be effected by our agency. We deliberate about things that are in our control and are attainable by action (which are in fact the only things that still remain to be considered; for Nature, Necessity, and Chance, with the addition of Intelligence and human agency generally, exhaust the generally accepted list of causes). But we do not deliberate about all human affairs without exception either: for example, no Lacedaemonian deliberates about the best form of government for *Scythia*; but any particular set of men deliberates about the things attainable by their own actions.

The *Eudemian Ethics*, a work that partly overlaps with and partly elaborates on themes discussed in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, supplements this description:
of things that can both be and not be, some are such that it is possible to deliberate about them, but about others it is not possible. Some things can either be or not be but their coming into being does not rest with us, but in some cases is due to the operation of nature and in others to other causes; and about these things nobody would deliberate unless in ignorance of the facts. But with some things not only their existence or non-existence is possible, but also for human beings to deliberate about them; and these are all the things that it rests with us to do or not to do. Hence we do not deliberate about affairs in India, or about how to square the circle; for affairs in India do not rest with us, whereas the objects of choice and things practicable are among things resting with us, and squaring the circle is entirely impracticable (1226a) … we deliberate about everything that we choose, although of course we do not choose everything that we deliberate about (1226b; Rackham's translation).

This passage repeats some of the stipulations from the *Rhetoric*, but here the issues that we may deliberate about are even more explicitly restricted to things that we may or may not *choose to do*.
It is significant that Aristotle uses the first person plural, in the middle voice (bouleuometha), for the things that we may deliberate about. It is characteristically something that "we" do reflexively, with each other, something done together. Similarly, his word for the deliberative genre (*sumbouleutikon*) is a

form derived from *bouleuein*, with an added *sum-*, which means that what we do is deliberate together.
Deliberation is central to Aristotle's ethical and political doctrines; through deliberate choices humans and citizens show their character. Accordingly, the deliberative genre is central to his theory of rhetoric, in fact it represents all of rhetoric; the words and stipulations Aristotle uses in defining the deliberative genre are the same that he uses for all of rhetoric and all three genres taken together.
To this discussion of the domain of rhetorical argumentation in Aristotle, we might add references to the rhetorical theories of Anaximenes of Lampsacus (author of the Rhetoric for Alexander), Cicero, Hermogenes, Boethius, thinkers from the Renaissance such as Agricola, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Thomas Wilson, or from modern times such as George Campbell, Hugh Blair, or Chaïm Perelman. This is the dominant tradition in rhetoric. It sees rhetorical argumentation as rooted in the domain of choice of regarding courses of action. We may say that this is a crucial insight, perhaps *the* fundamental insight in rhetorical thinking. This is the insight that modern argumentation theorists, who want dialogue or even integration with rhetoric, seem to ignore.

Why is this important? Because we have seen that deliberation is a distinctive domain in human argumentation with particular characteristics that are not captured by a general theory. Hence, any general theory of argumentation which fails to account for this distinctive domain (such as the theories we reviewed at the beginning) is incomplete. It overlooks the following facts:
In deliberation we do not argue about truth, nor about probability, not about opinions, but about choice. As Aristotle has it, "Choice (*proairesis*) is not true or false" (*Eudemian Ethics* 1226a).

Because rhetorical argumentation is about choice, it has a structure that is different from, and more complex than, argumentation about propositions. When we discuss whether a certain proposition is true or false, or even whether it probable, we essentially discuss *one* property of it; our discussion is in that sense *one-dimensional*. Hence we may in principle have a compelling argument for (or against) the proposition. But when we deliberate over a proposal, i.e., whether to choose a certain course of action, there will be many properties that may be predicated of it; for all of these we may discuss their truth or falsity (or their relevance, or their probability), and they may all influence our choice. These

properties may belong to many different dimensions in the sense that they are not "convertible" into each other, or into any common measure. For example, a given proposal may be *honourable;* but it may also be very *costly.* We may describe this by saying that Choice is *multi-dimensional*, and properties belonging to the different dimensions are *incommensurable* (on these concepts, see Kock 2003).

As one example of a typical issue in the domain of rhetorical argumentation we may take at brief look at crime legislation. Two important dimensions in this debate which can never be converted into the same common measure are, on the one hand, the minimization of crime, and on the other, the just punishment of crime, i.e., punishment as retribution. Especially if these two do not go together all the way, which outweighs the other? This is the sort of issue where we do not discuss truth or even probability, but where we deliberate about choice. In addition, the debate on crime legislation is also full of issues like the following: How much crime is there really? Do "three strikes" and other "tough on crime" policies really deter? Do rehabilitation programs actually rehabilitate? In these debates, truth or probability is what we look for. The example illustrates the distinct natures of the two domains. Or take another of the perennial deliberative issues: going to war. Even if we could agree on the economic cost of a given war, how do we weigh it against the benefits that the war in question is supposed to bring? And how do we calculate the cost in human lives?
So, in deliberation, there will be a plurality of considerations or dimensions that will and should enter into the debate. For each of these considerations taken in itself, debaters may have opinions that may be shown to be more or less true, or at least probable. But the fact remains that the various relevant considerations in such an issue belong to different dimensions, in the sense that none of these considerations, e.g., cost in human lives, can be reduced to one of the others, e.g., economic cost; nor is there a "common denominator", a "covering" unit into which all the relevant considerations may be converted, or, in a phrase from Stuart Mill, a "common umpire" to which all the considerations may be referred, yielding an objective calculation of what the pros and cons add up to, and which side adds up to most.

It also follows from the multidimensional structure of deliberation that there will generally be legitimate (relevant) arguments both for and against a given choice. Moreover, there is no objective way to add up the pros and cons in a given issue, no way to determine or calculate objectively which is the right choice (if there

were, we would not have a choice).

Hence, deliberating arguers may legitimately support (and continue to support) opposite choices. Arguers speaking for opposite choices are not obliged to resolve their difference of opinion. They are of course obliged to follow rules of reasonableness in arguing, and pragma-dialectics has taken the lead in trying to formulate such rules. But even if all conceivable rules of reasonableness are followed, which they seldom are, the nature of the domain of rhetorical argumentation is such that consensus will probably not ensue.

Finally, from the lack of a way to calculate objectively the relative weight of the pros and the cons follows that each individual in the audience (each judge/voter …) must subjectively assess the strength of the arguments for and against a given choice.

These are some of the crucial differences which set the domain of deliberation apart from the domain of issues where we discuss propositions. The whole discipline of rhetoric is based on a recognition of the distinctive nature of deliberation. It was for this domain that Aristotle developed rhetorical theory. This is the domain for which all the resources of rhetorical argumentation exist, and for which they are necessary. Yet the distinctiveness of this domain is one crucial insight that contemporary argumentation theories, despite all their willingness to integrate rhetoric, have failed to explore.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – 'Status Groups' Or A 'Free Market Of Ideas'? An Analysis Of A Romanian Intellectual Polemic In Pragma-

Dialectical And Critical Discourse-Analytical Terms

In 2004 a controversial book appeared in Romania, *Boierii minţii: intelectualii români între grupurile de prestigiu şi piaţa liberă a ideilor (Boyars of the Mind: Romanian intellectuals between status groups and the free market of ideas)* by Sorin-Adam Matei, a Romanian academic working in the USA. Drawing on Weber's concepts of 'charisma' and 'status', Matei claimed that Romanian public intellectuals are organized in terms of 'status groups', a so-called 'paramodern' type of social organization, combining traditional, 'aristocratic' elements and modern ones. He also used this claim to explain the perceived dysfunctions of the Romanian public sphere after 1989: instead of a democratic 'free market of ideas', a space distorted by power relations linked to the charismatic cultural capital of certain intellectuals, to group loyalties, interests and rivalries, a space where individual prestige is less a matter of the quality and quantity of cultural goods produced, than a matter of belonging to the 'right' intellectual caste.

The predominance of status groups in the cultural world, Matei argued, as well as the way in which they exploit market mechanisms, are 'distorting' the process of 'remodernization' after 1989 and only aggravate what others have called Romania's deficit of modernity. As an illustration of this alleged mechanism, Matei discusses the way in which H.-R. Patapievici (now a well-known writer and director of the Romanian Cultural Institute) was 'launched', some 10 years ago, by philosopher Gabriel Liiceanu, the leader of the most prestigious 'status group' during and after communism, that of the disciples of philosopher Constantin Noica (1909-1987).

The analytical framework of this paper is provided by a combination of Pragma-Dialectics (van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992, 2004, van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2002) and Critical Discourse Analysis, or CDA (Fairclough 1989, 1992, 1995, 2000, 2003, Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, Wodak et al. 1999). In my work so far (Ieţcu 2004, 2006, 2006a), I have focused on the contribution of public intellectuals to the processes of social change after 1989 and I have combined CDA with pragma-dialectical concepts in an attempt to expand CDA's analytical framework. For instance, I have assumed that a concept like *strategic*

maneuvering can throw light on the analysis, in CDA terms, of *discursive strategies of legitimation* of certain preferred ideologies in post-communism, or that the logic that has governed the *recontextualization* of certain western discourses in Romania after 1989 can be discussed in terms of certain *fallacious* ways of arguing.

Reconstruction of the argument

I am suggesting below a reconstruction of Matei's argument, which I take to consist mainly of coordinative argumentation in support of the standpoint (1): single arguments such as 1.1. and 1.2. have to be taken together in order to defend the standpoint (i.e. the mere *existence* of status groups would not support the standpoint sufficiently if they did not also *predominate* in Romanian cultural life, virtually to the alleged exclusion of other more democratic forms of organization). Arguments in support of the premise that status groups are a 'paramodern' form of organization, i.e. one which distorts modernization processes (1.1'), are also linked by coordination:

1. *Romanian intellectuals are turning Romania into a 'paramodern society', i.e. distorting the process of (re)modernization after 1989*.

[usage declarative 1: definition of 'intellectuals' as 'public intellectuals', i.e. those who are actively influencing public life]

[usage declarative 2: definition of 'paramodernity' as a system of social organization that combines modern and pre-modern elements, e.g. a belief in the existence of essential differences among social groups or categories, in the social role of elites and exceptional individuals, etc.]

1.1. *Romanian intellectuals are organized in status groups.*

[explanation: in order to obtain power in the cultural, academic, political field]

[usage declarative: definition of 'status group' as an elementary form of social life characterized by its closed character, certain forms of participation and access (initiation, rituals of apprenticeship) , certain forms of relations among members and identity mechanisms]**[i]**

[explanations for the emergence of status groups: exogenous causes – e.g. poverty of resources creates cultural monopolies; historically, Romania's modernization was accomplished by the intellectual elites; endogenous causes: individual 'charisma' structures the group into leaders and followers]

1.1'. Status groups are a paramodern form of social organization, which distorts

modernization.

1.1’.1a.1. In a modern society, the intellectuals are aggregated in a class system, i.e. social position and status are determined by the market; access to social position is not pre-determined but open.
1.1’.1a.1’. In a paramodern society, the intellectuals are aggregated in status groups, i.e. in closed, elitist communities, with non-transparent, undemocratic procedures of access, hierarchical relations, etc.

1.1’.2a.1. The organization of the intellectuals in status groups distorts free market mechanisms.
1.1’.2a.1’ The free market is an element of modernity.

1.1’.2a.1.1. The ‘Păltiniş’ group launched H.-R. Patapievici as a prominent public intellectual and ensured his commercial success.
1.1’.2a.1.1’. H.-R. Patapievici would not have enjoyed such public success if he had not been supported by the Păltiniş group.

1.2. *Romanian intellectuals are predominantly organized in status groups.*
1.2’. The predominance of status groups is characteristic of paramodernity.

As I indicate above, one of the sub-arguments adduced involves an *example* of how the functioning of the ‘Păltiniş’ group justifies the standpoint, in particular of how Patapievici’s reputation was allegedly ‘manufactured’ in the mid-nineties by Liiceanu’s public interventions. In the absence of such support, Matei argues, whether justly or unjustly, it is improbable that Patapievici would have enjoyed such market success.

2. *Critical reactions to Matei’s argument*
Matei’s book sparked off an intense polemic, which the weekly *Dilema* collected under the title ‘Why are the intellectuals quarreling?’ (June-July 2004). Fourteen prominent intellectuals answered the editor’s questions:
(a) ‘In your view, is there a battle for supremacy amongst ‘status groups’ in Romanian cultural life?’
(b) ‘If yes, can these groups be grouped along the ‘left’ vs. ‘right’ political axis?’
(c) ‘Is there a dominant group?’

Responses ranged from rejection of Matei’s standpoint as ‘aberrant’ nonsense, an expression of the ‘resentment’ of talentless people against those who have

succeeded on the cultural market, or a manifestation of 'political correctness' and 'cultural socialism', to views which basically conceded the truth of his claim, and reformulated it in terms of 'clans' and 'clientelist' relations.

