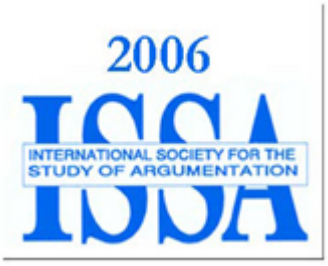
ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Duets, Cartoons, And Tragedies: Struggles With The Fallacy Of Composition



A fundamental problem arises concerning much of our language about groups. The problem is this: we apply to *groups* the intentional language of emotions, attitudes, and beliefs. Such language is paradigmatically individual in application and yet we apply it to groups of all sizes – small, medium, large and very large – and of varying degrees and kinds of organization. In important contexts, we refer to groups not only as doing things and being accountable for what they do, but as having attitudes and intentions related to their actions. Groups may be said not only to undertake actions but to be resentful, hateful, generous, compassionate, accepting, suspicious or trusting. They may be said to hold beliefs and make value judgments, and reach decisions on the basis of these. Corporate boards and parliaments, for example, are organized groups empowered to act for still larger groups. They take decisions and act – and when they do so, it is on the basis of beliefs and attitudes which underpin their intentions and actions. Suppose, for instance, that a corporate board reaches a decision to spend millions on exploratory drilling in some area of the Arctic. Why? Its decision is made intelligible on the grounds that it knows the price of oil to be high and rising, and has evidence implying that the area in question contains oil. Or a parliamentary body might reach a decision to send peacekeeping troops to a particular country, on the basis of beliefs about the risks and needs of the people in that country, and the feasibility of its troops making a constructive difference in that context.

For those who contest the observation that intentional language is commonly applied to groups, I suggest a reading of journals and magazines containing commentary about economic and political affairs. You will find many attributions of actions to groups and you will find that these actions are rendered intelligible in much the way we make individual actions intelligible, namely by attributing beliefs, attitudes, and values to groups. My particular interest in this area stems

from work on challenges of political reconciliation, and from seeing how questions about compositional attributions arise in that context. However, as the preceding examples will show, compositional attributions are by no means restricted to that sort of context.

For convenience, let us call the application of intentional language to groups the compositional phenomenon. The *compositional phenomenon* strikes many people as highly problematical. Many have raised difficulties about it, saying that it cannot possibly make sense for groups to think, feel, believe, and decide. Why not? Because groups are not *conscious*; there is no group mind. Some go even further, contending that groups cannot do anything, *qua* groups, and cannot properly be held accountable for their actions. (Miller 2001) This claim strikes me as implausible to the point of perversity, and I will not explore it here. I will assume that groups, small or large, organized or not, can do things. In fact there are some things that can only be done by groups – performing choral works, reaching a jury decision, winning a soccer game, and passing laws in parliament being obvious examples.

In discussions of group conflict and its resolution, the compositional phenomenon is quite conspicuous. We find, for example, allusions to distrust, trust, apology, forgiveness, and reconciliation as phenomena in politics, in the relations between groups. (Govier 1997) Does such discourse make sense? Can we engage in it without systematically committing mistakes of logic and metaphysics? These questions will be the focus of this presentation.What I have in mind here is the Fallacy of Composition, in which we mistakenly infer conclusions about wholes or groups from premises about parts or individuals.

In this presentation, I consider a number of themes related to the compositional phenomenon. First, I consider several responses that would purport to eliminate it. I then move on then to set it in the context of theory of argument. The view I will take is that there really is a problem here, the Fallacy of Composition is genuinely a fallacy, and an important one – but that the gap underlying this fallacy can be plausibly bridged in some cases.

Some Preliminary Metaphysics

As discussed here, the problem of compositional attributions begins from the supposition that, with respect to intentional language, group attributions are problematical whereas individual attributions are not. This casting of the problem will seem correct to many. Nevertheless, there are several ways of resisting the

dichotomous contrast between individual and group that constructs this problem. First, the individual can be regarded as a kind of plurality or collectivity. (Graham 2002) Hume, for instance, famously compared the self to a commonwealth. Seeking to understand personal identity, Hume argued that we attribute it on the basis of relations of resemblance and causation between the distinct perceptions of the mind. Stating that impressions cause ideas, which then cause further impressions, Hume said, “In this respect, I cannot compare the soul more properly to any thing than to a republic or commonwealth, in which the several members are united by the reciprocal ties of government and subordination, and give rise to other persons, who propagate the same republic in the incessant changes of its parts. And as the same individual republic may not only change its members, but also its laws and constitution; in like manner, the same person may vary his character and disposition, as well as his impressions and ideas, without losing his identity. Whatever changes he endures, his several parts are still connected by the relation of causation.” (David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*, Chapter 35.) Hume offered this comparison not as an argument from analogy, but rather as an explanatory illustration of his theory about causal relations among the distinct perceptions that constitute a human mind.
Hume, then, endorsed an account in which individual selves were compositional. As illustrated in the comparison between the self and the commonwealth, Hume argued that individuals are composite; the implication here seems to be that there is no categorical difference between the individual self and some composite entity such as a republic or commonwealth. If we were to endorse such an account, we might conclude that the dichotomy between *group* and individual levels of analysis be resisted.

A differently oriented approach can provide different grounds for the same conclusion. Often emotions and attitudes that are attributed to individuals presuppose interactions with other persons (Graham 2002), or are themselves the product of cultural patterns and responses. For instance, an individual who is suspicious of persons in another ethnic group may hold these attitudes because of beliefs and feelings acquired from traditions in the culture. To some extent, people believe, feel, and think as they do because of enculturation. (Govier 1997) Rather than presuming that we need to explain group attitudes by arguing up to macro from micro, one could insist that explanation goes in the opposite direction, downward from macro to micro. There are, of course, variations in individual responses to cultural traditions.While one person may inherit racial

prejudice from his culture, another may find it repugnant and be motivated to struggle against it. (Cohen 2001, Moody-Adams 1997)

These broadly metaphysical considerations argue against any exclusive and exhaustive dichotomy between individual and collective. But such considerations are too general to defeat the concerns of those who find compositional attributions problematic. They do not address the specific gaps when evidence about individual persons (whatever their metaphysics) is cited as support for conclusions about groups of such persons. As we shall see, many arguments for compositional attributions are weak, falling into the well-known trap of the Fallacy of Composition.

On a Pragmatic Level: Three Disputed Responses – and a Further Proposal

Apart from these broadly oriented metaphysical arguments, there are three further reactions to the compositional phenomenon as it is commonly constructed. These are:

1. *The Forbidding Response.* On the forbidding view, all intentional language, as applied to groups, is based on error; compositional attributions should be banned because intentional language applies paradigmatically to individuals. It should not be extended to groups, because groups are not conscious and are thus not the sorts of entities that can have beliefs, attitudes, and feelings. (Miller 2001)

2. The Legitimating Response. On this view, intentional language as applied to groups must be legitimate because it passes the only realistic and sensible test of legitimacy – namely actual use. Along the lines of ordinary language philosophy and the later Wittgensteinian philosophy, which stated that ordinary language is all right as it is, one might simply resist any systematic criticism of standard practice. (Wittgenstein 1963) After all, we regularly employ compositional attributions when they interpret and respond to actions and events; given that they do so, compositional attributions are functional. To seek to reform ordinary language on philosophical grounds would be misguided and futile.

3. *The Discriminatory Response*. On this view, there are indeed contexts in which intentional language applies to groups. We know from experience of war and intense conflict that nations and groups are often suspicious of each other and harbour feelings of resentment and hostility, based on felt grievances about wrongs of the past. That groups and nations have often had relationships characterizable in these ways are established facts of history. Such considerations are part of standard lore in the so-called realist school of international relations. Distrust and fear are frequently said to characterize relations between nation

states. On the Discriminatory account, such negative attributions are allowed but if we attribute such traits as compassion, generosity, forgiveness, and trust to groups, that goes too far in the direction of idealism, being too emotional and value-laden to be realistic. Positive intentional attributions must be resisted or systematically reinterpreted as manifestations of self-interest. On the Discriminatory account, it is insisted that ethically positive traits are purely individual.

I submit that all three of these responses are open to criticism. An objection to the forbidding response is that it is dogmatic, inflexible, and unrealistic given standard practice. An objection to the legitimating response is that its confidence in ordinary language goes too far in avoiding explanation and justificatory argument. An objection to the discriminatory response is that it is biased toward the negative. This response is grounded more in a Hobbesian attitude to the social world than in a sound theory of logic and language. Consistency indicates that if we can make sense of a nation *distrusting*, we can make sense of a nation *trusting*; if we can make logical and epistemic sense of a group *resenting*, we can make sense of a group *forgiving*;

In this presentation, I develop a fourth approach, along the following lines.
4. *Compositional Construction*, or *Gap-filling*. On this view, compositional attributions pose questions, especially when claims about group actions and attitudes are based on evidence about individuals. Real issues arise. The challenge is to acknowledge the gap and the problem, and find ways in which the gap can be bridged.

The Fallacy of Composition: Examples and Comments
To relate this problem more specifically to issues about argument and argumentation, I move to consider the Fallacy of Composition. I might add here that this fallacy has been strikingly memorialized in a sculpture by that name at the University of Groningen. This sculpture, a lighted structure, by Trudi van Berg and Jos Steenmeijer, occupies most of a wall on the building for the Faculty of Economics.
As is well-known, the Fallacy of Composition is committed when there is reasoning from premises about *parts* to a conclusion about a *whole*. There are many interesting instances of this fallacy, and many important questions, that arise in material and physical contexts. Here, I consider primarily social phenomena, given my interest in compositional attributions to groups of people.

In the social context, instances of this fallacy typically involve premises about individuals and conclusions about some group of which those individuals are members. There are, of course, many examples of such flawed arguments. I will mention several instances here.

The Duet: John is a terrific tenor and Susan is a brilliant soprano. So a duet by John and Susan will be superb.
The Cartoons: A Danish newspaper, under a particular editor, publishes some cartoons that are found to be offensive by some Muslims. Through this action, *Denmark* has offended *Muslims*.
The Tragedy of the Commons: If one farmer grazes his cattle on the commons, that will be beneficial for him; therefore if all the farmers graze their cattle on the commons, that will be beneficial for all.
The Dinner Party: No one would set out dinner for her family and exclude one member from the table, refusing for no good reason to allow the ostracized person to eat. You can see from this that it is wrong for some human beings to have inadequate food while many others enjoy good meals. Therefore the world community should accept responsibility for world hunger.
The Utilitarian: Each person desires his own happiness, and each person's happiness is in that way a good to that person. Therefore the general happiness is a good to the aggregate of persons.

In the Fallacy of Composition, the basic mistake is not merely quantitative. It arises from the fact that there are often significant structural differences between the micro and macro level. We go astray if we reason so as to fail to consider those differences. In the social context, which is our concern here, there are significant differences between individuals as such and groups comprised of these individuals in relationship with each other. Individuals in groups stand in relationships to each other and *interact* – sometimes cooperatively, sometimes conflictually, sometimes when occupying institutional roles, sometimes according to various habits and expectations. (May 1987) The nature and quality of the interactions between individuals in a group affects that group – even when it is very small, as in the case of the duet. If we reason that (simply) because John and Susan are both good singers as *individuals*, they will be good as a *duet*, we have ignored the fact that to present a successful duet, these two have to harmonize and work together. We have made a mistake, ignoring complications and complexities which may arise from their need to work together.

In terms of the theory of argument, it is interesting to note that the Fallacy of Composition can appear in arguments of different types. If an argument is taken to be *deductive*, and the premises are about individuals while the conclusion is about a group, clearly that argument will be deductively invalid in the straightforward sense that it will be possible for the premises to be true while the conclusion is false. We may locate the Fallacy of Composition within this gap. If an argument is taken to be an *analogical* argument in which the primary subject is a macro phenomenon, while the analogue is described at the micro level, the analogy will be inadequate because there are relevant differences between the analogue and the primary subject. We consider the Fallacy of Composition in considering the nature and relevance of these differences. If an argument from individual to group is taken as *inductive generalization*, it can be criticized as hasty; the individual cases do not give sufficient evidence about the group as a whole. If it is regarded as an *inference-to-the-best-explanation*, there will be doubts about whether a compositional attribution to a group does, indeed, provide the best explanation of the possession of characteristics by an individual or individuals, given that individuals within the group may differ from each other and can exert a certain degree of autonomy.

Concerning the gap constitutive of the Fallacy of Composition, there are two crucial factors to be considered.

(a) The problem of *less*. The individuals, considered simply as individuals, are *less* than the group considered as such, because they do not stand in relationships to each other, do not interact, cannot be said either to cooperate or to be in conflict, and are not organized institutionally.

(b) The problem of *more*. The individuals, considered as such, are *more* than groups as such, since individuals have something every group lacks, namely *consciousness*. An individual can literally, by himself or herself, think, reflect, plan, choose, feel, amend her feelings and so on. No group has consciousness in the literal sense in which an individual has consciousness.

In pursuing the gap-filling approach, I will return to these basic problems of less and more.

Reducing Composition to Something Else?

But first it will be useful to consider some approaches that will be resisted here.

In a version of the legitimating response to our problem, the very notion of a Fallacy of Composition may be contested. For example, one might say that there are recognized figures of speech in which one element serves to represent the

whole – as when we say “all hands on deck” or “give us this day our daily bread”. The figure of speech here is that of synecdoche. And in these familiar expressions, it is quite clear what is being said. The *hand* represents the person of a crew member and the *bread* represents the nutritional needs of people. Surely these things are understood and only the most pedantic person would object to these ways of talking. Synecdoche, one might say, has been around for a while and is an unobjectionable device.

Within political discourse, consider this statement: ‘Berlin opposes Washington on Iraq.’ In this locution, we find synecdoche insofar as the capital cities are named to represent the people of nation states. Pedantically we can spell it out: to say that Berlin opposes Washington on some matter is to say that Germans, as represented by their government in Berlin, disagree with Americans, as presented by their government in Washington, on policies regarding Iraq. One might insist that what is said is surely understood and perfectly legitimate; there is no problem here, we know what is meant, and synecdoche is an established mode of speech. But wait a minute: this case, unlike that of the hands on deck, this claim about Washington and Berlin involves a *compositional attribution*. There is does seem to be some amount of philosophical mystery in the matter. What does it mean for a nation or collectivity (Germany, or Germans) to *disagree* with another nation or collectivity (the United States, or Americans)? How are we to understand such claims? What sorts of evidence would support them? This is the compositional problem. The fact that we understand synecdoche in some other contexts does not make the compositional problem disappear in this sort of context.

It is sometimes said that the Fallacy of Composition has to be judged case by case and is in this respect a ‘material’ fallacy and not a formal one. (In this context, ‘formal’ and ‘general’ should not be confused. My treatment claims to be general, but not formal.) (Govier 1987, 1999). I leave the social sphere to find a simple example here. Consider, for instance, the case of a uniformly brown cookie; say it is a peanut butter cookie and its ingredients have been well mixed by the cook so that all its visible parts are brown. If we were to reason that because all the visible parts of the cookie are brown, the cookie itself is brown, we would reach a true conclusion. Yes indeed. However this result does not mean our argument from parts to the whole avoids errors in reasoning. We got to the true conclusion by luck alone. It does not follow from the fact that we sometimes get lucky and

arrive at a true conclusion that the Fallacy of Composition is material and has to be understood on a case-by-case basis. There is still something wrong with the argumentation scheme in the case; there is a problem with any general scheme reasoning from parts to whole with no gap-bridging device. That we are lucky in some cases, because in those cases the shift from micro to macro happens in this instance not to be negatively relevant to the conclusion, does *not* show that the general scheme is rationally defensible.

Perhaps what is going on in compositional attributions is akin to, or an instance of, stereotyping. We too easily form a 'them', where instead distinctions and divisions are needed. In some cases, our simplistically formed category of 'them' serves to buttress the polarization or even the demonization of an 'out-group' as contrasted with an 'in-group.' The basic mistake here is that a group is cast according to the attributes of some few individuals within it. Although some generalizations about groups may hold true, statistically, there are individuals within a group who do not fit the stereotype. And furthermore even a description that applies to a majority of individuals within a group may not apply to the group considered as a collectively.

The notion of stereotyping seems to fit the case of the Danish cartoons. Initially it was one editor who chose to commission and publish the contested depictions of Mohammed. This man, Flemming Rose, commissioned the drawings for a children's book, and did that for reasons of his own. Rose suspected that Danes were self-censoring in their comments on Islam and Islamism because they were afraid of intense reactions, including physical violence, by radical Islamists. He wanted to find whether people would be bold enough to make some drawings and send them in. Rose said, "I commissioned the cartoons in response to several incidents of self-censorship in Europe caused by widening fears and feelings of intimidation in dealing with issues related to Islam." (Rose 2006) Flemming Rose was one individual in one particular situation, with his own quite specific goals and concerns. In the initial situation, there was little reason to deem him typical of Danes generally; nor was he in any way authorized to represent Danes as a collectivity. In their response to the distribution of the cartoons, some Muslims in some countries rioted, burned embassies, and advocated boycotts of Danish products on the ground that the cartoons were blasphemous and offensive. It is by no means clear that Flemming Rose offended *Muslims in general*. But even if we say that he did, a vast leap is made attitudes attributed to Rose are attributed to *Danes more generally*. Flemming Rose is not all Danes or most Danes; still less so

did he represent the state of Denmark. (As embassies and products of Denmark were attacked, Danes began to rally to support Flemming Rose. At that point it could be more plausibly argued that 'Denmark' supported his actions; this scenario seems characteristic of the polarization underlying serious group conflict.)

One of the strongest objections was to a particular cartoon depicting Mohammed wearing a turban with a bomb in it. If Mohammed is represented as a terrorist and is the prophet of this religion, then, one might say, that the person who drew this particular cartoon was himself guilty of stereotyping because in his representation of the bomb in the turban, he implied that all Muslims are violent terrorists. About this suggestion, Rose commented, "Angry voices claim the cartoon is saying that the prophet is a terrorist or that every Muslim is a terrorist. I read it differently: *Some* individuals have taken the religion of Islam hostage by committing terrorist acts in the name of the prophet. They are the ones who have given the religion a bad name." It did not escape the attention of commentators that *violent* reactions to the stereotyping of one's group as *violent* only serve to confirm the very stereotype that one protests. (Fatah 2006) But then this whole matter is not, fundamentally, one where we would expect logic to reign supreme.

Some of these reflections suggest an inductive interpretation of the Fallacy of Composition, according to which we would assimilate it to another fallacy, that of Hasty Generalization. Leaving the cartoons and conflicts surrounding them, I turn here to a dispute regarding the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Many of the TRC's early defenders – including Archbishop Desmond Tutu himself – emphasized stories of *individual forgiveness and reconciliation*, and then went on to speak of national reconciliation between black and white South Africans. (Tutu 1999) The logical gap is apparent here. But what is its nature, exactly? Is the problem simply that there were not enough individual stories… the sampling of cases was not large *enough*, and possibly not representative, so that there is a problem of hasty generalization? To generalize to '*most*' or '*all*,' we need more of the *some* – and that is the problem? I do not think that is quite the problem here. Getting *more* of the *some* would not suffice, because it would not address the issue of level shift, from micro to macro, from relationships between individuals to relationships between large groups. For a group to forgive another group, or to reconcile with it, group processes are required. If we are to say that there is some kind of reconciliation between groups

that have previously been opposed, then we have to be able to speak of the attitudes of these groups (either aggregatively or collectively) and we have to characterize them as shifting in ways that are reconciliatory. Compositional problems arise here as they do not if our concern is straightforwardly a matter of Hasty Generalization.

It is sometimes suggested that the Fallacy of Composition can be understood as involving Equivocation. On this account, there is a shift of *meaning* when we move from micro to macro level. If we use the same terminology in both contexts, we ignore this shift, and reason on the basis of an equivocation. (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992) For example, individuals may *remember* things, may experience traumas, and may *work through* those traumas in a quest for healing. People speak, as well, of the need on the part of nations and groups to remember aspects of the past and work through traumas that have been experienced by the nation, and heal. But what does such language mean in the context of a collectivity? There has to be a shift in meaning, and when we make compositional attribution, we ignore that fact. On this interpretation the Fallacy of Composition might seem to be reducible to another fallacy, that of Equivocation.

As with the brown cookie, there are instances in which an answer to these questions seems easy to come by. Consider, for instance, the case of acknowledgement. Many discussions of post-conflict processes call for acknowledgement, by nations and groups, of wrongs committed by agents acting on their instruction and behalf. And nations and groups really can acknowledge; it is easy to see what this means. A nation can, for example, establish memorial days, commission sculptures, build and maintain museums, issue official statements of apology and recognition, and establish institutions for funding projects. It is thereby acknowledging various historical facts, and committing itself to value judgments about them. So far as policy and expressive artifacts are concerned, collectivities are likely to have greater resources and more power than individuals. Individuals can acknowledge too. They typically do so by making statements of admission expressive of their beliefs and attitudes, and in the case of wrongdoing, those admissions allow that the acts were wrong, were done culpably, and should not be repeated. Groups are not disadvantaged compared to individuals when it comes to acknowledgement; in fact, given their greater resources, they may be more able to acknowledge and memorialize than are individuals.