I am arguing here that Matei's original standpoint was distorted by his opponents who chose to superimpose it onto a particular dichotomy, actually a false dilemma (between a radical form of liberalism and an extreme left-wing position) that has more generally governed the recontextualization of western political discourses in post-communism (Ieţcu 2006). Critics of the political involvement of the Romanian intellectuals have also discussed this in terms of a Manichean obsession with absolute, mutually exclusive dichotomies, which the intellectuals have furthermore dramatized in apocalyptic ways, so that any left-wing concept or movement has been equated with a dangerous enemy, a threat to western culture and civilization, while 'canonical' ultraliberal economic theories have been adopted uncritically as incontrovertible truths and infallible solutions (Iliescu 2005).**[ii]**

I also argue that appeals to the market by Matei and his opponents invoke the 'market' in at least two different senses. In the replies by Patapievici and Liiceanu (which I discuss below), the market seems to be understood, in a self-serving sense, as a *consumer market*. Thus, the preferences of the reading public, as reflected in sales figures, are assumed to provide conclusive proof against 'status group' theory and in support of the intrinsic quality of an author's work. In Matei's original argument, the 'market'(as in the 'free cultural market', or 'the free market of ideas') seems, however, to be used to refer to the public sphere, implicitly conceived as a *critical discursive public space*, a *dialogical* site, where judgments of value can emerge as a consequence of public space debate. It is questionable, in fact, whether the public sphere should be called a 'market' of ideas – the fact that it does, in this cultural polemic, illustrates in my view the power of a certain discourse about the free market, understood in the liberal economic sense, to act as an all-legitimizing discourse in post-communism.**[iii]**

Matei's attempt to explain the social role of the Romanian intellectuals is, of course, not singular. A variety of analyses have bee proposed after 1989, mainly focusing on the intellectuals' perceived failure to have a really strong impact on society. A particularly interesting and disturbing line of criticism (Miroiu 1999, Barbu 1999, Mungiu-Pippidi 2002, Iliescu 2005) raises the possibility that the intellectuals may not have been a genuine factor of modernization in Romanian society, that – in spite of their professed liberalism and their professed commitment to democracy – their public involvement has often been neither truly

liberal, nor truly democratic, but conservative, elitist, concerned with personal interest and gain, and at best ambiguous towards the fundamental values of modern liberal-democracies, towards modernity in general. The intellectuals are thus viewed as an 'elite which is incapable of modernizing itself', and is thus unable to contribute to the wider modernization of Romanian society (Mungiu-Pippidi 2002, p.170), as an elite which has proved incapable of transforming Romanian society from a 'status' society, based on 'clientelism' and 'tribalism' into a society ruled by the law, by fair, transparent and impersonal procedures.

2.1. *A refutation in terms of arguments from factual impossibility, self-contradictoriness and from the analogy with 'political correctness'*

According to H.-R. Patapievici (2004), Matei's explanation of Romania's deficit of modernity is false and illegitimate because

(a) it is factually impossible to manipulate people's economic behaviour to any significant degree;

(b) it is self-contradictory, and

(c) it is analogous with 'political correctness', which is a manifestation of 'cultural socialism', a form of 'American communism', etc.

In his answer to the first question, Patapievici begins by subtly reformulating Matei's theory so that status groups are redefined in terms of 'backstage maneuvers' and 'underground conspiracies'. In so doing he violates Rule 3, the *standpoint rule*, as Matei's emphatic point was that status groups are not to be understood in terms of conspiracies but as the natural correlate of a given stage of development, and that relationships that cement them (loyalty, friendship, love, admiration) are openly acknowledged (that they are so is in fact obvious from Liiceanu's own response, see below). He also violates Rule 6, the *starting point rule*, by presenting his own interpretation of status group theory in terms of backstage maneuvers as being allegedly shared with the reader, and by further postulating two possibilities (hypotheses) on its basis, in a would-be critical rationalist manner. He derives testable consequences from these hypotheses and shows that they are impossible or self-contradictory, which he takes as a conclusive falsification of the original hypotheses, therefore of Matei's standpoint. Here is a relevant fragment from Patapievici's text (my translation):

'… Matei's idea is that there is no genuine cultural market in Romania because the selection of authors through commercial success is replaced by a counter-selection, accomplished through the maneuvers of status groups. When there is

market success, this theory claims, what we are dealing with, in fact, is a success of marketing, achieved by status groups. It follows that it is not the market that establishes what is valuable, but backstage maneuvers. The backstage, in this theory, is in the hands of status groups, and the personalities that manage to have public impact, as well as the public's opinion about them, are but the *intentional* consequences of status group maneuvers. In other words, the cultural authorities of the Romanian public sphere are not real, because, instead of being produced publicly and transparently by market mechanisms, they are secretly manufactured behind the scenes, outside public control, by underground conspiring groups.

If this is true, then there are two possibilities. The market does exist, in fact, and status groups have to conspire to be able to manipulate it. In this case, those who take this view have to admit that their theory is nothing but a subspecies of the theory of the 'Protocols of the Priory of Sion', and their task, sociologically speaking, is to demonstrate analytically the mechanisms whereby a conspiratorial group can control the market success of a given author. In the case of H.-R. P., who has prompted the reflection advanced by Sorin Matei as an explanation for all the evils of Romanian culture, the author of the status group conspiracy theory has to analyze the social and institutional mechanisms whereby Gabriel Liiceanu, Andrei Pleşu, Sorin Vieru, Radu Bercea and Andrei Cornea (i.e. the 'Păltiniş Group') have turned me into a successful writer. In particular, Matei should be able to explain in concrete terms how it was possible for the cultural judgment of a few tens of thousands of people to be manipulated and their normal economic behaviour distorted (as if all of these people were 'forced' to buy the tens of thousands of copies of my books …). The second possibility is that, in fact, the market does not exist, all there is are relations between status groups, which take up all of public space, without remainder. In this case, it would follow that all published authors are exponents of one status group or another and that, in criticizing and condemning one or another status group, according to the taste of the moment, the author of this theory himself is only the exponent of a rival status group. But if so, the author of this theory ought to declare honestly that his theory was developed for the benefit of the Compania Publishing House (where his book was published) and of the Muşina status group (to which he admits that he belongs or has belonged) and ought to draw the inevitable conclusion that, according to his theoretical premises, any intellectual dispute is after all nothing but a non-intellectual episode in the Hobbesian battle for supremacy among rival

status groups. A poor, *nasty and brutish* hypothesis indeed.' (Patapievici 2004)
This part of Patapievici's argumentation can be looked at in terms of irrelevance and false dilemmas: it is doubtful whether the two alternatives he postulates are at all relevant to the argument they are supposed to help dismiss or that they are the only conceivable ones.**[iv]**
What is particularly interesting here is the fact that strategic maneuvering draws on a reductive understanding of the cultural field as a consumer market. This is rhetorically effective, as the neo-liberal concept of the free market possesses an almost unchallengeable legitimacy in post-communist Romania, yet it is dialectically unacceptable. It is, for one thing, questionable that the cultural field is reducible to a market. Secondly, it is questionable that commercial success can be used as proof of the impartial, undistorted functioning of the market. Patapievici seems to be relying here on a partially implicit argument which says:

(a) My books sell well.
(b) Sales figures are indicative of the intrinsic quality of a product.
(c) Therefore, my books possess quality in themselves.
In other words, the theory according to which their value is 'manufactured' by a status group is false.

However, the same evidence is used by Matei to support the opposite claim – that the market is being distorted, that Patapievici sells well only because he is *perceived* as an authority thanks to prior symbolic investment with authority by the relevant status group. The fact that Patapievici's books sell well says nothing about the quality of his work, as all sorts of cultural products of dubious quality often sell better than quality ones. As sales figures do not support claims about the intrinsic quality of a writer's work, the argumentation is irrelevant here (a violation of rule 4, the relevance rule), and supports at best a claim about the preferences of the public, whatever their source may be.
In his answer to the second of *Dilema's* questions, Patapievici translates the polemic into one between a view of culture as a 'republic of letters', in which values can assert themselves freely, independently of power relations, and one of culture as a field in which values are determined by backstage battles between contending groups. He dismisses the latter position by identifying it with an extreme left-wing position, i.e. what he calls 'political correctness', and by equating any criticism along the lines suggested by Matei with the 'fanaticism', 'brutality', 'aggressiveness' and 'primitiveness' allegedly embodied by 'political

correctness'. In Romania, Patapievici argues, the promoters of the 'cultural socialism of the American academic left' are trying to impose 'political correctness' onto the whole of Romanian society. They 'invent' enemies and condemn them through 'Soviet-style' instruments: 'ideological critique' understood as 'unmasking' and 'stigmatizing' the enemy. As the most visible examples of 'politically correct' people, he mentions, in a sequence of *ad hominem* attacks, a list of public intellectuals that have at various points expressed critical views about his work: Ion Bogdan Lefter, chief-editor of *Observator Cultural*, 'the Andreescu family – father and son, equal in fanaticism, differing only in intelligence and knowledge', and 'the Miroiu clan – who are colonizing entire faculties and disciplinary fields'. There are also less visible promoters, issued from the 'left-wing crucible' that dominates American and British universities, former recipients of scholarships or western funds, who are now 'opportunistically sniffing the air for careers' and take it upon themselves to promote 'cultural socialism' in Romania.

Leaving these unfair *ad hominems* aside, argumentation against Matei's standpoint is mainly by analogy, between the type of cultural critique that Matei develops and 'cultural socialism' or 'political correctness', as extremist manifestations of the western left wing:
'… As the generation of the 60's became institutionalized, a species of 'cultural socialism' appeared in the United States, whose enlightened ideology pursued the unification of all (recent or traditional) left-wing radicalisms under one militant umbrella: the political correctness agenda. Its fundamental claim is that groups know better than individuals what is good to think, what ought to be done, felt, etc. In order to improve society and eliminate all those conflicts which make social life complicated (inequality, xenophobia, discrimination, etc.), the solution proposed by cultural socialism is re-education, for individuals, and affirmative action, for institutions. (…) Cultural socialism sets out to eliminate conflicts in society, by re-educating us all in the politically correct spirit and requiring the state to abandon its claim to liberal neutrality and intervene openly in favour of the 'progressives' (i.e. of the new ideologues of political correctness). If traditional socialism has failed to destroy the capitalist economy, although it has hated it more than anything else, it has now, by means of cultural socialism, set out to destroy the traditional liberal culture of western civilization.

There are very few intellectuals who defend cultural socialism in Romania. There

are some, however, who – by inducing a feeling of guilt within society and stigmatizing adversaries – would brutally and aggressively like to impose the cultural socialism of the American academic left (which, in a 1994 article that was promptly condemned by those who are politically correct, I called the 'American communism'), as the only modern solution to Romania's problems. (…)

On the whole, the conclusion is that the ideology of political correctness, as well as Marxism, for which it acts as a neo-Puritan American cousin, needs enemies, against which it may legitimize itself as necessary and which it may grow parasitically upon. These enemies have to be invented. By means of which instrument? Here the bizarre perverseness of the defenders of political correctness manifests itself fully. The most aggressive among them are attempting to gain public recognition with the help of an ideological instrument that has not been used in this country since the time when Romanian culture was ruled by Soviet power: ideological critique aimed at unmasking and stigmatizing the enemy. (…) Understanding what is wrong with an opponent in the realm of ideas comes down to branding him with the politically correct stigma. You will agree that there can be no question of a debate in these conditions. It is however easy to obtain spectacular summary executions.' (Patapievici 2004)

The way in which Patapievici dismisses Matei's status group theory by equating it with an allegedly extremist position is characteristic for the writer, who has tended to equate any manifestation of the western left with an extreme, totalitarian left. In so doing, he is using a questionable analogy:
(a) 'political correctness' is illegitimate and dangerous;
(b) the type of cultural critique developed by Matei is analogous to 'political correctness';
(c) therefore, it is also illegitimate, dangerous, etc. While rhetorically effective, and drawing on presumed shared consensus on the illegitimacy of the extreme left, this move is highly dubious from a dialectical perspective: it is not at all clear why a theory which is critical of the intellectuals' role has to be dismissed in these terms, why it is equated with an extremist left-wing ideological position.

As elsewhere in his writings, Patapievici is also using a form of disjunctive syllogism in a situation which cannot be so simply reduced to two mutually exclusive alternatives:
(a) any manifestation of the left is an extreme and totalitarian embodiment of the left;

(b) either you reject the left or you have to embrace an extreme form of the left;
(c) the left has to be rejected.

Like false analogies, false dilemmas are violations of Rule 8, the *argument scheme rule*. On the whole, Patapievici is pursuing the same strategy of delegitimation of the left as in all of his writings (Patapievici 1996, 2001): an extreme, distorted representation is constructed for the left-wing idea that is at issue, then an allegedly valid disjunctive syllogism is postulated between this representation of the left and the corresponding neoliberal or libertarian conception, which leads to the conclusion that only the latter view is legitimate, correct, etc. The novelty here is that a theory which is not necessarily recognizably left-wing, such as Matei's status group explanation, is equated with an extreme left-wing ideological position, and the whole polemic is then projected onto the background of the same Manichean and reductive representation of the political spectrum.

2.2. *A refutation in terms of arguments from empirical evidence, from underlying causes and from the analogy with communism*

Like Patapievici, Gabriel Liiceanu draws an analogy between the theory of status groups and the extreme left, communism in particular. Matei's theory is said to be a 'fiction', in the same way in which communism was an 'enormous fiction', a 'continuous mystification', a case of entire societies allowing themselves to be 'fooled'. The analogy may again seem far-fetched, unless we think of Matei as necessarily a representative of the western academic left, and of the left in general as necessarily extreme and therefore illegitimate and dangerous.