But the fact that in this particular case and some others compositional attributions seem unproblematical only suggests a more general solution; it does

not in itself provide one. General questions about the legitimacy of the shift have not disappeared. What would it mean for a *nation* to remember? To *forgive*? To show concern and generosity? *To deal with its past? To reconcile?* To say that there may be equivocation, that there is an alteration in meaning when we proceed from micro to macro, remains true for many cases. But these observations about equivocation do not fully handle the problem. What is the shift? What sorts of evidence (if any) can justify compositional attributions? The gap remains and must be bridged. How do we do it?

Ways to Bridge the Gap

There are human actions that are not the actions of individuals. These actions include such things as the singing of choral works, the waging of wars, and the conducting of national electoral campaigns. These are actions and they are human actions. It is people, human beings, who do these things. And people do not and in many cases cannot do them as individuals. So how do human beings do these things? How do we manage to sing the choral movement of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony? Conduct an election? Or dispatch troops to fight in a distant country? The answer is obvious: we do these things in organized groups, in which there are procedures and practices.

Suppose that the organizational structure is tight enough that a large group has a smaller sub-group authorized by its rules to deliberate and act in a range of cases. Let us call this sub-group the executive. Suppose further that the executive conducts deliberations in which people speak and reason together and reach decisions on the basis of its proceedings. In these deliberations, individuals put forward ideas and arguments and other individuals respond to them. Assuming even a modicum of democratic process in the case, the reasoning and decisions of the group are not necessarily those of any *individual* within it. There will be exchanges of information and judgment, argument, dialogue, and dialectical developments. The process in which various people make and respond to claims and arguments engages a number of people, and their arguments and responses affect each other. The decision may be said to *emerge* from the deliberations of the group, and may be deemed to be a joint decision. (Gilbert 1987)

Suppose, for example, that the executive of a political action group decides not to send messages out to members using the national postal system. It reaches this decision after deliberations involving considerations about possible delays and losses that its members claim to have occurred within in that system. Its decision with regard to this matter indicates an attitude that may be attributed to the

executive. Its attitude is one of distrust in the postal system. If the executive decision is known to the larger group and not opposed by them, thereby being tacitly accepted, we can attribute the attitude to the larger group. To consider another illustration, suppose the executive of a judges' organization meets to consider criticisms of a number of judicial decisions on matters pertaining to gender and its deliberations cumulate in an executive decision to organize workshops to educate judges on the matter. Let us suppose that the executive comes up with a policy and recommendation for action. Given this decision by the executive, certain beliefs and attitudes can be attributed to it. For example, if the executive is recommending educational workshops for judges, on gender themes, it must believe that judges need more information and training about gender and legal process, and that these workshops could provide them. Given its authorized role, the beliefs and attitudes attributed to the smaller group may also be attributed to the larger group, presuming that most do not object given information about this initiative. By their failure to object, they may be said to indicate tacit consent to these policies and to the beliefs and attitudes indicated by them.

Relationships and processes affect results. I am proposing that in such cases the gap between *individual* attitudes and those of the *group* may be bridged by the facts of group process. What A,B,C,D, and E come up with after meeting together emerges from their discussion and – because it emerges in this way – is distinguishable from what any one of them would have come up with individually. There is something distinctive about the process in which the decision has been reached, because it has involved these individuals *in relationship* to each other. (Gilbert 1987, Graham 2002) The decision or action that results from the deliberations of the executive is a group product, attributable to the executive because it is a product of the interactions of its members, and attributable to the larger group if they tacitly consent. Because the decision or action can be attributed to this group, the intentional attitudes and beliefs implied can also be attributed to it.

The two members of a duet can speak directly to each other, but large groups cannot deliberate face-to-face. Canada cannot have a discussion except insofar as some representative persons have discussions in some contexts, and these discussions are publicized and become public. An obvious possibility is that of an explicit and authorized political process. If the context is that of the House of Commons in Ottawa, these participants are representative of the Canadian public

because they have been elected in a process that is broadly accepted as legitimate. Given *representativeness* and *tacit consent*, policies adopted in the House of Commons can be regarded as those of Canada. Insofar as these policies are understood and stand unopposed, they can be attributed to Canada as a collectivity. The collectivity has engaged in deliberations and actions through its representatives.

A complication arises at this point. Where there is no group process, the problem of compositional attributions cannot be solved in this way. (May 1987, Graham 2002) What about more loosely organized groups or groups that are scarcely organized at all? It would seem that unorganized groups can act – as they do in various forms of street demonstration and protest. A recent example is that of extensive protests in Paris, with regard to the proposed law on youth employment. In some cases of street protest, people come together without there being a clear organizational structure constituting them as a collectivity. We may consider cases in which there is nothing like a designated executive enjoying powers granted by a collectivity in which persons are members or not. Suppose, for example, that 200,000 people have gathered in the center of Paris to express their discontent with a proposed law, and many of them are carrying signs and shouting slogans against that law. Given that participation in the protest is voluntary, given the context and the reasonable supposition that the meaning of signs and slogans is understood, it makes sense to attribute to these persons attitudes of opposition to the proposed law. (Indeed, the attribution of such attitudes is already implied when we describe a crowd as *protesting* the proposed law.')

But suppose now that one hundred or so of these people begin to engage in property violence. Let us say that they throw stones and smash the windows on cars shops. And suppose that such persons are a minority. Should we say that the protesting youth are engaging in property violence? That they are threatening, destructive? My account here would have the implication that these further attributions cannot be justified unless there is further evidence, according to which we would have grounds for attributing these attitudes to most of the individuals present or to the group as a whole. How do those present respond to the violence? Do they indicate support by cheering and joining in? Do they indicate opposition by shouting out against the violence or trying to prevent it? Or by leaving the scene? Do they indicate ambivalence and embarrassment by standing awkwardly by? If there is no predominant pattern of response in such a

case, given that there is no representative executive to speak for the group, we cannot attribute either approval or disapproval.

Clearly, my account of gap-bridging presupposes that there is organization within the group. When representativeness and tacit consent are less clear, it is difficult to justify attributions to the group as a whole or even to a majority of its members.

I have argued here that there is an important sense in which compositional attributions are problematic. When premises are about individuals and conclusions are about groups, there is gap in the argument. The existence and understanding of this gap underpin the tradition of the Fallacy of Composition. I have maintained here that this fallacy is genuine and important, and I believe there is much to learn by logically probing claims about 'the Danes,' 'the West,' 'Muslims,' and so on. Stereotypes, hasty generalizations, and unclear language often underlie simplistic polarization, at a cost both to accurate understanding and to decent relationships. For all the qualifications we may make about the individual/group dichotomy and the clarity of some concepts, there is a problem of compositional attributions. But I am arguing against any notion that all such attributions should be resisted. On the contrary, I have claimed that some of them are unobjectionable because they can warranted by a line of argument in which the gap is bridged. This warranting is most straightforward when groups are organized.

The gap defining the Fallacy of Composition can be bridged when group structures and relationships provide contexts for people to think together and act on the basis of their joint deliberations. We can understand how the deliberations and actions of an interactive group provide grounds for attributing to it attitudes and beliefs. By these mechanisms, the problem of *too little* is addressed. It does not matter that the group itself does not have consciousness, because intentional attitudes can be correctly attributed to it on the basis of interactions between its members. Then, in virtue of *representativeness* and *tacit consent,* we can see how those attitudes and beliefs can also be said to characterize a larger group. These features show how the problem of *too much* is resolved. Putting together emergence, representativeness, and tacit consent, we are able to bridge the gap constitutive of the Fallacy of Composition as it applies to groups and individuals.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – The Invocation Of Time Within Argumentative Discourse In An Asynchronous Internet Environment

Interactive online environments often contain arguments. Research has been conducted on flaming behavior (Lee, 2005), but other linguistic elements of online conflict do not receive much attention. One such element is the invocation of time. While such a move makes use of a solitary concept, this strategy is one that has yet to be examined. It is useful to understand what takes place when people invoke time in order to have a better understanding of online argumentative discourse in general.

Several different areas of theoretical research provide ways of understanding possible ways to examine how people introduce and use time within online argumentative discourse. These include linguistics (Clark, 1992; Lakoff, 1987), chronemics (Bruneau, 1977, 1979; Laguerre, 2004), pragma-dialectics (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jacobs, & Jackson, 1993), and strategic maneuvering. The discursive inclusion of time may in fact prove to be fallacious, which requires a further theoretical understanding of fallacy theory.

To examine the invocation of time requires acknowledging that time can be considered a distinct linguistic category. Cognitive linguistics provides a way to examine categorization. Lakoff (1987) broke from previous theories regarding language and categorization by using examples to demonstrate that language categories are linked to human cognition. These examples led to a final dismissal

of elements of classical categorization in exchange for a theory of categorization based on internal cognitive models. While Lakoff's work has limited applicability to argumentation theory as a whole, it does shed light on how certain words or phrases may connect logically to one another to create an overall argument. This cognitive linkage suggests that more difficult to follow metaphors and language use can also be examined based on the way that concepts are categorized in order to understand the rationale behind the argument.

Chronemics was initially conceived as a way to examine time as a variable influencing human communication (Bruneau, 1977, 1979). He defined chronemics as "the study of human temporality as it relates to human communication" (Bruneau, 1977, p. 3), later expanding the definition to include the influence and interdependence between temporality and communication. In his examination of chronemics, he defined eight interdependent levels of time-experiencing. Despite these levels, Bruneau (1977) opened chronemics as an area for further research without creating any definitive way to categorize time.

Later Bruneau (1979) studied chronemics relative to organizational communication, further developing the understanding of time to include the relations between personal, group, and organizational time. Ballard and Seibold (2004) also worked in organizational communication, demonstrating that variation in three communication structures associated with organizations influenced the way people perceived time on numerous dimensions. The way work members perceived time was created through interaction and their intersubjective experience.

While this research focused on organizational communication, it is important to note that there may be competing ideas about time. The multiple dimensions of time lead to different reasons for people to invoke time. Other research has also demonstrated the possibility for competing conceptions of time to create conflict (Jaffe, 1975). This conflict demonstrates the cultural construction of time, which may influence how time is invoked and understood within argumentative discourse. Therefore, time contains several complexities that may influence its invocation.

The advent of the Internet also influenced the category of time. Laguerre (2004) examined the notion of the cyberweek and how it compared to our previous understanding of the civil week. The cyberweek is further broken down into the concepts of 'cybertiming' and 'flexitiming', which blur the boundaries between

work and leisure time, the workweek and the weekend, and public and domestic spheres online. Using the idea of an interactional model, with the cyberweek being both part of the civil week and apart, a cyberweek is defined as "a set of times electronically produced through the intervention of a human agency – measured with no reference to the rotation of the moon or sun – all of which are equivalent and contained in linear or non-linear sequences, or in both, in a flexible, cyclical temporal domain" (Laguerre, 2004, pp. 226-227). While it does not take temporal aspects like time zones into account, virtual time is still rooted in civil time. For example, responses across time zones may take a while because the receiver is sleeping while the sender works.

While Laguerre's (2004) focus on the cyberweek is more concerned with its connection to organizational matters, other researchers examined virtual time in a more general manner. Lee (2005) demonstrated that asynchronous written communication on the Internet might also affect the expression of hostility. McMillan and Hwang (2002) pointed out the importance of the time something takes to load on interactivity, an aspect that does not factor as much into other discussions on time. While the authors studied interactivity related to advertising, this could have an impact on how people invoke time in argumentative discourse in other places.

The realm of invocation occurs within an overarching interaction. Clark's (1992) arenas of language use provide a way to examine how this discursive move affects the interaction between the participants. In this pragmatic approach to the collaborative nature of language use, arenas of language use are considered structural arenas of actions. There are three properties of arenas of language use: participants, social processes, and collaborative actions. These properties demonstrate that there are multiple people directly involved to accomplish some social process working independently and together, which create the setting for language use. Therefore participants are responsible for managing both the content of the conversation as well as the process. There cannot be argumentation between arenas as there are in fields of argumentation (van Eemeren et al., 1993) because arenas include all of the participants within the discourse. However, from Clark's standpoint argumentation may be a possible arena.

Pragma-dialectical theory integrates descriptive and normative concerns regarding argumentation (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992; van Eemeren et al., 1993). It uses the ideal of critical discussion as a basis on which to evaluate

argumentative discourse. With a clearly defined ideal form of argumentation, argument reconstruction can then note the departures from the ideal (van Eemeren et al., 1993).

Fallacy is one form of departure from critical discussion. According to the pragma-dialectical approach, a fallacy is a discussion move that violates a discussion rule, thus hindering the resolution of the disagreement (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992). However, this approach has been critiqued. Siegel and Biro (1997) were in favor of a normative theory of argumentation, but criticized the lack of an epistemic dimension they felt was central to understanding both argumentation in general and fallacy. Ikuenobe (2002) claimed the pragma-dialectical approach to fallacy did not take the different types and degrees of fallacies into question and ignored the issue of motivation. Hansen (2002) criticized van Eemeren and Grootendorst for referring to Hamblin's view of the dominant understanding of fallacy in previous literature as the standard definition of fallacy. He surveyed some of the major literature from Aristotle to Hamblin to demonstrate that Hamblin's often-quoted sentence is likely an exaggeration. The surveyed literature supported a more general definition of fallacy as a "segment that appears to be a better argument of its kind than it really is" (Hansen, 2002, p. 152).

Other research (Goodwin, 1998; Rühl, 1999; Cummings 2002, 2003; Ikuenobe, 2002) suggests there are difficulties inherent in defining and understanding fallacies on a general level. What is agreed on is that fallacies do take place and that they need to be studied. The pragma-dialectical mode has been criticized for ignoring the epistemic dimension and not distinguishing between different levels of fallacy, but it does provide a normative approach that is useful when looking more generally at fallacies.

Pragma-dialectics has expanded on its discussion of fallacy through the development of strategic maneuvering, which incorporates the rhetorical aims of the participants (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999). It demonstrates that participants want each stage of the resolution process to end in their favor, but does not mean that they will be unreasonable. According to van Eemeren & Houtlosser (2003), "persuasive aims need not necessarily be realized at the expense of achieving critical objectives" (p. 290). Fallacies then become "derailments of strategic maneuvering" (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003). Strategic maneuvering may attempt to balance competing rhetorical and critical discussion demands, but that might not always occur. The imbalance that takes place when rhetorical concerns win out results in fallacious moves (van Eemeren

& Houtlosser, 2003).

I became aware of a possible fallacious use of time in a study of online gossip (Greenfeld 2005). Participants appeared to occasionally disregard the affordances of asynchronous communication. This resulted in something akin to the following interaction begun by dhjelm (2005):

(1)
6.1.1.1.1. dhjelm: 2005-11-03 12:21 am UTC
You wouldn't have as much time to talk on your cell phone, or play with the radio, or eat, or spill coffee on yourself if you had to keep shifting gears.

6.1.1.1.1.2. rabid_violence: 2005-11-04 07:01 am UTC
You act as if people still wouldn't do these activities een [sic] if they had a stick. Face it, they'd do all of them, while grinding their gears in.

Put the Kool-Aid down then get back to me.

6.1.1.1.1.2.1. dhjelm: 2005-11-04 04:40 pm UTC
It took you two days to think of that?

6.1.1.1.1.2.1.1. rabid_violence: 2005-11-04 09:01 pm UTC
This was my frist [sic] time checking debate all week.

From a pragma-dialectical perspective, this is a clear violation of Rule 1. The poster dhjelm attempts to prevent rabid_violence from putting forth or clarifying his position. What is interesting is that dhjelm attempts to close off discussion about an opposing opinion without addressing the topic. Although the asynchronous environment allows people to return to older information when it is convenient for them, such an attack operates on the assumption that other posters who responded were able to see the post close to the time the comment was written. This being the case, the case can be made that rabid_violence responded at a later date because he/she was thinking of a response, rather than coming across the comment closer to the time the comment was written. However, the time stamps indicate that it had not even taken the two days mentioned to respond. While posting in an asynchronous environment, people may assume that other posters visit the site more frequently than they actually do, leading to a fallacious argument based on the first poster's own habits.
This example raises questions about the way online argumentative discourse

takes place and how time plays a role in this discourse. Examining the invocation of time provides a way to understand broader reasoning in online fora. Noting the occasions where time is used fallaciously serves as a way to understand the function and uses of fallacy. This leads to the following research question: how do people invoke time within online argumentative discourse?

Method

Grounded analysis served as the primary method for collecting and analyzing the data. Two online journal communities were selected from the Livejournal (LJ) site, one centered around debate and the other a leisure-oriented community for *Harry Potter* fans. Both communities were active, meaning that there were multiple posts each week and responses to these posts that appeared in the community. The posts were also publicly available so that anybody could view the entries and comments in the community.

There are a number of affordances (Hutchby, 2001) for community journals that affected posting. The journal communities allowed anybody to join, and members could then post a topic-related entry to the community journal. Personal journal owners had the option of watching the community or selecting whether community posts would appear in their "friends list" view. Respondents could respond to the initial post or to other comments within the post. The posts were threaded based on to whom the response was given and in chronological order for each thread or subthread. Those who had a livejournal name could also choose to have comments posted in response to anything they wrote emailed to them. Otherwise a poster would have to keep track of the entry itself to see whether somebody responded to a comment.

The two journal communities were studied for a period of two months, starting in November 2005 and ending before the New Year. All instances where posters invoked time in an online disagreement were collected. Most examples came from the debate community, while very few took place in the leisure community. Examples where time served as the basis of the disagreement were discarded. Examples where time usage referred to an instance rather than the passage of time were also discarded. The remaining examples served as the basis for the development of categories of time usage. As a result of the threading that took place in the communities, comments were identified according to their place within the overall tree. A new number was added for each indentation within the thread. Finally, the categories were examined to see if there were any fallacious uses of time according to the pragma-dialectical model.

Results

Fifteen basic categories for time usage were discovered. They include history, information, time comparison, the current state, conditionals, projections, suspension of time, appropriate time, demonstration of like/dislike, humor/sarcasm, human capabilities, attacks, expertise, facesaving, and references to an individual poster's time. All of these categories are non-exclusive. Posts referencing time often contain multiple categories within one post. Table 1 lists examples for each category.

The first three categories, history, information and time comparison, are highly similar. Often history is invoked in order to provide information. Statistics are another form of information. It is possible to refer to the past for other purposes, just as one can refer to current events to provide information. For example, time comparisons consist primarily of past/present comparisons. Linked to both past/present comparisons and history are comments about past experiences. These experiences often demonstrate stability or change in a poster's views. Using time to describe history allows posters to demonstrate continuity/discontinuity and to place events in the past, allowing for future movement.

While references to the past are easily found, posters also refer to current, possible future, future, and suspended times. The current state applies to both posters (as in Table 1) and events. The conditional category operates in a formulaic way that can be described as "when x, then y." Similarly projections refer to a possible future, but are not dependent on another action taking place first. Hypothetical situations that mention time are moments where time is suspended.

The next two categories occur both separately and together. Appropriate time can be linked to like/dislike. However, appropriate time within argumentative discourse also refers to when something should occur. The time link to like/dislike is primarily associated with media such as television shows and films.

Humor and sarcasm primarily appear in conjunction with another category. Nevertheless, there is a construction that stands on its own. The example for this category in Table 1 resembles the face-to-face joke that begins with "back in my day…". This demonstrates that not all time references are meant to be taken seriously, even within argumentative discourse.

Human capabilities and attacks are also linked. The issue of what people are capable of doing at the same moment can be used to attack another position. In

general, attacks refer to both attacking another position and attacking another poster. Most attacks including a time reference relate to the position rather than a poster.
Expertise can be linked either to the person posting a comment or another poster. There are three main uses of expertise and time: to demonstrate time spent, admit to lack of expertise, and question someone else's expertise. Most of these are tied to the amount of time spent in a particular community.
The final two categories also relate to individual posters. Facesaving refers to the actions individual posters take to minimize potential argument about a comment. It often occurs in conjunction with other moves, not all of which invoke time. Finally, reference to an individual poster's time applies to the inclusion of what time it is offline for a particular poster.

As shown through the smaller categories, the majority of time references appear as a combination of different categories. Take the following piece of a quarrel between gerbilsage and chrissie (gerbilsage, 2005):

(2)
2.1.1.1.2.1.1.1.1. gerbilsage: 2005-11-08 10:55 am UTC
You'll get over me and meet somebody of your own kind. They'll probably live under a bridge and eat slime just like you.
– M.

2.1.1.1.2.1.1.1.1.1. chrissie: 2005-11-08 10:58 am UTC
That would have been a good one were I thirteen. You've insulted me much more efficiently in the past. I know you can do better.