Liiceanu's text draws mainly on ethical appeal. He claims he finds the theory of status groups (which he also interprets in terms of conspiracies and backstage maneuvers) hard to believe. On the other hand, he argues, what he has believed all along was that his world was held together by 'friendship', by 'sentiments that have stood the test of time', by 'loyalty', the 'seduction of intelligence', the 'splendour of talent', by the capacity for 'laughing together', by a 'sincere and inexhaustible power to admire others'. The cultural field itself is viewed as a democratic space (the 'courtyard of culture', whose gate is never locked), where no power relations operate other than the power of individual talent or genius. Furthermore, Liiceanu places resentment, envy and frustration at the root of any critical reaction against the Romanian public intellectuals (a causal argument against Matei's standpoint). Here is a fragment of his response (my translation)**[v]:**

‘I am therefore symmetrically inclined to view those who bustle about spasmodically under the fences of the courtyard of culture, unable to reach for the latch (which is never locked) and to step inside naturally and decently, as a little noisy crowd of culturally frustrated and impotent individuals, who speak and write bad Romanian. Because they cannot put together anything that is not altogether bad, because, in the absence of genius [‘în absenţa harului’] their products are experimentally juvenile, vulgar and hypocritical, instead of being authentic and tortured by the demons of the thing that *has to be* said, all they can do is to spit over the fence and shout loudly that those who are inside have not accomplished much and that, through intricate maneuvers and unimaginable astuteness, they have, … , duped people into reading them.

What is hilarious about this bunch of people who feed on resentment (…) is that they keep invoking in this context, which they adorn with liberal economic theories, the one little word which they should keep silent about, if only out of an elementary sense of caution: *the market,* the cultural market. It is in fact the market that gives nightmares to these people, that anonymous and uncontrollable vote which decides (…) , who exactly has anything to offer to others. Neither myself nor any of my friends who sell each title in tens of thousands of copies (…) have the power to do these two things … : 1) convince people to buy our books against their will; 2) prevent our ‘adversaries’ from writing wonderfully well, selling their books and becoming famous.’ (Liiceanu 2004)

It is noticeable that both Patapievici and Liiceanu are invoking the market in support of their argument, and in a similar way, as a consumer market, as a purely economic mechanism based on the law of supply and demand. I discuss the way in which the market appears in these arguments in the next section**.[vi]**

3. *Sites of liberal neutrality: the market and the public sphere*

O’Neill (1998) defines the free market in relation to the concept of neutrality. In liberal theory, a liberal polity is one that is neutral between different conceptions of the good, in the sense that it does not attempt to prescribe the good, but creates the framework within which different conceptions of the good can be pursued. Neutrality is also extended to include economic arrangements: the market is seen as a procedurally neutral device through which people can pursue their own conceptions of the good life (O’Neill 1998, p. 17). Neutrality thus understood is required by the pluralism of modern societies.

Two distinct responses are customarily made to the question of pluralism, each

associated with a distinct account of the nature of the site of neutrality. One response is the *dialogical* response: pluralism requires a space for conversation between different conceptions of the good, a space which is itself neutral between those conceptions. A second response is a *non-dialogical* response which rejects the possibility of a rational conversation between different conceptions of the good and argues that pluralism requires a-rational mechanisms which allow individuals with different conceptions to coordinate their activities without conversation (O'Neill 1998, pp. 16-20).

These two responses correlate, O'Neill argues, with two different sites of neutrality. In the dialogical account, the site of neutrality is the political public sphere, the agora or forum, whereas in the non-dialogical account it is the market. The former is a site where individuals are able to discuss competing conceptions of the good, subject norms and values to rational argument, with the purpose of arriving at some consensus or at least at mutual understanding of different views sufficient to allow cooperation on common problems. Ideally, this site of neutrality takes the form of a *critical discursive public space*, as defined for instance by Benhabib (1992, pp. 73-98), following Habermas (1962/1989).

It is, I believe, clear from the way in which the market is invoked in the arguments by H.-R. Patapievici and G. Liiceanu that they have in mind the second, non-dialogical understanding: consumer behaviour and sales figures stand proof that certain cultural products are deemed valuable, worth having. The market, Liiceanu says, is an 'anonymous, uncontrollable' mechanism, which indicates spontaneously what exactly is good or valuable and what is not.

The question I would like to ask at this point is the following: can the cultural market, as a market of ideas, function only or primarily as a non-dialogical site of neutrality? In my view, the cultural market should not be understood primarily by analogy with the market of material commodities, but by analogy with the political public sphere, as an inevitably dialogical site. Of course, the cultural market, as public sphere, should not prescribe or predetermine which cultural products are valuable, desirable, but allow for public debate to determine that. Although neither Patapievici nor Liiceanu seem to have this latter understanding in mind, it is in this latter sense, of a critical discursive public space, that the 'market' seems to be understood in Alina Mungiu-Pippidi's (2004) reply, which I discuss briefly below.

4. *The Romanian cultural market: the absence of a critical discursive space*

Mungiu seems to concede the gist of Matei's analysis: the Romanian cultural world is organized in 'clans' and 'cliques', engaged in 'autistic' clashes, and pursuing their own material interests. Their confrontations are not confrontations of ideas but confrontations of interests: there is in fact no ideological element besides self-interest. What the intellectuals are doing, she argues, is trying to prevent the emergence of

'… a large open market, with clear value criteria, such that, if someone produced something exceptionally good, everyone would acknowledge it, and if someone produced something of dubious quality, there would again be a critical mass or people, (…) that would point this out to him. They are instead struggling to form small autarchic enclaves, with their sponsors, their small publics and their small group of friends, … where they might go on … praising each other's genius. In other words, (…) we can say that their social organization is in clans, or, more simply, in cliques. And clans often enter into furious competition with one another. Unfortunately, these battles are only at an incipient stage, and so primitive that no common zone can be discerned at the intersection of these groups, no common space that might potentially develop into a public sphere. On the contrary, the intensity of these autistic clashes is without precedent.'(Mungiu-Pippidi 2004)

Unlike Patapievici, who imagines major threats coming from the extreme left-wing, Mungiu sees no ideology at work, certainly not a left-wing ideology, except opportunism, and no public sphere developing, just autistic clashes personal interest:

'I think there is no ideology involved here. Clans do not have ideologies. This assiduous cultivation of one's own interest accompanied by a fabulous self-legitimizing discourse has nothing ideological about it. It would be in fact hard to find ideological differences when nobody is left-wing here. (…) We do not have a left wing because the intellectual's social solidarity with other classes is null. (…) Briefly, what ideology? We are busy people.' (Mungiu-Pippidi 2004)

5. *Conclusion*

To sum up, in using the market only in the sense of a consumer market, as a site where no dialogue is needed to determine what is valuable, both Liiceanu and Patapievici are maneuvering strategically in support of their own standpoint, which apparently refutes Matei's analysis. Their argumentations are however dialectically unacceptable, to the extent that they reduce the cultural field to the

economic field (violation of the *relevance rule*), distort the original standpoint by assimilating it with 'backstage maneuvers' and 'conspiracies' (violation of the *standpoint rule*), and attempt to legitimize a certain cultural *status quo* by appeal to a questionable, though convenient, analogies and Manichean dichotomies, involving extreme, totalitarian versions of the left (violations of the *argument scheme rule*).

As I have argued, to invoke sales figures and commercial success is irrelevant to an argument about cultural values. However, such ways of arguing can be highly effective, rhetorically, as they fit in with the overall emphasis on a maximally deregulated free market as a defining element of transition to liberal democracy in Romania after 1989 and thus seem to possess an inherent legitimacy. These arguments are implicitly viewing the market as a privileged site of liberal neutrality, but do not address at all the question of the democratic public sphere, of the critical discursive public space that the *cultural* market ought to open up, where the norms and values promoted by the public intellectuals ought to be subjected to critical debate.

'The Left as evil', by analogy with 'Communism as evil' has, since 1989, provided the intellectuals with an extraordinarily fertile topical choice, which has conveniently served various strategies of self-legitimation in the political and cultural field. The way in which western discourses were appropriated or recontextualized in Romania has (unfortunately, in my view) been governed by the 'logic' of a practice of radical delegitimation of the left in general, rather than by that of a practice of designing and legitimizing an alternative social project.

The Romanian intellectuals (among whom Liiceanu and, later on, Patapievici were prominent) set out in 1989 as defenders of truth in the public sphere, on the model of the Central-European dissidents. In pragma-dialectical terms, their orientation towards 'dialectical' goals was extremely explicit and gained them considerable moral and political authority. The obsessive reiteration, in their political writings, of the terrible truths about communism succeeded in making almost invisible the extent to which their arguments were in fact often open to the charge of fallaciousness, obscured the fact that the dichotomies they constructed for argumentative purposes were often only false dilemmas, based on Manichean, reductive representations, their analogies spurious and misleading, and their arguments less oriented towards an impartial consideration of a variety of perspectives than to the legitimation of a set of monological, dogmatic truths. The polemic around Matei's book, including the intellectuals' violent reactions, can be said to reveal a different dimension of their political involvement, having to do

more with the goal of legitimizing and reinforcing their own symbolic capital than with the pursuit of 'truth' – a more 'rhetorical' orientation than commonly assumed.

NOTES

[i] Status groups (as power groups) are structured around the prestige of their members. This prestige is not necessarily gained by 'democratic means' or by the neutral play of market forces, but is generated by privileged access to intellectual resources, 'enlightenment', 'recognition' and 'confirmation' by the group. Status groups are not the product of any conspiracy but the reflex of a certain type of society, i.e. a closed society with strong hierarchical relations (Matei 2004, pp. 12-53).

[ii] The aversion for the left (understandable in a post-communist country) has unfortunately bred an aversion for democracy, seen simplistically as the power of the people, therefore as yet another anti-elitist system of government – hence, the ambiguous attitude towards democracy of the Romanian intellectuals, committed to perennial Platonic values, hierarchies, canons, and relatively skeptical towards liberal value pluralism (Barbu 1999, Miroiu 1999, Mungiu-Pippidi 2002, Iliescu 2005).

[iii] Matei's own stand on this is often unclear: it would seem that he himself fails to distinguish properly between the cultural field and the economic field, and fails to see that the former is not reducible to the latter, although it is being increasingly colonized by the latter. He often seems to take for granted that it good that the cultural field is functioning increasingly as a market.

[iv] The first hypothesis is, allegedly, that the market does exist and status groups are conspiring to manipulate it. From this, Patapievici derives the testable consequence that it is indeed possible to force tens of thousands of people to buy certain books against their will. The implicit conclusion is that this hypothesis is false because the testable consequence will most certainly be falsified by experience. The second hypothesis is that the market does not exist because all of public space is confiscated by status groups fighting for supremacy; this hypothesis seems even less probable and it is refuted by showing that it contradicts Matei's own theory , as his own theory would now be the expression of the interests of a status group, and Matei himself would presumably reject this hypothesis. However, the dilemma 'either there is no market or there is a market' is a false dilemma, and fallaciously oversimplifies the issue. What Matei argues is that the market is dominated by status groups, that there is a predominance of

status group which causes distortions: there is a market but its functioning is distorted by these centres of cultural power. So what Matei says cannot be reduced so simplistically to two alternatives.

[v] The word 'har' – literally, 'divine grace' – is noticeable here, and seems to confirm Matei's analysis in terms of 'charisma'.

[vi] For reasons of space I am leaving aside a possible discussion of rhetorical devices of a non-argumentative type (pathos and ethos): notice both the extensive use of ad hominems ('the Miroiu clan') and of metaphor ('those who bustle about spasmodically under the fences of the courtyard of culture') with the purpose of discrediting one's opponents.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – The Argumentative Construction Of Emotions: The Example Of Indignation In Pro-Life Rhetoric

1. *Introduction*

For a little more than a decade, the field of argumentation studies has seen a growing interest for the topic of emotions. The aim of the present paper is twofold. I will first attempt to tackle the complex theoretical debate which opposes *normative* and *descriptive* approaches (2.). As far as normative approaches are concerned, the treatment which emotional appeals receive in Douglas Walton's pragmatic theory of fallacies will be the center of my attention (2.1.). I will then look at Christian Plantin's model, which aims not so much at *evaluating* emotional appeals as to *describing* how emotions are argumentatively constructed by speakers (2.2.). In the second part of the paper, I will proceed to a case study and examine a recent example of American pro-life rhetoric (3.). Focusing on a corpus of short essays written by an anti-abortion writer named Larry Bohannon ("Evil in Our Time" and "What About Abortion?"), I will try to capture the essential features of the argumentative construction of a particular emotion – namely indignation.

2. *What about emotions? Contrasting two lines of thought in argumentation theory*

When it comes to emotions, two lines of thought can be distinguished in argumentation theory. From a *normative* point of view, a fully-fledged argumentation theory should be able to *evaluate* emotional appeals – and not merely to *describe* them. Thus, the analyst is to specify the criteria which allow to discriminate between " reasonable " and " fallacious " uses of emotional appeals. From a descriptive point of view, however, the analyst's main task is to provide an accurate description of emotional appeals without necessarily passing judgment on their degree of reasonableness.

2.1. *Douglas Walton's normative approach: a pragmatic theory of fallacies*

I will start by taking a look at normative approaches – which, in my view, are best represented by Douglas Walton's work on emotions (1992, 1997).