2.1.1.1.2.1.1.1.1.1.1. gerbilsage: 2005-11-08 11:00 am UTC
You overestimate me. I'm not a troll like you. I'm just a random lad who uses LJ for procrastination. Unlike you, I don't feel the need to milk as many comments as possible out of people by making inane comments designed solely to provoke a reaction.
– M.

While this argument has clearly departed from critical discussion, the two posters are continuing to debate whether or not chrissie can be considered an Internet troll. Chrissie invokes time in the categories of both appropriate time and time comparison to suggest that gerbilsage has not insulted her enough. If her

behavior does match the description of gerbilsage's following comment, then it serves to continue the argument, although not in the way chrissie appears to want.

Within the categories, there are both fallacious and non-fallacious instances according to the pragma-dialectical model. The attack category is one place that demonstrates both proper and fallacious uses of time. For example, there is the following attack on theloudcafe's (2005) attempt to end an argument:

(3)
2.1.2.2.1.1. theloudcafe: 2005-11-07 05:35 am UTC
I also want to make it clear that *stop goes for EVERYONE.*

I don't care if you hate Emma with every fiber of your being or love her with all your heart –

Insults are insults, and I don't want them traded in my thread. [sic]

2.1.2.2.1.1.1. bunney: 2005-11-07 05:40 am UTC
The only person who's been insulted here is Emma and I don't think she's reading.

2.1.2.2.1.1.1.1. theloudcafe: 2005-11-07 05:46 am UTC
OK, seriously. Don't act like you guys haven't been 'debating heatedly' or WHATEVER you want to call it. I'm not saying the comment should have been made, but that doesn't mean others should have either. If it kills you that they really do not like the look of Emma's breasts — please please please don't use my thread as an excuse to get offensive. You can say I'm being power abusive or whatever, I don't care. Drama is just not for me. Or the threads that I hold.

2.1.2.2.1.1.1.1.1. bunney: 2005-11-07 05:59 am UTC
When was I being offensive? Besides, this is a community and these sorts of things crop up on communities. You can always delete the thread if you don't want to read it.

Furthermore, are you aware that you hotlinked every single one of those pictures and hotlinking is so internet illegal it's not even funny?

2.1.2.2.1.1.1.1.1.1. theloudcafe: 2005-11-07 06:06 am UTC
Oh my god, what do you have against respecting my rules? Everyone else

commented saying that they would drop it. You however keep it up. Why are you posting in a thread, when you don't even RESPECT the maker of the thread?! Seriously, you want to know how your being offensive? Read your posts.

And my hotlinking has nothing to do with this. Why do you insist on bringing it up? You bring up an arguement about how I'm hotlinking — and then you ask how you're being offensive?

Seriously. I want you to drop it. It's midnight, and I want to go to sleep. All I'm asking of you is to go some place else to argue…

Bunney's response attacks the use of the word 'offensive' in the preceding post. This requires theloudcafe to further defend her standpoint that posters, and bunney in particular, were being offensive. It is a clear demonstration of Rule 3 as bunney's attack remains focused on theloudcafe's previous comments. Since this develops into a multiple, mixed dispute, the rest of bunney's post provides an alternative before shifting into another standpoint altogether. The argument concludes on theloudcafe's end with a fallacious use of individual time.

The fallacious attack is more easily spotted in attacks on another poster. For example, mrexcess (2005) responds to a post in the community that results in the following quarrel:

(4)
2. mrexcess: 2005-11-02 04:54 pm UTC
Such an independent libertarian you are! It's not at all like you just swallow and repeat whatever the current brand of neocon Kool-Aid every BushBut in the country is presently dishing out in unison. Not-at-all!

And your obvious, seething partisan hatred for "liberals", man, how could anyone ever have confused you with yet another BushBot?

These internet folks are just wacky, I tells ya! Wacky!

2.1. whip_lash: 2005-11-02 05:01 pm UTC
It talks, but nothing meaningful comes out.

Yes, I have an obvious, seething hatred for liberals. And social conservatives. And dogmatic libertarians. And socialists. And morons. Wacky!

2.1.1. mrexcess: 2005-11-02 05:31 pm UTC
Sorry I was still too busy laughing at your last Plamegate post (the one where you spend several paragraphs uncomfortably zipping and dodging around the central issue of the case) to include any fresh content here.

2.1.1.1. whip_lash: 2005-11-02 05:50 pm
What, not that I expect this to be very enlightening, do you propose to be the central issue of the case?

This humorous attack on whip_lash's initial post about Valerie Plame compares his post against anti-war comments to current Bush supporters' talk on the same issue despite the poster's previous claim to be a member of a different party. What makes this comment fallacious is that it violates Rule 3 by distorting whip_lash's standpoint into one associated with the Republican Party, resulting in oversimplification and exaggeration. The second comment by mrexcess is also fallacious because he attacks whip_lash, yet never responds to the challenge to support his standpoint that whip_lash missed the central issue of the case.

Discussion
As demonstrated by these examples, the invocation of time can take place in relation to the content of the argument or to manage the overall discussion. This is similar to Clark's (1992) discussion of collaborative actions, where participants are responsible for coordinating both content and process. That time is used for both demonstrates the practical problem of managing interaction in everyday discourse, which can be problematic for the pragma-dialectical model as it relies on having the time for a critical discussion to take place.
There are also a few regular conditions where time usage appears in argumentative discourse. Most occur in posts regarding current events, while others appear in posts/comments that restate older information, posts/comments about television shows and films and when it is late at night for a particular poster. Posts about current events where time invocation occurs typically have ties to other events that have occurred previously or are similar to something that may be done. The restating of older information or something already provided by another poster leads to sanction as what is restated is considered common ground for the participants. This also reflects the collaborative actions of participants (Clark, 1992). Television shows and film discussions that relate to time refer primarily to the length of the film/show rather than the content. Finally, the lateness of the hour for an individual poster only emerges through self-disclosure.

One would think that the asynchronous environment of the online communities would provide a place for critical discussion to take place as it removes the constraint of available time. However, some of the fallacious uses of time demonstrate that people interact within argumentative discourse online as though it is real-time interaction. Examples (1) and (3) show how this reasoning emerges in online discourse.

Strategic maneuvering provides a way to explain the way time is invoked in online discourse. All three levels of strategic maneuvering, topical potential, auditorial demand and presentational devices (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999, 2001), fit the categories of time invocation mentioned previously. Topical potential links to history, information, time comparison, current state, conditional, projection, suspension of time, appropriate time, and human capabilities. Auditorial demand is more difficult as there can be time invocation tailored to the audience, but in a way that is not directly tied to the invocation of time. For example, living4theblue's (2005) comment, "I hope this doesn't come off as bitchy, but I posted this a few days ago." It clearly is presented in a strategic way to minimize conflict and produce a particular response, but the strategy lies in the first part of the sentence while the time invocation remains separate. Humor/sarcasm can be considered another aspect of auditorial demand in that it often contains the type of humor that is associated with the community. It also can be a presentational device. In fact, the presentational device level can be applied to most of the categories, depending on how time is being invoked.

Examples (1) and (3) demonstrate how a desire to end discourse results in a fallacious move. Example (4) also demonstrates that an attack can become fallacious if proof is not provided or the attack distorts what was previously presented. In all of these cases the desire to win the argument is not in balance with the aims of critical discussion, resulting in fallacy. Another way to think of these competing aims is as dialectical shifts (Walton, 2000b; van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003). The application of formal dialogue to actual dialogue as a form of comparison is similar to the comparison in the pragma-dialectical model of actual discourse to critical discussion.

While fallacy theory has been criticized for being *ad hoc* (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003), the fallacious examples demonstrate that fallacy emerges from the discourse. The interaction between posters leads to the fallacy. This appears most clearly in example (3), where theloudcafe continues to attempt to end

debate, which culminates in a fallacious invocation of time.
The affordances of the online journal communities also may have ties to the fallacious use of time. For example, the fallacious use of time in example (1) may have resulted from dhjelm receiving an email notifying him of rabid_violence's comment in response to him rather than his going back to the community entry to discover the comment. It is possible that the email would have been more likely to prompt a response questioning the timing of the response than had dhjelm returned to the post's comments and found it. Unfortunately, there is no way to determine how posters learned of other posters commenting to them from the text itself. Therefore, further research into affordances and whether people use all available affordances may provide a better understanding of how people consider time within online environments.

In addition, the overall concept of time still requires further examination. The categories here reflect the usage of time more than the metaphors and understandings of time, which would relate to Lakoff's (1987) work. Further investigation into the ways time is invoked in these categories may demonstrate that some metaphors are predominant in certain categories. The fallacious moves that result when posters ignore the affordances of asynchronous communication available in the community demonstrate that virtual time is firmly rooted in offline time for posters, supporting Laguerre's (2004) description of virtual and civil time. All of these have an impact of our understanding of time.
Interestingly, all the examples except for the first involve debates that have a quick turn-around between comments. The longest pause takes place in example (4), where almost half an hour takes place between two of the comments. Self-selection may lead to this result, as posters may not consider it worth debating after a certain period of time has passed between when the comment initially was posted and when somebody else who wants to respond sees it. A possible link may be to the type of argumentative discourse that appears in Internet chat rooms where the affordances of chat rooms work against critical discussion (Weger & Aakhus, 2003). Since journal communities developed after chat rooms, journal users may have started in chat rooms and operated based on the affordances they were used to rather than adapting to the affordances of the journal system. Other precursors to journal communities are Usenet and electronic bulletin boards. Their affordances may link more closely to LJ community affordances.

There are a number of limitations to this study. First, only two communities were

studied for two months so more rarer categories may not have been discovered. Second, the only asynchronous environment studied was the online journal community and there are other asynchronous Internet environments. Third, the debate-centered community was largely political and the leisure community tied to one popular film/book series so there may be other uses that occur in different types of communities. Finally, it operates on the assumption that time is used differently in general from the way it is invoked in argumentative discourse.

Nevertheless, this study opens up several avenues for future research. There is plenty of room to further examine the use of time in argumentation, both on and off the Internet. A more in-depth understanding of the categories proposed here may lead to further discoveries of the way people invoke time in argumentative discourse. The fact that fallacious time use can demonstrate a dismissal of asynchronous communication affordances suggests that further research not only on the affordances of a particular environment but also the affordances employed by users in argumentative discourse might help explain the way arguments take place online. The links between time and the different levels of strategic maneuvering also require further investigation to see how invoking time relates to both rhetorical strategy and critical discussion. All of these provide a deeper understanding of broader aspects of online argumentation and can contribute to a greater knowledge of fallacy.