This work can be considered as pioneer work, as it firmly rejects the *negative ontology* which dismisses emotional appeals on the ground that they are emotional appeals and cannot thus be anything but fallacious. Walton claims that " there is nothing wrong *per se* with appeals to emotion in argumentation, even though appeals to emotion can go wrong and be exploited in some cases " (1992, p. 257). It is important to notice that Walton does not consider emotional appeals

as fallacious *a priori*: in his view, potential fallacies lie in *contextual uses* of emotional appeals, but not in their very *essence*. Far from an essentialist perspective, Walton aims to sort out the " right " uses of emotional appeals from the " wrong " ones. What is at stake, then, is not the mere linguistic description of emotional appeals, but their explicit *evaluation* in a given context of dialogue. The analyst must ultimately pass judgment and label emotional appeals as " right " or " wrong " considering the textual and contextual evidence at hand. Walton's refusal of a merely descriptive approach appears quite explicitly in the first pages of *The Place of Emotion in Argument* : " [T]his book […] is a normative analysis of the conditions under which appeals to emotion are used correctly or incorrectly in argumentation " (1992, p. 28).

This normative approach to emotional appeals is to be situated within the more general framework of Walton's theory of fallacies. Following the revised version of this theory, arguments are evaluated as " reasonable " or " fallacious " according to communicative norms rather than according to universal logical standards. Whereas Charles Hamblin (1970) laid considerable emphasis on the criterion of deductive validity and defined fallacies as arguments which seem valid but are not, Walton chooses a more *pragmatic* perspective. He claims for his part that fallacies are " technique[s] of argumentation that may in principle be reasonable, but that ha[ve] been misused in a given case in such a way that [they go] strongly against or hinde[r] the goals of dialogue " (1992, p. 18). This definition suggests that in order to pin down a fallacy, the analyst first needs to subsume the context in which speakers are interacting under a *normative model of dialogue***[i]** and then determine whether or not a given argument is in compliance with the rules set by this model of dialogue. Walton's methodology rests on the assumption that each model of dialogue involves specific goals which speakers are bound to pursue conjointly and thus claims that an argument is reasonable insofar as it makes a contribution to these goals. How does this pragmatic view of fallacy underpin Walton's specific work on appeals to emotion ? Walton writes: " [E]motional arguments can be used fallaciously in particular uses so that *they go contrary to the proper goals of […] dialogue that participants are supposed to be engaged in*. Contrary to the common assumption that an argument based on emotion is not a rational (reasonable) argument, such an argument can be good and reasonable insofar as "good" and "rational" argument is that which *contributes to the proper goals of dialogue* " (1992, pp. 25-27, my emphasis). The degree of reasonableness or fallaciousness of an emotional appeal depends on its

fitting a particular model of dialogue and on its contribution to the latter's goals.
At this point, I would like to make a general comment on normative approaches. In my view, what these approaches primarily seek to do is to determine whether a given emotional appeal will have positive or negative effects, and this with regard to the ideal progression of the argumentative process which is normatively fixed by a model of dialogue. If emotional appeals have the effect of contributing to the goals of the model of dialogue which speakers are supposed to be engaged in, they will be considered " reasonable ". If, however, they have the effect of violating these goals, they will be considered " fallacious ". In what follows, I would like to look at an alternative way of approaching emotions in argumentative discourse, which is less *normative* than *comprehensive* – in the same sense that sociology can be comprehensive and study the meaning which social actors *themselves* confer to their actions and, in our case, to their emotions. This perspective draws on Christian Plantin's work (1999, 2004), which I will briefly discuss before engaging in the case study.

2.2. *Christian Plantin's model: " arguing emotions "*
The starting point for Plantin's work on emotions is an empirical observation. In interaction – whether it be public or private –, it is not at all infrequent to see speakers question the value and legitimacy of their addressee's (or someone else's) emotions. These are cases one might label as *disagreements over emotions*. More precisely, we can distinguish between three varieties of disagreement. Speakers may call into question
(i) an occurent emotion,
(ii) a long-term propensity to experience a specific type of emotion (what Jon Elster calls an emotional disposition, 1999, p. 244) and, last but not least,
(iii) an absence of emotion. Disagreements often lead to sequences in which speakers attempt to explain why they feel what they feel and, in a more normative way, why everyone should feel what they feel. Plantin claims that in such cases, speakers *argue emotions*, so to speak : they try to establish the legitimacy of certain emotions by showing that the latter are *grounded on reasons*. In other words, speakers offer *argumentative constructions of their emotions* – this, in my view, could be an interesting object of study.

Plantin's stance, which underlines the existence of disputable emotions and which considers the possibility that the latter can be " argued " by speakers, has two main advantages.

(i) It broadens the scope of the concept of argumentation. Usually, argumentative discourse is assumed to bear on specific objects and to pursue specific aims. It is thought to provide reasons for our disposition to entertain certain opinions and for our disposition to act in certain ways. Plantin's work points out that argumentative discourse may also *provide reasons for our disposition to feel – or not to feel – certain emotions.*
(ii) It provides a fruitful alternative to the normative approaches which we have examined above. As we have seen, the latter seek to determine whether an appeal to emotion is " reasonable " or " fallacious ". In this respect, they are primarily interested in the *effects* which an appeal to emotion is likely to produce, with regard to an idealized argumentative process. Plantin's approach, on the other hand, does not ponder whether an appeal to emotion will have positive or negative effects in reference to an idealized argumentative process : its central claim is that appeals to emotion themselves are argumentative and can be studied as such. What is at stake, then, is to examine *how speakers argue emotions – that is : how speakers attempt to establish the legitimacy (or the illegitimacy) of certain emotions.*

At this point, one might well ask what is meant exactly by a phrase such as "arguing an emotion" – a phrase which appears paradoxical at first. The main idea is the following : when an emotion is called into question, speakers have to verbalize the type of situation which, in their view, ensures the legitimate character of the emotion. In other words, when an emotion is not an object of consensus but one of disagreement, speakers present their opponents with a *discursive construction of a situation which ought to make the said emotion appear legitimate – or even compelling.* Here, I would say, following Plantin, that argumentation theory can benefit greatly from the development of cognitive approaches to emotions. A central claim of these approaches is that emotions cannot be reduced to sensations, for they do not only consist of a physiological arousal, but also involve the cognitive evaluation of a situation. The philosopher Jeff Coulter puts it very clearly: " Our capacity to experience certain emotions is contingent upon […] learning to *interpret and appraise matters* in terms of norms, standards, principles, and ends and goals judged desirable or undesirable, appropriate or inappropriate, reasonable or unreasonable " (Coulter 1979, p.129). This focus on the cognitive component of emotions is characteristic of what is known as *appraisal theory* (Scherer 1999, 2004).
Klaus Scherer, one of its leading figures, explains that a " central tenet of

appraisal theory is the claim that emotions are elicited and differentiated on the basis of a person's subjective evaluation or appraisal of the personal significance of a situation, object, or event on a number of dimensions or criteria " (1999, p. 637). Appraisal theories are of great interest, insofar as they remind us that emotions are closely related to a process of evaluation in the course of which the individual interprets events and situations according to a set of criteria. Crucial to appraisal theory is the identification of these criteria, which Scherer calls " stimulus evaluation checks " (2004, p. 141) : the novelty of the event, its intrinsic pleasantness, the probability or uncertainty of its outcome, its agency, its being controllable or not and its compatibility with social norms– to name but a few. As Plantin's work suggests, the cognitive criteria of evaluation which psychologists study in great detail are useful from an argumentative discourse analyst's point of view. Indeed, they offer an interesting analytical framework to study the *verbal construction of events and situations, as well as its emotional orientation*. What is at stake, as Plantin adequately puts it, is to center our attention on the " linguistic counterpart " to the cognitive system of evaluation. As argumentative discourse analysts, the point is obviously not to focus on the cognitive antecedents of emotions and determine how individuals evaluate events and situations : it is to focus on *discourse itself* and to study how speakers verbally construe events and situations when they seek to legitimize an emotion.

3. *The construction of indignation in pro-life rhetoric : a case study*

I will now attempt to illustrate this perspective by means of a case study and examine a recent example of pro-life rhetoric. The corpus which I investigate is composed of two short essays (" What about abortion ? " and " Evil in Our Time ") written by an American anti-abortion writer named Larry Bohannon**[ii]**.

3.1 *Challenging the "apathetic" people*

I mentioned the fact that speakers often disagree on the value and legitimacy of a particular emotion. Here, the author starts by calling into question not an emotion, but rather an *absence of emotion*. He writes :

(1) Many people have become apathetic about abortion. Since [people] have already been born, abortion is no threat to them personally. (" What about abortion ? ")

The adjective " apathetic " describes a person who is no longer able to feel any emotion on a given subject. The explanation which the author gives for this general apathy is interesting. It focuses on one of the most emotionally relevant

criteria (especially in the case of emotions such as fear**[iii]**) – *whether or not an event affects the well-being of the individual* – and suggests that in the case of abortion, this criterion cannot easily be played upon. Since abortion can hardly be construed as a personal " threat " to the audience's safety, the writer has to turn to other criteria. I will examine a few of them in some detail – namely : the kind of event which abortion supposedly is (3.2.), the kind and number of people which it affects (3.3. and 3.4.), the agents which it can be ascribed to (3.5.) and the other events which it can be compared to (3.6.).

3.2 *Kind of event*

As I have argued earlier, the aim of a descriptive approach is mainly to describe how speakers verbally construe events when they seek to trigger – or even to legitimize – an emotion. In the present case, we might ask : how exactly is abortion depicted in pro-life rhetoric ? What light do pro-life rhetors try to shed on it ? Let us start with the following example :

(2) Abortion is an intentional violent act that kills an unborn baby. (" What about abortion ? ")

This sentence – or rather this definition – contains everything in a nutshell, as it were – that is : it exemplifies the criteria of evaluation which the author is going to rely on in his construction of indignation. The noun " act " and, most of all, the adjective " intentional " show abortion not just as something that merely happens, but as an *action for which responsibility can be ascribed to one or several agents* – I will return to this important issue when I discuss the agency criterion. Let us look at the expression " to kill an unborn baby " and its emotional effects. By the sole use of the verb " kill " (i.e. *to make sth/sb die*), the author seeks to heighten the fact that abortion is a matter of life and death : a living creature ceases to exist. Moreover, this living creature is designated by means of a noun (" baby ") which tends to emphasize its human dimension – I will also return to this issue in a moment. For now, contrast this expression with another expression which is used – not by pro-lifers, obviously, but by pro-choice advocates – in order to refer to abortion : " To terminate a pregnancy ". The verb " terminate " refers to an action which involves the ceasing of something, but unlike the verb " to kill ", it does not specify that it is *life* which ceases in the process. " Pregnancy ", as far as it is concerned, refers to a physiological state –the state of being pregnant. The word allows to avoid a direct reference to the *being* which develops in the woman's uterus. Thus, the expression " to terminate a pregnancy " conveys the impression that it is a *physiological state* which is acted upon (" terminated "),

and not a living creature. Of course, we know that acting on *this* physiological state inevitably affects a living creature. Yet those two expressions – " to kill an unborn baby ", on the one hand, and " to terminate a pregnancy ", on the other – do not shed the same light on abortion : one of them prepares for the construction of indignation.

3.3 *Kind of people affected*

Let us now examine the expressions which the author uses in order to refer to the *kind of people affected* by abortion– or rather the kind of *beings*, if we, as analysts, wish to remain as neutral as possible. The author mainly uses noun phrases such as " an unborn baby " (or simply " the baby ") and " our unborn children ". These expressions are crucial to the construction of indignation, as they tend to *humanize* the beings which are affected by abortion. It is safe to say that the first image that comes to mind when one hears the word " baby " or " child " is that of a *born* baby or child – and not that of an embryo or a fetus. The author also relies on the main cultural connotations which are suggested by the use of these lexical units: " babies " and " children " are *innocent* (they can do no wrong) and *weak*, thus needing our protection. These connotations sometimes appear quite explicitly in the text : the author claims that abortion affects the " weakest and most defenseless among us ". One will notice the prepositional phrase " among us " and the use of the deictic " us ", which suggest that the " baby ", however " unborn ", *already* belongs to the same community as the speaker and his addressees.

In his designation of the beings which are affected by abortion, the author follows two principles which, according to Friedrich Ungerer (1997, p. 314), are crucial to the process of " emotional inferencing ": the principle of *proximity* (" Focus on what is close to the reader ") and the so-called *homocentric principle* (" Focus on what is life-endangering [...] for human beings "). The fist principle is best illustrated by the use of deictics and, more specifically, by the use of first-person possessive determiner (" *our* unborn children "), whereas the second principle is best illustrated by the use of nouns such as " baby " and " children ".

3.4 *Number of people affected*

In his study on " Emotional language in news stories ", Ungerer also notes that " as far as *number* is concerned, the emotional impact of human death and calamity seems to get stronger as the number of people involved increases " (1997, p. 315). This comment seems to apply to the pro-life construction of

indignation. The author repeatedly points to the number of abortions which have been carried out in the United States and thus to the number of beings affected by them. What is striking is that the bare use of numbers does not seem to have enough emotional power. Quite systematically, the author has to put it into perspective and back it up with thought experiments. Let us look at the following example :
(3) Since [1973], some 40 million abortions have been committed in this nation. This is almost a third of the number of live babies born during the same time. If you go to a high school graduation ceremony this year, consider that one third of the class is missing. (“ Evil in Our Time ”)

The problem, as far as the construction of emotions such as pity and indignation is concerned, is that beings which grow in a woman’s uterus may suffer from what one could label as a *deficit of reality*. Since they have not been born and since their existence has not yet fully received what the French sociologist Luc Boltanski (2004) calls a *confirmation* (through the official giving of a name, for instance), they may appear less real than other beings and thus less able to qualify as victims in a rhetorical enterprise. In this case, saying that they are “ 40 million ” won’t help much. In this respect, the thought experiment seeks to enhance the emotional effect produced by this number. The mention of a “ class ” at a “ high school graduation ceremony ” calls up images of young adults – that is : beings who not only have been born, but have developed a social identity –: it strives to make up for the potential lack of *reality* of the beings which have not lived beyond their mother’s womb by focusing the audience’s attention on what they *could have been*.

3.5 *Agents*
When they verbally construe an event in order to legitimize an emotion, speakers often investigate the *causes* of this event. More precisely, they try to identify one (or several) agent(s) who could be held responsible for the happening of this event. Psychologists speak of an appraisal criterion of “ agency ” (Scherer 2004, p. 141). This criterion appears to be essential in the case of indignation. According to Ortony, Clore and Collins, this emotion belongs to the class of *agent-based* (or *attribution-of-responsibility*) emotions, which they define as follows : “ [T]here are […] important qualitative differences among emotions that depend on *how* we believe salient events to have come about. […] The situations in which people find themselves or in which they find others are frequently viewed as

resulting from actions of one sort or another. Responsibility for these actions is *often attributed to an agent.* Thus, the Agent-based emotions are Attribution-of-responsibility or, simply, the Attribution emotions " (Ortony, Clore et Collins 1987, p.134, my emphasis). From an argumentative discourse analyst point of view, one can say that the construction of indignation not only requires the speaker to depict the ordeals experienced by individuals, but also to ascribe the responsibility for these ordeals to other individuals. I will take a close look at the linguistic expressions which categorize individuals as agents and I will examine which *motives* and which *kind* of *responsibility* the author ascribes to them.

The first group of agents consists of individuals who physically perform the very act of abortion. Note that these individuals are never referred to by means of expressions which would point to their medical qualifications or to their belonging to a health institution (e.g. " doctors ", " physicians ") and would thus give them some respectability. In the text, they appear as " abortionists " – a word which usually denotes a person who *illegally* performs an abortion. This choice of words gives the impression that all abortions are illegal. Let us examine the following example, in which the author ponders on the motives which could account for the " abortionists' " actions:
(4) What motivates an abortionist ? What must they think as they slash and tear a baby apart or plunge a knife into its neck ? Somehow, abortionists have become callused to the reality of their actions. (" What about abortion? ")

What is striking is that the two questions are left unanswered. The author fails to find proper motives for the " abortionist's" behavior. The idea is that the action performed is so horrendous that it cannot be accounted for. In the absence of motives, the only explanation lies in the " abortionist's " lack of sensitivity to the suffering of others and even to his lack of awareness of what is *really* happening – as shown by the expression " callused to the reality of their actions ". This rhetorical move is not without danger: the depiction of " abortionists " as unaware of the reality of their actions could lead to consider them as irresponsible – e.g. not accountable for their actions. This explains why the author has to come up with *conscious* motives in order to show that the " abortionist " is indeed the agent of his action and can thus be blamed for it. This shows in the following example, where the author discusses " partial-birth abortion ":
(5) Anyone can see that [partial-birth abortion] is only a very cynical attempt by the abortionist to kill the baby, collect his fee and not be charged with murder.

(“Evil in Our Time”)

Here, the text not only offers a moral – or even legal – qualification of the action (it is a “ murder ”), but also ascribes a reprehensible *motive* (greed) to the agent, not to mention a longing for impunity. This sentence encapsulates all the ingredients for indignation.

The second group of agents consists of individuals who do not physically perform the act of abortion, but ideologically support it. They are generally referred to as “ pro-abortion activists ”, but the author often focuses on a sub-category: “ the Feminists ”. As it was the case earlier, the author investigates their *motives.* His strategy is to question the sincerity of the beliefs and values which these agents profess:
(6) The pro-abortion activists always claim that they are protecting the lives of women by maintaining abortion rights. You can rest assured that their efforts have nothing to do with protecting the lives of women. It has everything to do with maintaining their political power. (“ Evil in Our Time ”)

Here, the writer suggests that there is a disjunction between the motives which the agents publicly advocate and the motives which secretly drives them – in other words : there is a disjunction between these agents’ *overt* and *covert* motives. The overt motive appears noble on the surface – “ protecting the lives of women ” –, but it is undermined by the shameful and self-centered covert motive – “ maintaining [one’s] political power ”. The same accusation goes to the Feminists, whose belief in a fundamental “ struggle ” between men and women is subordinated to their determination to “ increase their political power ”. It should be underlined, at this point, that the writer does not systematically question the sincerity of the agents’ beliefs : he concedes that there are indeed “ true believers ” on the pro-choice side.

The third and last group of agents consists of individuals who support abortion not because they adhere to an ideology which transcends their personal interests, but rather because abortion serves these personal interests. The author refers to this group of agents as the “ convenience crowd ”:
(7) [Many men] want the freedom to have irresponsible sex and abort any “ mistakes ”. They want to escape the paying of child support by destroying the evidence. Tragically, there are probably many parents in this group. They want to be able to abort any “ mistakes” made by their teenage girls. (“ Evil in Our

Time ”)

Abortion allows these agents not to take responsibility for their actions. It should be noticed that the author centers his attention on “ men ” and “ parents ”, but does not explicitly integrate women into this “ convenience crowd ”. “ Men ” and “ parents ” are accused of pushing towards abortion solely because it is more convenient for them – it allows the former to enjoy their sexuality with no regard for the consequences and the latter to preserve their family’s good reputation. Women, on the other hand, are in this rhetoric never presented as *agents*, but rather as the very *victims* of the agents who compose this “ convenience crowd ”:
(8) Millions of young and frightened mothers have been pressurized to choose abortion to help man escape responsibility and embarrassment ”. (“ What about abortion ? ”)

This refusal to depict women as autonomous beings who could deliberately have recourse to abortion is significant. It shows, in my view, that pro-life rhetoric relies on a stereotypical image of woman according to which it is in her very *essence* to become a mother. If, in certain circumstances, women are not willing to become mothers, it can only be due to external “ pressures ” (pressures exerted by others), but certainly not to the exercise of their own free will.

To sum up, we can say that this example of pro-life rhetoric points to three different groups of agents :
(i) individuals who are physically responsible for the very act of abortion and who are led by greed,
(ii) individuals who support abortion in the name of an ideal (for example : a feminist ideal) – even if the author casts a doubt on the sincerity of this ideal and hints at a possible disjunction between the agents’ overt and covert motives – and, eventually,
(iii) individuals who encourage abortion solely because it serves their personal interests.

3.6 *Analogies*
When “ arguing ” an emotion and verbally construing a situation, speakers will often point out the latter’s similarities with other situations which are assumed to be emotionally relevant within a particular culture. As Plantin has it, an “ event provokes emotions if it can be linked with domains that are socially or personally connected with emotions ” (2004, p. 271). In what follows, I will examine the role

and functioning of analogies in our sample of pro-life rhetoric. I will concentrate on the following example, which draws a parallel between abortion and both the Nazi genocide and the slave trade :

(9) It is ironic that the same people who support abortion today criticize the ideologies that supported other great evils in the past such as the German holocaust or slavery. They cannot see the similarities between their own ideology and those they criticize. For example, the supporters of slavery during the 1800's widely argued that slavery was good for slaves. They said it was better to be a Christian slave and go to heaven than to be a heathen in Africa. Today, abortion supporters say that is it better for babies to be aborted than to grow up in a home where they are unwanted. […] Just because an unborn baby is unwanted today does not mean that it is destined to be unwanted for the rest of his life. The supporters of the final solution in Hitler's Germany made similar arguments when they advocated exterminating the mentally ill and others. (" Evil in Our Time ")

According to Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1971, p. 372), analogy is better described as a *resemblance of relationships* than as *a relationship of resemblance.* Indeed, an analogy does not usually confine itself to suggesting that two elements are alike (*A resembles B*). It comprises *four* elements and claims that *the relationship between A and B resembles the relationship between C and D* (*A is to B as C is to D*). A and B are usually referred to as the *theme* of the analogy and C and D as its *phoros*. The phoros (the relationship between C and D) is an object of consensus and the point of the analogy is, ideally, to *transfer this consensus from the phoros to the theme* (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1971, p. 382). In the present case, the idea is that abortion supporters are to " babies " what " supporters of the final solution " were to " the mentally ill and others " or what " the supporters of slavery " were to " slaves ".

At this point, one may ask what exactly is the relationship which is supposed to be similar in the case of A and B, on the one hand, and in the case of C and D, on the other. One notices that it remains largely unexplained or, at least, unspecific. What allows the author to put abortion, slave trade and the Nazi genocide in the same basket, as it were, is the general idea that someone does something cruel to someone else while claiming that it is for their own good. The author's strategy is not to go into detail and actually demonstrate that the three relationships are similar to a high degree: he does obviously not mention the numerous differences between the three cases. The effect which the use of analogy seeks to create is rather a *transfer of emotional consensus*. The text brings up two domains where

an emotion like indignation is culturally stabilized: the role of the analogy is to transfer the obviousness of this emotion to the domain of abortion.

4. *Conclusion*

In this paper, I have tried to outline the main issues of the debate which, within the field of argumentation theory, sees an opposition between *normative* and *descriptive* approaches to emotions. I have argued that normative approaches, such as Douglas Walton's pragmatic theory of fallacies, are primarily interested in the *effects* which emotional appeals are likely to produce, with *regard to an idealized argumentative process*. If emotional appeals have the effect of contributing to the goals of the model of dialogue which speakers are supposed to be engaged in, they will be considered " reasonable ". If, however, they have the effect of violating these goals, they will be considered " fallacious ". Drawing on Christian Plantin's work, I have pleaded for a more comprehensive stance which, starting with the observation that speakers often disagree on the legitimacy of certain emotions, is mainly interested in their attempts to show that some emotions are grounded on reasons and that some are not. This involves a systematic description of the *verbal construction of events and situations* which speakers elaborate. The analysis of the sample of pro-life rhetoric was conducted in such a perspective. My intention was to examine what light pro-life rhetors shed on abortion when they try to stir the " apathetic " people and legitimize a feeling of indignation. This was done through a careful study of the linguistic expressions which indicate what kind of event abortion is thought to be, what kind of beings it is thought to affect, what kind of agents it is thought to be imputable to and, eventually, what other events it is thought to be similar with.

NOTES

[i] Walton defines six main models of dialogue : the critical discussion, the inquiry, the negotiation, the deliberation, the quarrel and the information-seeking dialogue (see 1997, pp. 163-164).

[ii] The two essays appear on a website (http://www.abortionessay.org) which hosts pro-life writers and contains numerous essays opposing the practice of abortion. The choice of this corpus calls for an important remark. At the present stage, I have no claim to representativtiy – that is: I cannot say whether or not the argumentative strategies which I examine in these essays are representative of pro-life rhetoric on a more global scale. This is an exploratory research which I hope to be able to pursue in the future.

[iii] In their classification of emotions, which is based on how individuals appraise events, Ortony, Clore and Collins argue that fear is essentially a reaction to the anticipated consequences of an event – and more precisely to the consequences of this event for the self (1987, p. 19).

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – A Methodological Approach To Argument Evaluation

1. *The methodological approach to argument evaluation defined*

The methodological approach to argument evaluation may be expressed by the following claim: argumentation can be successfully evaluated by applying tools elaborated by the general methodology of science. Among those tools, there are rules of performing various knowledge-gaining procedures such as reasoning, questioning, defining, and classifying objects. In what follows I call these rules methodological. At first glance this approach is plausible, because the argumentation theory and the methodology of science have in fact a common aim: to establish rules for evaluating activities of some special kinds. In the case of argumentation theory, these are speech acts performed within an argumentative discourse; in the case of methodology these are knowledge-gaining activities performed either in scientific research or in everyday life. The aim of this paper is

to show that this approach works. I illustrate its usefulness by discussing two cases of argument evaluation by means of the rules of defining elaborated by the methodology of science.

Although elements of the methodological approach to argument evaluation are present in philosophy, informal logic, and argumentation theory, they have not so far been systematically elaborated. By "elements of the methodological approach to argument evaluation" I mean claims concerning applications of various methodological rules to evaluation of arguments. Some of these claims have been advanced or examined by thinkers who belong to various philosophical traditions. Among them I mention Jaakko Hintikka who points out to the need of evaluating arguments within the framework of questioning (e.g. 1984a; 1984b; 1992); Douglas Walton who examines fallacies of questioning, also by means of some methodological rules of questioning and answering (1991) and analyzes some rules of formulating persuasive definitions (2001); Alvin Goldman who applies some rules of justification (which are also applied by the methodology of science) within the epistemological approach to argumentation (2003); Louise Cummings who shows the relation between scientific norms and argument evaluation (2002). I should also mention Polish philosophers and methodologists from the Lvov-Warsaw School: Kazimierz Ajdukiewicz who develops the program of pragmatic logic (1974) within which methodological rules of performing various knowledge-gaining procedures are elaborated and Tadeusz Czeżowski who formulates such methodological rules for the procedures of describing and defining (2000).