The asynchronous Internet environment of online journal communities contains argumentative discourse that includes the invocation of time. This invocation has ties to linguistics (Lakoff, 1987; Clark, 1992) as well as strategic maneuvering (van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 1999, 2001, 2003) and fallacy (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992; van Eemeren & Houtlosser, 2003). Some posters even ignore the affordances of the asynchronous environment within argumentative discourse to result in a fallacious move based on the real time of the poster. This move has broader implications for the study of online argumentative discourse. Further research will help us understand the way in which time emerges into online arguments and how it has implications for the way we examine affordances, strategic maneuvering and fallacy.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Managing Disagreement In Multiparty Deliberation

1. This paper examines a case of deliberation that took place during a meeting among community leaders and representatives for a land-housing development firm. The meeting involves a speech, made by one of the developer's representatives, and the subsequent discussion of what is put forward among the community leaders and representatives of the development firm. The participants' discussion moves following the speech provide an opportunity to reflect on a practical problem faced by parties to a deliberation: how to enable the expression of sufficient disagreement among participants while preventing the unlimited expansion of disagreement. Observations of the meeting based on a transcript made from an audio-recording will first be described followed by a discussion of the implications of these observations for further understanding how disagreement is managed in multiparty deliberation.

2. The meeting where the deliberation takes place involved eight members of the community's government (the mayor, four council members, planning board chair, and borough attorney) and five representatives of the development firm (main speaker, his assistant, firm's attorney, the president of the corporation's regional division, and the vice-president of land development for the region). The meeting was held as a broader controversy related to the development discussed in this meeting emerges in the community about appropriate land-use and development. The official status of the meeting is not clear since no record of the meeting was available until it was discovered during the pre-trial phase of a lawsuit related to the development discussed during this meeting. The speech lasts nearly 18 minutes and the ensuing discussion lasts 1 hour and 30 minutes.

The speech begins with preliminaries that update those present about matters

that the developer has been "*studying*." The speaker defines the land under contract (161 acres) and describes the availability of the adjacent pieces of property. He points out their goal to build 350 units, which is the maximum allowed by the Borough's ordinance, as a senior lifestyle community with recreational amenities. He also points out that there are several "*outside forces in flux*" including the determination of the protected wetland boundaries on the property and the borough's ordinances. He then previews the main points of the presentation as real estate taxes, infrastructure costs, and ordinances. He defines these as "*three kinds of global issues*" on which the developer "*needs some feedback*." The speaker then makes a prediction that the borough residents will realize a "*25-42 percent*" real estate tax decrease depending on how many units can be developed and how the project is put together. The speaker puts forward a theory of how to make the project successful and thus attain that tax benefit for the whole community.

The presentation is a quasi problem-solution arrangement that can be summarized as follows: The developer projects that 300 units sold is the point of economic viability for the project and that 350 units sold is preferred. The development's success depends on the way it is marketed and priced. The key barrier to marketing is that the development can not have certain desirable amenities such as a golf course due to the limited availability of land. The proposed solution is to market the development based on the charm of the surrounding community and other recreational amenities such as tennis courts and swimming pools. The key barriers to pricing – the effective cost to each individual buyer – are the cost of building the development, the real estate taxes levied by the community, and the fee for connecting each unit in the development to the community's water and sewer infrastructure. The cost of the development is dependent on how many units can be built.

The developer puts forward two solutions for controlling the effective purchase price of a unit in the development. The first is a payment in lieu of taxes program (PiLT). This program is aimed at equalizing the real estate taxes paid by unit buyers so that the early buyers pay the same real estate taxes as the later buyers. The second solution involves the community waiving the connection fee for each unit sold and, in return, the developer will make improvements to the existing water and sewer infrastructure. Connection fees are the cost of hooking up the units in the development to the community's water and sewer infrastructure. It is

a way to make new home owners share in the past costs of building and maintaining infrastructure. The final barrier to the project lies in some problems the developer has with the current landscape, historical, and zoning ordinances for which the developer suggests changes.

2.1. The discussion following the speech was analyzed by examining how aspects of the speech were made part of the ensuing discussion. The moves made by the community members were the moves that directly address something said or implied in the making of the speech and then making that aspect of the speech part of the discussion that follows the speech. Not every thing said or turn taken in the discussion counted as a move. Of all the contributions made during the 90 minutes of discussion, 42 were considered to be moves made on the speech. These moves raised doubts and disagreements by calling out, addressing, or attacking key parts of the speech. As seen in Table 1, different parts of the speech were made part of the discussion with varying frequency. The infrastructure/connection fee aspect of the speech receives the most attention in the discussion while the number of units, the PiLT program, and the overall proposal draw the participants' attention.

Table 1: Opening Speech Topics x Moves on Speech

Aspects of the Opening Speech	Number of Moves made on Aspect of Opening Speech
Infrastructure/Connection Fees	14
Number of Units, Wetland Buffer	7
PiLT Program	7
Proposal	6
Taxes	4
Zoning / Ordinances	4
Total	42

2.2 The moves on the opening speech open up sub-dialogues, as they will be called here, within the broader discussion that expands upon the doubt or disagreement expressed by the participant's move on the opening speech (this is similar to the distinction made by van Eemeren, Grootendorst, and Snoeck Henkemans (2002). The sub-dialogues can be further characterized in terms of how the initiating doubt and disagreement are developed over subsequent contributions. The initiating move of the sub-dialogue is either developed primarily by one participant over a series of turns or by multiple participants over a series of turns (this is similar to van Eemeren and Grootendorst's (1992) concepts of mixed and non-mixed disputes). These characterizations of sub-dialogues highlight some forms of disagreement expansion that occur through the mutual contributions of one or more participants.

The main feature of the sub-dialogues is that in making contributions other possibilities for doubts and disagreements are exposed that open up alternative directions to be pursued through the interaction. For instance, in example 1:17.1, the mayor (A) develops his point over a series of turns to show that he apparently disagrees with some aspects of the PiLT program that the developers have introduced as a means to control the Borough's use of revenues gained from the development. In making this point, however, the mayor stops and shifts to another point.

Example 1:17
A: .hh okay. I a-ho-I hope that you are that-that (.) the body that you speaking to right now .hh is responsible for only about twenty-five thousand of the taxes.
(1.4)
B: Right.
A: All right ahh this-and I know that everybody on this council uh has a very firm commitment to holding the line against costs and ensuring that there is the maximum tax benefit uhh out of any project that comes along. However that being said we can't speak (0.8) for the school board
B: Right
A: an-and we wouldn't even attempt to uhm. .hhuh p. We ya-know-tha-that-they're going to do what they're going to do,.hh uh We ya-know-tha-that-they're going to do what they're going to do,.hh uh we would hope that they would hold the lines a-as we would. And since they're all paying the taxes as well .hh but, but your point is well taken that .hh when these tax-a-th-as the assessed evaluation,

the assessed evaluation goes up and the tax rate starts to drop .hh there's going to be uh-uh it's gonna be like oh manna from heaven.
B: Right

The initiating move is not taken up by B, the developer's spokesperson, who simply lets A make his point. The move by A calls into discussion the PiLT program as an effective control mechanism over how the borough uses its new revenues from the development. Over the course of his contributions A appears to back off of his opening criticism about the lack of borough council control and then shifts to an emphasis on the potential revenue for the borough. It may be that A recognizes how his point of disagreement can not be sustained in the situation because it does not cleanly refute any of what has been argued in the opening speech. This example illustrates how a contribution actually opens up further questions and doubts.

By contrast, example 1:37 illustrates how doubt is introduced and developed over a series of turns by more than one participant. In particular, Example 1:37 illustrates how an initiating move creates further opportunity for doubt to be collaboratively developed and new directions for the interaction to open up.

Example 1:37
A: I-I I just a. Just as a point of information, I'm sure you're aware that you're dealing with two different water sheds here. .hh Uh, the exceptional, que- it may well be that the exceptional quality water shed .hh is that area which is west of your proposal, now that would not be it (allright) (ok, I'm???), That dumps into the empty box creek and that's where the endangered species has been observed.=
G: =Yea but that-that piece of prop, piece of (,8)(cod)cotton head waters up on top there is a real nice piece of wetland..
A: =I understand, that's the head waters a' the Rocky Brook which feeds in to the little stone river.
G: have had your uh your environmental work done now for how. Uh-des. for how long now?
B: What we've-what we've done is we have gone to the state for a call and absent/present determination. Um (1.8) and the state has come back and said that, (.) we have documented cases of endangered species in the area, they can't site a specific species on the property but they've said, we're warning you no:w, they're in the area. Uh we have not gone for a formal wetland delineation although we have-we have gone out and and delineated the extent of the

wetlands. Uhm: all through here, and all through here. We kind of stopped when we got to the power lines. (.) So we believe we believe that the wetland line is accurate. Umm we, still have title issues to resolve as to where everybody's property line is and then create a-a final survey before we can actually submit a formal application to the DEP.
J: Have you done in-independently of the (estimate) DEP, for umm: your LOI, you've done any environmental work to
B: Yes
J: let you know what you think Is out there? =
B: =Yes our environmentalist has come back and said, you-There may be some habitat that's suitable. umm suitable habitat doesn't mean the species exists. (.) Y'know, you can put some French fries in a parking lot and a condor will swoop down and-and eat them. .hh That doesn't make it suitable habitat. uh so, (0.7) while they've said there appears to be suitable habitat in the area, it doesn't mean that that the species is actually there.

(1.8)
A: I'm just-the mpoint that I'm making is that the species, one endangered species has been identified in the uh empty box creak .hh area which is the west
B: That's a creek shed.
A: water shed, yes right right. They we do not have any documented sightings, for the Rocky Brook area.
B: Okay
A: To the best of my knowledge
B: Okay

In this example the mayor (A) raises what he calls a point of information about wetlands. The move calls out the part of the opening speech where the representative for the developer acknowledges that the delineation of the wetland buffer will have a dramatic effect on the number of units that can be built. The mayor's point is picked up by another council member (G) who asks a related question to the developer. The representative (B) answers the question only to be further questioned by the borough attorney (J) and then finally the mayor reiterates his point. The participants do not appear to be concerned so much about the wetlands and the relationship to special habitats but seem more oriented toward the effect the wetland boundary delineation will have on the project. Calling out the wetland buffer for discussion raises doubts about the

developer's ability to make the development happen.

In the discussion, there were 14 sub-dialogues characterized by disagreements developed through an exchange among participants and 18 sub-dialogues characterized by doubts developed through an exchange by participants. Not all moves were taken up in sub-dialogues as 6 disagreements were developed as an individual's point over a series of turns and 4 doubts were developed by an individual over a series of turns. Of the 42 moves made on the speech (see Table 1), 32 were sub-dialogues and 10 were individual expansions.