A careful analysis of the elements of the methodological approach to argument evaluation present in writings of the philosophers listed above shows that many methodological rules are in fact used in argument evaluation. This is why they deserve to be described in a systematic way.

A possible set of methodological rules which are to be used in argument evaluation is based on the list of some typical knowledge-gaining procedures which are investigated by the general methodology of science. Among these procedures the most significant are:

(1) reasoning,
(2) questioning,
(3) defining,
(4) classifying objects and
(5) formulating and testing hypotheses**[i]**.

Some of those methodological rules are found in textbooks and in some research papers in informal logic and the argumentation theory. Are those methodological rules substantially different from the rules elaborated in these fields, for example from the pragma-dialectical rules for argument evaluation? According to the understanding of methodological rules accepted in this paper, there is no sharp boundary between logical, methodological or pragma-dialectical rules for argument evaluation, because all those disciplines investigate knowledge-gaining procedures. From an epistemic point of view all those rules constitute one kind.

Although there exist some satisfactory descriptions of particular methodological rules (for example the rules of questioning as elaborated by Hintikka), there is still a need to gather them in a form of a systematically elaborated list as methodological rules for argument evaluation. So the central task for the methodological approach to argument evaluation is to establish a possibly unified set of methodological rules, which can be used in argument evaluation and then to show how these rules can be applied. None of these tasks is in fact undertaken in this paper. The aim is much more limited: taking as an example the rules of defining I am going to show how preparing such a list and applying it can be started.

The application of methodological rules in argument evaluation consists in comparing them with rules that govern real life cases of argumentative practices performed either in scientific inquiry or in everyday life.

The choice of the procedure of defining is justified by the fact that definitions play a crucial role in argumentation. So in order to show how the methodological approach to argument evaluation works I start with describing the role of definitions in argumentation, and then I consider the role of the rules of defining in argument evaluation.

2. *Definitions in argumentation*

Many argumentation theorists and (informal) logicians, either in their research works or in textbooks, point out to the importance of definitions in argumentation. Some remarks on the role of definitions in argumentation can be found in works of e.g. Walton (1980; 2001), Marciszewski (1993; 1994), Viskil (1994), Govier (1997), and van Eemeren and co-researchers (van Eemeren, Grootendorst & Snoeck Henkemans 2002).

The crucial role of definitions in argumentation**[ii]** is revealed by the fact, that redefinitions of some key terms used in science and in everyday life are necessary either in scientific or in public policy discourses (Walton 1980, p. 16; 2001, pp.

120-122; Marciszewski 1994, p. 212; Govier 1997, pp. 98-99). Argumentation theorists also stress the fact that formulating definitions is helpful for discussion parties to proceed with a discourse. Van Eemeren, Grootendorst and Snoeck Henkemans remark that

To ensure that they are both talking about the same thing, the participants may decide to assign *definitions* to the main terms relevant to the discussion (2002, p. 174).

However, definitions in argumentation are seldom formulated in an explicit way. In everyday life, cases, when at a certain stage of a discourse the parties explicitly agree: "let us now formulate definitions of crucial terms relevant to our discussion" are rather rare. Using terms without requiring to define them is much more common. Yet, it does not mean that tools for evaluating definitions are not useful, for it is always possible to extract relevant implicit definitions, and then to evaluate them and thereby also to evaluate argumentation itself.

What are the reasons for applying rules for defining in argument evaluation? Two basic should be indicated.

The first of them appeals to the organizing role of definitions. As Marciszewski (1994), a Polish logician and methodologist of science, observes, definitions organize argumentative discourse in a systematic way. Definitions accepted at the beginning of a discourse may set the direction of a discussion and even the way of discussing. In some cases, good definitions can give a form of a good argumentative discourse by setting the whole strategy of discussing. If one of the parties is not conscious of the role of definitions (or has no proper tools to evaluate definitions), she or he can be misled by the other party. This organizing role of definitions is revealed by the fact that good definitions formulated within a discourse help to reconstruct standpoints, and therefore to establish where the main point of disagreement lies (see also Viskil 1994, p. 79). The consequence of assigning definitions a crucial role in argumentation, is clearly expressed by Marciszewski:

The centre of gravity of intelligent arguing lies in the art of defining (1994, p. 218).

We should here notice that evaluating a given definition is not the same as evaluating a whole discourse. However, if we accept Marciszewski's claim quoted above, we should also agree that evaluating the definition accepted at the beginning of a discourse heavily bears on the evaluation of the whole discourse. So, evaluating definitions which are relevant for a given discourse and evaluating

arguments performed within that discourse are interrelated. Moreover, as Walton (1980) shows in his analyses of real definitions (in contrast to nominal definitions) in ethical discourses, definitions can be explained by the metaphor of a target:
A good definition is a target that indicates what it is that the criteria are supposed to determine. Insofar as the target is clearly articulated, it can have a legitimate function in shifting the burden of proof in moral arguments, and should not always be lightly brushed aside (1980, pp. 16-17)**[iii]**.
So, if we formulate good definitions of main objects (or terms) of our discussion, it is highly probable that our discourse turns out to be reasonable and successful.

The second reason for applying rules of defining in argument evaluation appeals to the fact that one of the fundamental conditions of resolving a difference of opinion – what is the central goal of any reasonable argumentative discourse (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992, p. 13) – is parties' common understanding of terms. Sometimes one's view is expressed by means of ambiguous, vague, or fuzzy concepts. In such a situation we are entitled, or even obliged, to require definitions. This idea is expressed by Copi & Cohen (2005, p. 92): if some disputes arise only as a result of purely verbal misunderstandings, then we often need to recourse to good definitions. Yet, if an error in defining is committed, then – regardless of the validity and soundness of argumentation – a discourse turns out to be unsuccessful. In such cases, definitions can be seen as obstacles for a successful argumentation (see Viskil 1994, p. 80). Again, we can remark that good definitions accepted at the very beginning of a discourse may constitute the point of departure for a successful argumentative discourse.

Thus, if we agree that definitions play crucial role in argumentation, we may safely conjecture that the rules for proper defining play an important role in evaluating various pieces of an argumentative discourse.

3. *Some rules of defining in argumentation – two case studies*
A discipline whose task is to investigate the procedure of defining is the general methodology of science. Among various kinds of rules, the methodology formulates the rules for recognizing errors of definitions. Two types of such rules are important for my analysis: structural and pragmatic. The structural rules tell us what the proper structure of a given kind of definition should be. They allow to identify for example definitions which are too broad, too narrow, or viciously circular. As examples of such structural rules I may mention the following (see, e.g., Searles 1956, pp. 55-57; Layman 2005, pp. 103-104):

(1) A definition should not be circular.
(2) A definition should not be too broad.
(3) A definition should not be too narrow.
(4) A definition should not be negative if it can be affirmative.

The pragmatic rules of defining concern the context in which definitions are used. They are applied to identify such errors of defining as ignotum per ignotum, or confusing various kinds of definitions**[iv]**. As examples of such pragmatic rules I may mention the following:
(1) "A definition is flawed if the definiens picks out the right extension via attributes that are unsuitable relative to the context or purpose" (Layman 2005, p. 105).
(2) Descriptive definitions should not be confused with normative ones.
(3) Lexical definitions should not be confused with stipulative ones (Ajdukiewicz 1974, Ch. 5).
(4) Real definitions should not be confused with persuasive ones (Ajdukiewicz 1974, Ch. 5).
(5) In a real definition only essential (or relevant) attributes of the defined object should be included (Searles 1956, p. 56; Czeżowski 2000, p. 69).
(6) Among the essential (or relevant) attributes we should choose the constitutive ones (those which determine the whole), and disregard consecutive attributes (those which are dependent on and determined by the constitutive attributes) (Czeżowski 2000, p. 69; see Koszowy 2004, p. 127).

By means of both kinds of rules methodologists are able to judge whether an inappropriate kind of definition is used. Some general rules for defining are also implicitly present in argumentation theory. Viskil (1994) mentions three conditions of formulating proper definitions. According to him:
In order to give guidelines for formulating recognizable definitions, it is necessary to establish first what definition amounts to, which types of *definition* can be distinguished, and what their characteristic properties are (1994, p. 80).

Last two conditions given by Viskil may be captured in terms of the following rules of defining: various types of definitions should not be confused; essential properties of a given type of definition should be respected. These rules can in fact be found on a list given above.
As another example of the presence of the rules of defining in argumentation theory I shall briefly consider one of ten rules for critical discussion formulated

within the pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation developed by van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1992). Rule 10 states that:
A party must not use formulations that are insufficiently clear or confusingly ambiguous and he must interpret the other party's formulations as carefully and accurately as possible (1992, p. 209).

Although this rule does not contain any explicit reference concerning defining, it can be treated as an implicit directive for the parties to apply rules of defining in discussion. For this rule clearly points to the rules of defining: one of the necessary conditions of respecting this rule requires to use terms which do not cause the other party to interpret my standpoint inaccurately. Thus, in fact, respecting this rule requires proper definitions of key terms when necessary or required. How a general procedure of evaluating arguments by means of the rules of defining looks like? Some examples can be built upon Layman, who explicitly says about "using definitions to evaluate arguments" (2005, p. 110). In his standard textbook Layman gives an example of a definition which breaks the rule: "a definition should not be too narrow":
"Bird" means "feathered animal that can fly".

Let us develop Layman's example by supposing that the whole discourse was built upon this definition. How to evaluate such a piece of a discourse? We can remark that the discourse is based on an inadequate definition of the term "bird". The rule that tells us that the definition should not be too narrow is violated, because definiens (a phrase, which is used to define) does not apply to some objects in the extension of the definiendum (that, what is defined). For example kiwis or cassowaries fall under the provided definition of the term "bird" – they are feathered but do not fly. So conclusions of that discourse would not apply to kiwis and cassowaries. If the other party included kiwis and cassowaries into the extension of the term "bird", she or he would be ready to dismiss the conclusions. So the discourse would be unsuccessful. This simple example of the procedure of evaluating a piece of an argumentative discourse illustrates the general way of applying rules of defining in argument evaluation.

A good illustration of the procedure of evaluating definitions in research is given by the analysis of definitions of critical thinking made by Johnson (1996). According to Johnson, definitions of critical thinking present in literature belong to the type of definitions called "stipulative". In his analysis of those definitions he appeals in fact to the rule of defining governing this type of definitions: that

stipulative definition should broadly reflect of current practice (1996, p. 228). So, he would disregard certain definitions of critical thinking because – according to him – they violate this rule.

Case studies of definitions playing a central role in public discourses can be easily found in works of informal logicians and argumentation theorists. For example, Walton examines cases of evaluating persuasive redefinitions of terms which had already been defined in science and public policy usage (2001) or of formulating stipulative definitions in ethical discourses (1980). I shall also examine two cases of definitions. My aim is to show how violations of some particular methodological rules bear on evaluating a discourse.

Case one: the debate over euthanasia

Let us suppose that two parties debate whether euthanasia should be legalized. Let us also assume that one party persuaded the other that the term "euthanasia" refers to the active help to stop somebody's unbearable suffering. If this definition of euthanasia is accepted, then the issue is immediately solved because everybody agrees that it is a morally noble thing to stop ones unbearable suffering and doing morally noble things should not be forbidden by law. In this case the methodological rule of not confusing the real and persuasive definitions (rule 4 on our list of pragmatic rules) is violated. Real definitions should capture the essence of the thing defined; persuasive definitions aim at changing the attitude towards a defined phenomenon. In this case the persuasive definition is claimed to be an essential definition, but it is not. So the definer may hope that the opposite party shall not notice that persuasive definition has been used as if it was a real definition, and by accepting it the party will be forced to agree to legalization.

Case two: the debate over the restriction on the use of the Internet

Let us suppose that two parties debate whether any restrictions on the access to the Gobal Information Infrastructure (GII) are justified. Let us also suppose that both parties agree that the GII is the source of information. The party who is skeptical about any restrictions on the Internet, advances the following definition: the term "knowledge" in its common use refers to the sum of information. After formulating this definition the party proceeds by advancing the argument: if "knowledge" refers to the sum of information, so the more information we collect, the more knowledge we possess; and as we all know, the Internet allows us to gather various kinds of information, so it gives us an excellent opportunity to extend our knowledge of the world. Therefore the access to the GII should not be

restricted.
Also here the case is solved if this definition of the term "knowledge" is accepted. Nobody disagrees that we have the right to achieve knowledge. So there is no reason to restrict the access to the GII if it gives us knowledge. In this case the methodological rule to distinguish between a lexical definition of the term as commonly understood in a given language and a stipulative definition which projects the meaning of a given term (rule 3 on our list of pragmatic rules) is violated.