The sub-dialogues were strung together during long stretches of the meeting that actually formed coherent sets of threads where the participants carried out a sustained development of doubt and disagreement on two topics of speech: the PiLT program and the infrastructure/connection fees. The thread on the PiLT was pursued through sub-dialogues oriented toward understanding the program. The infrastructure/connection fees thread was pursued through sub-dialogues oriented toward challenging that aspect of the proposal. The pattern of sub-dialogues represents a kind of collective choice about what merits discussion and how it is to be discussed.

These observations about the moves made on the opening speech illustrate how participants' moves open up opportunities and directions for the interaction. Given the various ways that disagreement can be expanded, the next section turns to the question of how the expression of doubt and disagreement space was managed.

3. While the participants take issue with many important features of the plan, such as the PiLT program and the infrastructure changes, the expression of disagreement does not escalate beyond the control of the participants. Three ways that the participants collectively manage the expansion of disagreement are found in the participants' use of standard ways of reasoning about proposals, the way participants frame the meeting event, and in the way participants frame the activity of proposing. The first relates to the uses of disagreement to shape what the proposed course of action becomes while the other two relate more to shaping the form of interactivity among the participants in deliberation.

3.1. The moves that participants make in the discussion following the speech initiate sub-dialogues that raise doubts or put forward disagreements with various

aspects of the plan described in the speech. One reason the discussion of the speech does not escalate is that the parties orient toward the speech as a proposal and organize their evaluations and assessments as such. In a prior analysis of the opening speech, Aakhus (2005) found that the opening speech displayed characteristics of the speech act of proposing. The overall organization of the speech and the appeals made had the following characteristics: (1) the speech focused on a future act (A) of both a proposer (P) and a recipient (R), (2) the speech was an attempt to enlist the recipients in mutually bringing about A, (3) the speech revealed that P believes A will mutually benefit R and P or at least that if it benefits P it will leave R no worse off, (4) the speaker argued that R and P are able to contribute to the accomplishment of A, (5) the speaker argued that it is not obvious to both P and R that either P or R can do A of their own accord in the normal course of events, and (6) the speaker argued that A will leave neither P nor R worse off than not doing A.

These same six lines of reasoning come into play in the discussion following the speech when the community members express doubt and disagreement with the speech. For instance, this can be seen excerpt 1:26.1 below, where the borough council member calls out the connection fee waiver as a problem.

Example 1:26.1
C: I can see possibly a thirty percent reduction .hh or a reduction in your hook up fees down to the extent of-of that so it would it-it would lessen possibly what you're putting out for infrastructure(.) but it would be>defendable by<saying, look the borough doesn't need to uh reach into its pockets for anything but, I,-I-I have a hard time getting behind supporting umm waiving the fee completely or-or reducing it beyond (1.8) a defensible position. It-may-ma-just get beyond something, that wouldn't even 'if we make make us not have to spend.'

C's move offers an alternative position that he considers more defensible. He is saying that the borough should not have to pay for improvements the development needs to exist. The move plays off the sense that in proposing, the future action should leave neither party worse off than not doing the action. That is, a full waiver does not leave the borough better off and is thus not a defensible course of action whereas a reduced waiver might be.

In example, 1:30.1, the mayor (A) attacks the developer's premise about what needs to be repaired and whether the community needs to make any further

contribution to infrastructure repair in order for the development to be built.

Example 1:30.1
A: But le-le-lemme let me give you the true scenario here, and that is the residents of this this community have paid .hh(uh) substantial money to improve a sewer plant that can handle twice the population of our community. You do not need to improve that sewer plant in order to add your houses to it, however, (0.2) .pt you may need to (.) do some INI reduction to keep us within our permitted flows, .hh which is not a capacity issue, .hh that is-that is a it's -it's a it it's another issue regarding the way that the DEP does their assessment of-of of I mean the measuring of the effectiveness of the plant, uh the other side of that is, that it may be feasible, I'm not sure how how feasible, that the permitted flows of the plant may be increased due to a doubling of the size of the community so-so therefore y'know the uhh, the .pt point about having to add capacity of the plant I don't think is a valid one.

A's move makes it appear that the developer is asking for something that has already been done. This move is built around the condition of proposing, which is that both parties are able to contribute to the accomplishment of the proposed action.

It should be pointed out that in describing the actions of the participants through felicity conditions for proposing (Aakhus, 2005), the participants are not taken to be following conventional rules but instead taken to be engaged in practical reasoning about what has been said. The parties are attending to the unfolding discourse of the event, the context of practical activity in which they are involved, and the broader social context in which they are situated. Felicity conditions reveal standard lines of reasoning about the practical problems people face in figuring out what to say and how to say it in attempts to accomplish their goals and implement their plans (Jackson & Jacobs, 1981; Jacobs and Jackson, 1989; and Kline, 1979). What is evident in the present case is that these standard lines of reasoning are used in producing doubts and disagreements about the speech and that the participants' orientation toward the speech as an act of proposing reflects their collective management of the expression of disagreement. The focus on the speech as a proposal, contributes to what the proposal will become, and keeps the expression of disagreement from escalating.

3.2. Framing the activity is another way that disagreement was managed. This

has less to do with the making of arguments and more to do with shaping or influencing the interactivity of the participants. Even though it is clear from references in the transcript that the developer had been taking actions to bring about a development and that the developer had met with borough leaders on at least one occasion before the present meeting, neither the opening speech nor the event is officially framed as a proposal by the community leaders. This was consequential for managing disagreement in this deliberation.

An obligation for the developer to make a proposal was not established at the beginning of the meeting. In example 1:1 the mayor (A) describes the occasion and purpose of the speech.

Example 1:1
A: Uh Good evening gentlemen.
Audience: Good evening good evening
A: Uh this is a (.) uh a committee meeting (.) .hh of the council (.) um (.) and uh (.) it's not really a formal meeting that we take action on or anything like that but it's from my understanding that you wish to .hh make a presentation .hh to the council and we appreciate you being here .hh Uh we have our chairman of our (.hh) uh planning board as well here .hh to (.) uh listen to what you have to say and uh .hh might as well just (.) uh unless the council has anything that they wish to address first (.) .hh uh (.), we'll turn it over to you so you can get in and out and make (.) it (.) as sweet as you can.

This framing sets out a footing for the various participants in the meeting and the obligations for participation. The committee will take no action, the community leaders present are there to "listen," and the developers are there to "present."

About one-third of the way through the meeting after some differences of opinion about the plan had been surfaced, the mayor (A) in excerpt 1:25 draws attention to the reason for gathering:

Example 1:25
A: uh many people in community, uh recognize that y'know wit- our water filtration system, water treatments sy-plant had needs improvements.
B: Right
A: hh t-tday, we do needen more water storage capacity today, um hum right, so uh, tch we-we understand that there is uh we Have some staKe in any

improvement
that's [put in]
B: [Right]
A: place now, the-th extent.hh of that is yet to be determined a'right and uh that's one of the reasons why we sit and why we have the dialogues, so that we can, try to y'know find that medium ground if you will,
B: Yep .hh *uhm:

The mayor is making an explicit attempt to shape the possibilities for discussion. In the early part of this move, A acknowledges some points made in the opening speech but not the whole theory presented by the speaker. The mayor points out that "some" not all the people in the community recognize a need for some improvements but not all the improvements identified by the developer. Moreover, the mayor points out that the community has "some stake" in "any improvement" that is "yet to be determined." These qualifications combined with leaving the sewer system improvement off the list define what is possible and what is not. The community leaders are no longer just listening they are engaged in what the proposal is becoming but not yet accepting what is being proposed.

Closer to the meeting's end, in excerpt 1:52.1, the borough's attorney (J) comments on the value of the preceding discussion and points out that some concrete proposals will have to be put forward by the developer. The attorney for the developer (F) responds by describing the developer's view of the gathering.

Example 1:52.1
F: No no, what we wanted to do was have th' discussion first, cause very [honestly] we didn't make a lot of sense to suddenly put together a a pack[age or
J: [Right] [mm understood]
F: expect, have you spend our time reviewing the package without some sense about what we wanted to accomplish an, an an an be willing to consider that kind of situation.

Each of these examples, from the beginning, middle, and end of the meeting, illustrates how participants framed the meeting in the flow of the encounter. On one level the community members treat the opening speech as a proposal in the way their moves evaluate and assess the speech but at another level, as seen in the examples in this section, it is never quite clear that the community members are treating the opening speech or the meeting as an event of working out the

proposal into a course of action. The framing of the meeting does not draw attention to the opening speech as a formal proposal but to the fact that the parties are engaging with each other over things proposed. This seems a bit ironic but it has an effect on managing the expansion of disagreement. In the current situation unresolved disagreements are not as problematic since there is no explicit commitment to the proposal as something that will go forward. The developers are able to get key information about points of impasse without running the risk of the proposal being rejected. The community members are able to hear the proposal without committing themselves to it in any publicly accountable way.

3.3. The opening speech is framed as an incomplete proposal by the community members. Indeed, the community members do not refer to the speech or the actions of the developers as a proposal until near the end of the meeting. At that point, the community leader's responses mark the entire opening speech, and the accompanying points made during the discussion, as something less than a full proposal.

In example 1:52, the council member (C) and the borough attorney (J) challenge the developer to make a more concrete proposal while acknowledging the value of the discussion.

Example 1:52
C: (1.5) John what would you suggest, a uh s-some kind of uh proposal as to what the numbers in the PILT program would be and and like the time it would be worked under an' add over, and what the expected end rate would be.
(0.4)

J: Well, I think uh y'know George, got to kind of sort of got to the bottom line before, I mean they, they know it's going to work for them economically so, .hh uh I would think it would be incumbent upon them, to come up-to come to us, with the total package, you're basically saying there's like we can only spend so much money we can we can only build so many expenses into this project to make it build able and profitable for us. and we've talked about all number of different factors y'know, the connection fees, .hh the offside improvement contributions, the the-taxes .hh uh, you know what your costs are, y'know so I would say come to us with a proposal, or proposals as to how um you can get to uh, what you're gonna be claiming is going is your bottom line. An'I think you've listened to the

council t'night, I mean. I don't think anybody's uh pounded their shoe on the table and (0.2) said we're not willing to uh listen to anything. But-I think I think it's been a good meeting in the sense that you've introduced a lot of the new concepts to us, .hh but I think if we're gonna to move it to the next leve or have th' chance of moving it to the next level, we're hafta start seeing some concrete proposals, and uh, (0.2) certainly not going to emmanate from this side.