In both cases the definitions in fact implicitly contain what is apparently argued for. Walton remarks that persuasive definitions "are very often, in a clever and subtle way, deployed to serve the interest of the definer" (Walton 2001, p. 117). It seems that this characteristic refers not only to persuasive definitions, but also to other practices of defining. One of such practices is using question-begging definitions. T. Edward Damer describes this case as follows: the question-begging definition makes a given claim true by definition, "by subtly importing a highly questionable definition of a key word into one of the premises" (Damer 2001, p. 106).
The cases discussed illustrate the general mechanism of violating the rules of defining within argumentative discourse: when – by using tricky definitions – the definer achieves her or his goal, the whole discourse becomes unnecessary, because the issue is "solved" in the moment of accepting the definition. In such cases the difference of opinion only apparently disappears. If one confuses definitions introduced into a discourse on purpose, i.e. if one breaks the general rule of not confusing types of definitions on purpose, we have a case of manipulation.

4. *Concluding remarks*
The methodological approach to argument evaluation cannot be seen as the only fruitful approach to argumentation. Yet, the application of the methodological rules in argument evaluation can be inspiring as another perspective in a variety of approaches to argumentation, along with pragma-dialectical approach to argumentation or with epistemological approach to argumentation. This perspective is in agreement with working in the spirit of the Polish school of methodology, developed both by the Lvov-Warsaw School (especially Ajdukiewicz and Czeżowski) and by the Lublin School of Philosophy (especially Stanisław Kamiński) (see, e.g., Koszowy 2004). Hence, the methodological approach to

argument evaluation can be treated as an approach that helps to broaden our understanding of argumentation. This claim concurs with the more general claim expressed by many informal logicians and argumentation theorists: various scientific and philosophical traditions applied together can better fulfill the commonly accepted goal: to describe and evaluate the rich phenomenon of argumentation.

As the examples discussed above show, definitions employed in argumentation bear on the reasonableness of a discourse: if one defines objects or events improperly, a discourse may lead to false conclusions; if one uses persuasive definitions, a discourse becomes persuasion, or even manipulation, not argumentation. The obvious result is that the main goal of argumentative discourse – resolving a difference of opinion – is not achieved. Thus, the evaluation of definitions is the very first step in evaluating the whole argumentation. So, my choice of the procedure to be considered is not accidental. Moreover, definitions in argumentation are often implicit, so usually we do not pay enough attention to them. As I tried to show in this paper, we definitely should.

The idea of taking a closer look at definitions in argumentation follows Walton's remark which suggests that some case studies of the uses of persuasive definitions show the rhetorical role of definitions. This role reveals the need of elaborating a new approach to evaluating definitions in argumentation (Walton 2001, p. 117). The methodological approach I started to develop in this paper may constitute part of the new approach suggested and elaborated by Walton.

Taking into account the knowledge-gaining procedures listed in this paper, the obvious next step to developing the methodological approach to argument evaluation would be to list methodological rules that are applied in evaluating other knowledge-gaining procedures, which are employed in argumentation. For example a paper concerning applications of the rules for questioning which is another important knowledge-gaining procedure should be written in the future.

So, the task of building the methodological approach to argument evaluation is still to be realized. Although the full power and profits of this approach to argument evaluation are still to be revealed, developing this approach seems to constitute a reasonable research program.

NOTES

[i] The list of knowledge-gaining procedures can be useful also in the context of fallacies committed within reasoning, questioning, defining, etc. This list

constitutes the starting point for analysing the rules for identifying fallacies. The idea of identifying some fallacies by means of the methodological rules elaborated by philosophers from the Lvov-Warsaw School (see Koszowy 2004), was inspiring for proposing the more general project of the methodological approach to argument evaluation, as presented in this paper.

[ii] There are important philosophical debates over the theory of definition. One of them concerns essentialism in the theory of definition (Walton 2001, pp. 124-125). However, I shall not consider the philosophical presuppositions of defining, because I focus on applying rules for defining in argument evaluation.

[iii] The term "criteria" used here by Walton refers to empirical criteria that should be taken into account when formulating a real definition, i.e. a definition of an object, not a definition of a term.

[iv] These distinctions are explained in Robinson (1950) and in many textbooks of logic and methodology of science, among others in Searles (1956, Ch. 3), Ajdukiewicz (1974, Ch. 5), Marciszewski (1994, Ch. 8), Copi & Cohen (2005, Ch. 4), and Layman (2005, Ch. 3). Some of these distinctions, with more references to the literature, can be found in Viskil (1994). The difference between normal and implicit definitions is explained in Marciszewski (1994, pp. 203-206).

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Normatively Responsible Advocacy: Some Provocations From Persuasion Effects Research

This paper addresses one aspect of the relationship between argumentation studies and social-scientific persuasion effects research. Persuasion effects research aims at understanding how and why persuasive messages have the effects they do; that is, persuasion effects research has descriptive and explanatory aims. Argumentation studies, on the other hand, is at its base animated by normative concerns; the broad aim is to articulate conceptions of normatively desirable argumentative practice, both in the abstract and in application to particular instances, with a corresponding pedagogical aim of improving discourse practices. That is, one of these enterprises is dominated by descriptive and explanatory concerns and the other by normative interests.

In some previous work I have explored the relationship between these two undertakings by taking up the question of whether there is any intrinsic conflict between normatively-sound argumentation practices and practical persuasive success. The empirical evidence appears to indicate that a number of normatively-desirable advocacy practices – including clearly articulating one's overall standpoint (O'Keefe, 2002), spelling out one's supporting evidence and arguments (O'Keefe, 1998), and refuting counterarguments (O'Keefe, 1999) – commonly improve one's chances for persuasive success.

This paper approaches the relationship of normative argumentation studies and descriptive persuasion effects research from a different angle, by pointing to several empirical findings that raise questions or puzzles about normatively-proper argumentative conduct. My purpose here is less to offer definitive conclusions about normative analyses of advocacy, and more to point to some

social-scientific research findings that indicate some complications in the analysis of normatively desirable argumentative conduct – including some ways in which practical persuasive success may not be entirely compatible with normatively-desirable advocacy practices.

1. *Background*

As a preliminary, it may be useful to notice that at least some of what I have to say will intersect with some of the concerns of pragma-dialectics. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser have in recent years taken up questions concerning the nature of "strategic maneuvering" and its analysis from a pragma-dialectical standpoint. "Strategic maneuvering" refers to the advocates' "attempt to make use of the opportunities available in the dialectical situation for steering the discourse rhetorically in the direction that serves their own interests best" (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2001). One of the questions van Eemeren and Houtlosser have addressed is specifically the question of when strategic maneuvering is normatively questionable (as opposed to normatively unobjectionable). At least some my discussion will be seen to address that same question.

However, a complexity is introduced by the natural divergence between (a) the circumstance contemplated by (pragma-dialectical and other) ideals for critical discussion and (b) the circumstance in which argumentation and advocacy often are undertaken. Ideals for critical discussion often seem to contemplate a situation in which (at a minimum) two advocates undertake the articulation and defense of different points of view. There may be some third party to which the advocates' arguments are addressed (as in legal proceedings), or each advocate may act as the other's audience, but the key feature to which I want to draw attention is that there are two advocates.

But advocacy sometimes occurs in circumstances in which only one advocate is heard, such as consumer advertising. Yes, one may here think of the audience as (implicitly) the other advocate, but one would immediately want to acknowledge that the audience may not always be in the same sort of argumentative position as the advocate (for instance, the audience may not know as much about the relevant subject matter as does the advocate). And, yes, sometimes opposing views are available elsewhere; for instance, in the case of consumer advertising, consumer advocacy groups may publish opposing views or critical information. Even so, especially in instances of advocacy (such as commercial advertising) delivered through traditional media of mass communication, there is some

asymmetry between the audience and advocate.

Moreover, there are circumstances in which there is (potentially) argumentation (in a broad sense) but not necessarily advocacy (in the usual sense). The kind of circumstance I have in mind is exemplified by those medical decision-making situations in which a patient is to choose among alternative courses of action. In such situations, health professionals can provide arguments and evidence that bear on that decision, even if they advocate no particular option.

So my interest here is broadly with any situation in which persons consider some potentially-argument-based claim, that is, some claim that might be supported by argument. I mention these contextual variations and divergences (between the circumstances of critical discussion and other circumstances) because I think that they bear on the task of transferring normative ideals from one circumstance to another – and because they foreshadow some of the complications to which I want to point.

2. *Some empirical provocations*

I now want to turn to a number of research findings in the social-scientific literature relevant to persuasion that seem to me to raise some questions about normatively-proper advocacy. I offer four examples, each considered individually, but I hope also to draw out some connections among these.

2.1 *Gain-loss message framing*

One much-studied message variation in persuasion effects research is (what is called) the contrast between "gain-framed" and "loss-framed" appeals. A gain-framed appeal emphasizes the advantages of compliance with the communicator's viewpoint; a loss-framed appeal emphasizes the disadvantages of noncompliance. So, for instance, "If you take your hypertension medication, you'll probably get to play with your grandchildren" is a gain-framed appeal; "if you don't take your hypertension medication, you might not get to play with your grandchildren" is a loss-framed appeal. The underlying substantive consideration (offered as a basis for acceptance of the advocated view) is the same in the two appeals; what varies is how that consideration is "framed" (for some reviews and discussion, see O'Keefe & Jensen, 2006; Rothman & Salovey, 1997; Salovey, Schneider, & Apanovitch, 2002).

A parenthetical remark here: Although it's easy to gloss gain- and loss-framed appeals as involving substantively identical arguments, in fact the two framings are not necessarily logically equivalent. Each appeal's central claim takes the

form of a conditional. For the loss-framed appeal, the conditional is either "if not-A, then U" (if the recommended action A is not undertaken, then some undesirable consequence U results; "if you don't wear sunscreen, you may get skin cancer") or "if not-A, then not-D" (if the recommended action A is not undertaken, then some desirable consequence D is failed to be obtained; "if you don't wear sunscreen, you may not have healthy skin when you're older"). For the gain-framed appeal, the conditional is either "if A, then not-U" (if the recommended action A is undertaken, then some undesirable consequence U is avoided; "if you wear sunscreen, you can avoid skin cancer") or "if A, then D" (if the recommended action A is undertaken, then some desirable consequence D is obtained; "if you wear sunscreen, you can have healthy skin when you're older"). As will be noticed, the loss-framed conditionals are not identical to their gain-framed counterparts. For instance, the conditional "if not-A, then U" is not identical to "if A, then not-U." After all, it could be true *both* that "if not-A, then U" *and* that "if A, then U"; indeed, people do sometimes appear to reason in such a fashion ("I'm going to get cancer no matter what I do"). However, it is probably unwise to assume that the difference between these two conditionals is readily apparent to casual observers. Moreover, this way of reconstructing gain – and loss – framed appeals (the way I've just formulated them) is not unimpeachable. For instance, although each appeal is a conditional, the consequence might be expressed differently, namely, as a changed probability of obtaining some outcome: "If you wear sunscreen, you decrease your chance of getting skin cancer" and "If you don't wear sunscreen, you increase your chance of getting skin cancer." And this alternative way of expressing the appeals makes them look substantively rather more similar. So, without overlooking the possibility that the two ways of expressing an appeal are not necessarily logically equivalent, we surely can say that the two ways of expressing an appeal involve the same underlying substantive consideration.

These gain-loss framing variations can be seen to involve the use of what van Eemeren and Houtlosser have called a "presentational device," "the phrasing of moves in light of their discursive and stylistic effectiveness" (2001, p. 152; see also van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2000, 2005). As van Eemeren and Houtlosser (2005, p. 32) indicate, "certain instances of strategic maneuvering" can be "dialectically sound" (normatively unobjectionable) while others are "fallacious" (normatively dubious) The project they take up is that of "developing criteria" for identifying sound and fallacious maneuvering.

I don't want to be detained here by the specific question of whether van Eemeren and Houtlosser's particular criteria would classify this as a "sound" or "fallacious" presentational device – in good measure because their criteria are not yet entirely well-specified and in any case application of any such criteria is acknowledged to involve "context-bound judgments of specific instances of situated argumentative acting" (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2005, p. 32). But I do want to rely on our common intuitions here about what makes for normatively responsible (or questionable) advocacy.

So the question is whether we are indifferent (normatively speaking) to whether an appeal is phrased as a gain or as a loss. And my sense is that there is not much ground for concluding that an advocate's choice of a gain- or loss-framed appeal has normative implications. After all, this seems *purely* a presentational device: the underlying substance of the argument is the same in the two cases, which makes it difficult to see how the use of one or another framing could generally be fallacious (normatively dubious).

And I think this normative indifference is unaffected by learning that the two ways of framing the arguments are not always identical in their persuasive effects. For example, it seems to be the case that for messages advocating breast-cancer detection behaviors (such as mammography and breast self-examination), loss-framed appeals are generally more persuasive than gain-framed appeals (this generalization I offer tentatively, based on yet-unpublished work with Jakob Jensen). But this just seems to be an instance in which a presentational device is chosen for its persuasive effectiveness, without any normative hackles being raised. After all, it's the same underlying argument.

2.2 *Success rate vs. failure rate*

But now consider a second (related, but distinct) example: The acceptability of a medical treatment or surgical procedure (e.g., the likelihood that patients will choose it) can be influenced by whether the outcomes are expressed in terms of the treatment's success rate or its failure rate. For example, a surgical procedure is evaluated more positively when it is described as having a 90% survival rate than when it is described as having a 10% mortality rate (for some reviews, see McGettigan, Sly, O'Connell, Hill, & Henry, 1999; Moxey, O'Connell, McGettigan, & Henry, 2003).

This is quite similar to the first example. The two formulations (success rate and failure rate) are based on the same information – the same substantive consideration – but they present that information differently. Given that similarity,

one might naturally suppose that we would similarly be normatively indifferent to the presentational form.
And yet surely we are not normatively indifferent here. I think the common intuition would be that there is something wrong with knowingly and purposefully choosing one or another formulation. These varying expressions (success-failure treatment descriptions) do represent a "presentational device" like gain-loss message framing, but somehow this second case seems to present something a little different from the first.

Part of the difference is unquestionably the implied setting, namely, a circumstance in which a health care professional is describing a treatment option to a patient. Here, we might think, the health care professional has an obligation to present the information in as transparent and unbiased a way as possible – and so, for instance, we might think it would be normatively most appropriate to express the information both ways. But this seems a little too easy an answer, for three reasons.

First, there is no guarantee that expressing the information both ways will somehow neutralize the effects of a given expression. For instance, it might be that once patients have been exposed to the failure-rate information, it will not matter if they also have the success-rate formulation (there's not much empirical evidence concerning the effects of presenting both forms). That is, it's not clear that there's a normatively easy solution here.

Second, implicit in the idea that there is something normatively wrong about knowingly choosing one of these presentation formats may be the suggestion that it is somehow improper for the health care professional to have any advocacy role. Of course, there's nothing wrong with the professional's having a viewpoint (e.g., about whether the patient should undergo the procedure). The question is whether the professional ought to express that viewpoint, as opposed to being a disinterested adviser. The boundaries between these roles is blurry, and different patients might well have different preferences about the professional's role. But it is easy to imagine that at least sometimes, it will be entirely appropriate for the health care professional to advocate a particular course of action – and in such a circumstance it would be misguided to complain that, by virtue of choosing one presentation format, the professional wasn't being an unbiased adviser. That is to say, if there's something normatively questionable about the choice of presentation format, it must be something other than that the knowing choice of

format disqualifies the health care professional as an unbiased adviser (that is, something other than the practice's putative incompatibility with an unbiased-adviser role).

Third, surely we don't want to say that it's permissible to selectively choose a presentation format as long as one is in an advocacy role but not when one is in an information-provider role; presumably we want even advocates to be normatively responsible. If the presentation format itself inappropriately influences outcomes, then all invocations of that format ought to be subjected to the same normative sanction, regardless of the communicator's role as an advocate or an adviser. If it's normatively irresponsible to choose one presentation format when one's in an disinterested information-provider role, surely the presumption ought to be that it should be equally irresponsible for interested advocates to do so.

That is to say, even putting aside considerations of the communicator's role in this setting, there look to be normative questions that arise from the use of this variation. And that, in turn, suggests that we might usefully revisit the previous example concerning gain-loss message framing. I earlier suggested that the use of gain-framed or loss-framed appeals raised no normative concerns, but, given this second example, that conclusion ought to be reconsidered.

2.3 *Gain-loss message framing reconsidered*

Think about gain-loss message framing this way: Persons exposed to a loss-framed appeal will (sometimes) make different choices than if they had been exposed to a gain-framed appeal. And, of course, it's in the nature of things that this influence (of appeal framing) will be invisible to people – they will be unaware that their choices have been influenced by the particular way in which the appeal was framed. They will not know that if they had been exposed to a differently-framed appeal, they might have made different choices.

This way of putting things makes appeal framing look rather like a fallacy, at least in some traditional ways of thinking about fallacies. A long-standing characteristic worry about fallacies is that they lead an unsuspecting audience to be influenced in ways it otherwise would not have been. And here we might have a similar concern: Audiences will be influenced in ways they otherwise would not have been – not because of the substance of the appeals, but because of the phrasing of the appeals. (It's important here that these examples involve variations in expressing the same underlying substantive consideration. Differential effects

because of differentially meritorious arguments are no grounds for worries about normative misconduct.)

Indeed, this line of thinking makes one wonder whether it is possible for any presentational device – or at least any presentational device that makes a difference to persuasiveness – to be dialectically sound, that is, non-fallacious (not normatively questionable). If one way of expressing an argument has effects on people's decisions that are different from the effects associated with some other way of expressing that argument, then the argument qua argument is presumably not getting its due. (Do notice that this way of formulating the problem relies on knowing the dancer from the dance – the argument from its expression. And while it may be useful for some purposes to separate the argument per se from its particular realization, that distinction ought not be presumed secure.)

These first two examples can be thought of as representing presentation devices that (potentially) exploit human psychological weaknesses. We might wish that it wouldn't matter whether outcomes were expressed as "90% survival" or "10% mortality," but it does – and an advocate can exploit that fact in the service of the advocate's persuasive aims.

And one might argue that audiences should be protected from their weaknesses in this regard. Extensive empirical evidence has pointed to various systematic biases in reasoning, such as "optimism bias" (in which people are unrealistically optimistic about, for example, their relative susceptibility to health risks). [Some time ago, Finocchiaro (1992) recommended closer attention to similar phenomena by argumentation scholars.] And there is now considerable discussion of the legal implications of these sorts of phenomena – such as questions of whether government action (e.g., through restrictions on advertising) are appropriate or useful (e.g., Glaeser, 2006; Jolls & Sunstein, 2006; Trout, 2005).

For my purposes here, the central point to be noticed is simply that these findings point to a potential conflict between the practical interests of the advocate (who wants to persuade) and what we might think of as normatively-appropriate argumentative conduct.

I now want to consider two other examples that are rather different from these first two. The first two examples concerned cases in which normative questions are raised by certain advocacy practices where the normative considerations concern (in a way) the nature of the practice itself. The next two examples point to normative considerations arising outside the nature of advocacy practices themselves.

2.4 *Risk information*

The third example requires a brief preface to express a general normative premise, namely, advocates should not knowingly give inaccurate information in support of their claims. This is the sort of premise that almost seems too obvious to state, much less justify. But I do take it for granted that most would think this premise unobjectionable.

So consider the circumstance commonly referred to as "risk communication," that is, the presentation of information about risks of, for instance, individual behaviors (e.g., smoking), potential disease risks (e.g., risk of cardiovascular disease), environmental health threats (e.g., second-hand smoke), and so forth. Advocates will often find it useful to present risk information as part of their efforts at persuading people to undertake appropriate preventive or protective behaviors. I think we'd take it for granted that such advocates should present accurate risk information, and that the goal should be to give people an accurate picture of their risks (e.g., the risks of cigarette smoking).

But what if persons already overestimate the risk from (e.g.) smoking? Should we try to convince them that their risk is actually not as great as they suppose? This is not a purely theoretical question. There is some evidence that people do overestimate the dangers of smoking and alcohol consumption – and these risk perceptions are related to behavior; that is, persons with greater perceived risk are less likely to smoke or drink (e.g., Lundborg & Lindgren, 2002, 2004). The plain implication is that if people were given accurate information about these risks, they would be more likely to engage in these behaviors.

I can't sort out here all of the normative questions stimulated by such findings. But, as examples, consider: Do advocates have an affirmative responsibility to correct such misperceptions? Or is it enough if the advocates do not themselves assert incorrect information?

That is, is it permitted that advocates passively exploit the audience's misunderstandings? Without actually asserting incorrect risk information, advocates might nevertheless (enthymematically) rely on the audience's misperceptions in constructing their arguments. And, just to make things more complex here, what if the person presenting the risk information is in an information-provider role (e.g., a health care professional), not an advocacy role? Is such a person normatively compelled to correct misunderstandings about the degree of risk? My purpose here is not so much to offer answers to such questions as it is to point to how these social-scientific research findings raise some complications with respect to the normative treatment of advocacy conduct.

Specifically, I want to draw attention to two points. The first is the conflict here between the practical interests of the advocate (hoping to persuade people) and normative interests (e.g., in having communicators convey, or rely on, accurate information). For the persuader to be maximally effective in forwarding the advocate's point of view may require abandoning what we would ordinarily take to be normatively-desirable practices of advocacy.

Second: These questions are not unique to considerations of argumentative conduct. They reflect long-standing, classic normative questions about weighing ends and means: We have this desired end (e.g., encouraging people not to smoke). and the question is what means we are willing to employ in order to achieve that purpose (e.g., knowingly providing inaccurate information, exploiting the audience's incorrect beliefs, etc.). These parallel classic questions in moral philosophy about (for instance) "when, if ever, is lying morally justifiable?"

2.5 *Self-efficacy appeals*

The fourth example concerns (what can be called) self-efficacy appeals. As background: For many behaviors that persuaders might want to encourage, a key barrier to behavioral performance is attitudinal – people aren't convinced that performing the behavior is a good idea. For instance, consumers may need to be persuaded that a given product is worth purchasing.

But for some behaviors, the primary obstacle to behavioral performance is not attitudinal. Rather, it's a matter of one's perceived ability to perform the behavior, commonly called "self-efficacy" or "perceived behavioral control" (e.g., Ajzen, 1991; Bandura, 1977). For example, people may have favorable attitudes about exercising, but nevertheless not engage in those behaviors because of a perceived inability: "I don't have the time," "I don't have the equipment," "the facilities are too far away," and so on.

In such circumstances, persuaders obviously should focus on such self-efficacy beliefs. That is, rather than wasting time trying to convince people that exercise is desirable, instead persuaders should focus on convincing people that they do in fact have the ability to perform the action (e.g., Allison & Keller, 2004; for similar research on topics other than exercise, see Blok et al., 2004; Luszcynska, 2004). Notice that this is a straightforward instance of adapting a message to an audience, in which an advocate strategically selects which arguments to make on the basis of which of the audience's current beliefs need to be changed (for general analyses of this sort of approach, see Fishbein & Yzer, 2003; Van den Putte & Dhondt, 2005). [This seems not quite the same as what van Eemeren and

Houtlosser (2001, p. 152) call "selecting a responsive adaptation to audience demand," which involves "putting the issue in a perspective that accords with the expectations and preferences of the audience" (p. 153). Here, the advocate strategically selects which arguments to make on the basis of which of the audience's current beliefs needs to be changed.] Indeed, a persuader who does *not* focus on such beliefs is likely to be unsuccessful.

But this particular persuasive strategy might have a potentially undesirable side effect when used in the context of some health-related behaviors, namely, it might stigmatize those with unhealthy conditions as being personally responsible for their circumstance, even if they are not. (For discussion of such strategies, see Guttman & Ressler, 2001; for broader discussions of ethical aspects of health-related appeals, see Guttman, 1997a, 1997b.) I don't mean to say that this consequence necessarily guarantees that the strategy is somehow normatively defective; for example, some might find stigmatization unobjectionable here (or in general). But obviously these collateral unintended effects might make us normatively uneasy.

I want to draw attention to two points with this example. The first is that, as in the preceding case, there is here a conflict between the practical interests of the advocate (hoping to persuade people to engage in the behavior) and larger normative interests (e.g., in avoiding inappropriate stigmatization). If the persuader does what is maximally effective in this circumstance, then normatively undesirable consequences may follow.

The second is that this example, like the preceding one, represents a specific realization of common general problems of normative assessment. Weighing the normative worth of actions often involves weighing a combination of desirable and undesirable consequences. In a sense, then, there's nothing special about this last case, save that it arises in the context of advocacy. And in that way, this example is akin to the preceding one (inaccurate risk information), in that both involve weighing competing normative considerations: The inaccurate-risk-information case involves weighing the desirability of the ends and the means; this case involves weighing the desirability of the ends (the intended effects) and the unintended effects.

3. *Conclusion*

The examples discussed here are a varied lot. The first two examples (concerning gain-loss message framing and success/failure framing) raise normative questions

about advocacy practices on the basis of the intrinsic properties of certain appeals. The second two examples (concerning inaccurate risk perceptions and self-efficacy appeals) raise normative questions about advocacy practices on the basis of considerations outside the practices themselves – considerations of the desirability of the end (the risk perception example) or the unintended effects of the practice (the self-efficacy example).
But even the success/failure framing example is connected to larger contextualizing questions about the appropriate role of health care professionals in advising patients – should they advocate particular courses of treatment? Merely present information to let patients decide? And what if patients are incapable of digesting the information? And this, in turn, leads me to two broader points.

First: Paternalism inheres in persuasion. Advocates undertake advocacy because they think they know what other people should believe and do. And thus there is, to some degree, an inevitable collision between the usual sorts of normative interests of argumentation analysts (who are concerned that a good decision be reached, that the right outcome be obtained, with it being an open question just what the right outcome is) and the practical concerns of advocates (who are also concerned that a good decision be reached – but the advocate already *knows* what that decision should be). [Perhaps we might say: Advocates are paternalistic about ends (they know *what* decisions people should make), and argumentation analysts are paternalistic about means (they know *how* people should go about deciding).] And so, necessarily, larger questions about (for instance) balancing ends and means will inevitably enter into discussions about normatively-proper advocacy conduct. A satisfactory general analysis of normatively desirable argumentative conduct cannot be oriented only to the analysis of argumentative devices themselves, but rather must be situated within a broader understanding of the larger ends sought.

Second (and, in a way, as a consequence of the preceding): In all of this, we can see inscribed various classic ethical conundrums, such as normatively weighing ends and means. I take this to be yet another illustration of the permeability of the boundaries of argumentation studies. The very character of argumentation studies makes it an enterprise that touches many corners of scholarship–and for precisely that reason it is an enterprise for which interdisciplinary conferences like this one are specially valuable.

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