Man ?: I [don't know] what it's gonna Do.
Man ?: [( )]
F: No no, what we wanted to do was have th' discussion first, cause very [honestly] we didn't make a lot of sense to suddenly put together a a pack[age or
J: [Right] [mm understood]
F: expect, have you spend our time reviewing the package without some sense about what we wanted to accomplish an, an an [an be willing to] consider
A: [(th' around acceptor)]
J: Sure.
F: that kind of a situation.
J: No, I agree, I think that's what you intend an' I think you made a lot of sense, and I-again, I can't speak for the council, but from my perspective uh .hh as you said uh, I think, uh' the: you did a good job (.) explaining the concepts, and uh you have seen our reaction to them, in the sense of th' questions we have, and (0.2) I think it was a productive uh I think it was a productive step.

This example illustrates how the participants portray the opening speech and the contributions by the development group as achieving something less than a full proposal. The opening speech is described as explanatory and the discussion as informative but not a proposal on which they can reach a conclusion or engage in working out details.

By framing the speech as less than a full proposal, the proposal remains in a state of development and the parties are not obligated to working out the proposal together. This manages their obligations to each other and to others involved in the potential decision-making. In this case, the community leaders keep the proposal in the developer's hands so the community leaders effectively have no proposal to present to the public nor do they have to take any kind of official stand on the matter. Moreover, by framing the speech as less than a full proposal, the doubts and disagreements expressed to this point in the meeting are reframed as opportunities for further discussion or meaningful constraints to be worked

with.

4. This paper has described some observations about how the possibility for disagreement is expanded and managed by participants in a deliberative meeting. Section 2 describes how the possibility for disagreement is expanded through the emergence of sub-dialogues about some aspect of the meeting's opening speech. Three ways that the participants manage the expansion of disagreement are described in Section 3. First, the participants' doubts and disagreements reflect standard lines of reasoning for evaluating a proposal and this appears to keep the argumentation focused on developing what is proposed in the opening speech. Second, the community members do not frame the speech as a proposal or the event as one where a proposal is being worked out. Third, the community members call for further proposal development. The picture that emerges from the preceding analysis is that even though the discussion during the meeting treated the speech as though it was proposing a course of action, the participants at the same time treated the event as something other than the activity of proposing. So, what is going here in terms of how disagreement is managed in this deliberative setting?

Kauffeld (1995; 1999) explains how the circumstances of proposing feature one party that wants a second party to consider something that the second party may otherwise be inclined to regard as not worth considering. Such a circumstance requires that proposals are designed, as Kauffeld points out, to induce participation in a dialectical exchange wherein the speaker has the initial burden of proof but aims to shift that burden to the recipient of the proposal. Thus as the activity of proposing progresses, the recipient's role shifts from one of dismissing or casting doubt to a role where the recipient engages in working out the proposal. Kauffeld thus links the act of proposing to an activity of proposing by outlining a shift in obligations and commitments participants take up in the activity of making, challenging, and defending a proposal.

Following Kauffeld's analysis, what appears to be happening in the deliberation analyzed here is that participants have prevented the shift in obligations and commitments to take place. The community members have retained their role of dismissing or casting doubt while the developers remain in the role of initiating a proposal. This has several practical benefits for the parties as described above. It enables the participants to have disagreements about a policy without generating impasse, it allows for an exchange of information about what may or may not

work in the policy setting, and it allows the participants to avoid making any commitments to a course of action while generating a better understanding of a possible course of action.

Relative to pragma-dialectical theory and the critical discussion model (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1992) the participants appear to be procedurally open to critique as doubts and disagreement were raised repeatedly throughout and that there seemed to be considerable resolution mindedness as the participants kept to the matters at hand and explored issues raised by the speech. However, argument was used more to create a zone of agreement over which the participants could bargain than as means for rational resolution. The main constraint to rational resolution was the possibility that pursuing some issue to its end might in turn block the ability to satisfy some important value or self-interest for one side or the other or to prematurely end the discussion because some issue was not amenable to resolution.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Modern Rhetoric And The End Of Argument

1. Introduction

A remarkable number of critics and historians have asserted—sometimes with dismay, sometimes with delight—the death of rhetoric. The exact time of this termination and the precise cause of the capitulation are matters of considerable conjecture. Yet there is perhaps a consensus that after a long and celebrated life rhetoric died sometime between the end of the eighteenth and middle of the nineteenth centuries. Thus for Tzvetan Todorov the history of rhetoric is one of "splendor and misery" and for Roland Barthes the same history is "triumphant and moribund." In his *Figures of Literary Discourse* Gérard Genette offers what he calls a "cavalier account" of these developments which ends with the "great shipwreck of rhetoric" (p.114).

For Genette, rhetoric's career has been a "historical course of a discipline that has witnessed, over the centuries, the gradual contraction of its field of competence…from Corax to our own day, the history of rhetoric has been that of a generalized restriction (pp. 103-104)." For Genette, this "generalized restriction" is a movement from rhetoric, classically conceived, to a theory of figures, to a theory of tropes, to a final "valorization" of metaphor as the surviving heir of the rhetorical tradition.

Like Genette and others Paul Ricoeur also sees rhetoric as having followed a course of gradual decline from its classical origins to its present moribund state. In The Rule of Metaphor, Ricoeur offers an account of rhetoric's career that

concludes with its "dying days" (p. 28). One cause of rhetoric's death was its reduction to "parts," that is, the figures. Ricoeur decries the taxonomic tendency of rhetoric, as exemplified by the lists of figures, largely because these taxonomies are, in his view, "static." The more crucial problem is that the taxonomies contributed to rhetoric "severing" itself from argument. Ricoeur recognizes that Greek rhetoric was "broader, more dramatic, than a theory of figures" (p.12). After all, says Ricoeur, before taxonomy there was Aristotle's Rhetoric (RM, p.12). And, moreover, says Ricoeur, "before rhetoric was futile, it was dangerous" (p.11).

Ricoeur agrees with Genette's thesis that "the progressive reduction of the domain of rhetoric" was its undoing (p.44). Ricoeur agrees with Genette that "since the Greeks, rhetoric diminished bit by bit to a theory of style by cutting itself off from the two parts that generated it, the theories of argumentation and of composition. Then, in turn, the theory of style shrank to a classification of figures of speech, and this to a theory of tropes (p. 45)."

This interpretation of rhetoric's history as a "progressive reduction" in its scope away from invention and argument in favor of a limited view of tropes has gained considerable currency. It is probably appealing to scholars of argument to believe that abandoning invention and argument led directly to the demise of rhetoric. And while the "progressive reduction" position is plausible, it may not be historically accurate. For if Genette and Ricoeur are correct rhetoric, or at least rhetoric with a significant inventional component, should no longer be evident by the second half of the nineteenth century.

To test the claims of Genette, Ricoeur, and others I propose to examine works on rhetoric published in the late 1800's in the United States. In other words, I will examine treatises on rhetoric which appeared after the presumed death of that subject. I have selected two such works for particular scrutiny: Henry Day, The Art of Discourse (1867) and David J. Hill, The Science of Rhetoric (1877). Nan Johnson identifies these works as two of the most widely used and commonly quoted textbooks on rhetoric in the U.S. in her Nineteenth Century Rhetoric in North America. Thus a consideration of Day and Hill provides a reasonable picture of how rhetoric was understood in late nineteenth-century America.

Although it is not, strictly speaking, a rhetoric, I will also consider George Pierce Baker's The Principles of Argumentation, because it is important document for understanding the relationship between rhetoric and argument.

2. Henry Day, the art of discourse (1867)

It is apparent from the outset of The Art of Discourse that Day does not intend to reduce rhetoric to style, much less to a mere catalogue of tropes. Indeed, Day's intent is quite the opposite. In his preface he notes that The Art of Discourse is a revision of Elements of the Art of Rhetoric (1858). A "distinctive peculiarity" of that earlier work, says Day, was "the elevation of Invention, or the supply of the thought, to the first and commanding rank in rhetorical instruction" (p. v). He promises that his revision will continue what he began in the earlier work and will include "more definite indications of the relations of Rhetoric to Logic and Aesthetics, and the fuller and clearer application of logical and aesthetic principles to the construction of discourse" (p. v).

Day specifically objects to certain influential rhetoricians who he believes have presented at best limited views of rhetoric. Certain popular treatises mistakenly render rhetoric a department of one of the three "mental sciences:" logic, aesthetics, and ethics. He maintains that Richard Whately "has regarded Rhetoric as an offshoot of Logic" and Hugh Blair treats it "as a mere department of Aesthetics" and that Franz Theremin makes the art "a purely ethical procedure" (p. 7).
Day therefore proposes to present what he believes to be a complete rhetoric. This complete rhetoric consists of two "departments:" invention ("the art of supplying the requisite thought in kind and form for discourse") and style. As Day's definition of invention suggests, his conception of invention subsumes the traditional rhetorical component of arrangement of disposition. It is within invention that Day, like his classical predecessors, deals with argumentation. There are four parts of invention: explanation, confirmation, persuasion, and excitation. The goal of confirmation is conviction which is achieved through the "exhibition of proof." Thus it is within the context of confirmation that Day discusses argument. Argument, in turn, is understood almost exclusively as topical argumentation. The topics, says Day, were "regarded by ancient rhetoricians and orators as one of the most important in the whole province of rhetoric" (p. 120). The topics have "fallen so much into disuse" for the same reasons that invention itself has been neglected. Day intends to remedy that neglect by providing "a distinct view" of the topics (p. 120).

The function of the topics is "to facilitate and guide rhetorical invention in confirmation by a distribution of the different kinds of proofs into general classes" (p. 121). Accordingly, Day employs the topics to organize his discussion of

argument. He divides the topics into two classes: analytic proofs and synthetic proofs. Analytic Proofs are proofs "derived from the very terms of the proposition" (p. 124). Such proofs possess "the highest validity and force in all confirmation" (p. 123) but because such proofs are very nearly self-evident, they apparently have little role in argumentation. Synthetic proofs are "derived from without the proposition" and are subdivided into two categories: intuitive and empirical. Intuitive proofs are mental operations like mathematical reasoning and thus, like analytic proofs, require little argumentation to achieve conviction. Empirical proofs, originate "from without the mind" and are at the heart of rhetorical argumentation. There are three types of empirical proofs. The first of these is antecedent probability (or a priori proof) which includes inferences of effect from cause and attribute from substance. The second type of empirical proof is signs (or a posteriori proof) which includes inferences in which the whole is inferred from the part and cause is inferred from the effect. Signs also include arguments from testimony and authority. The final type of empirical proof is the example. Examples are proofs that derive from the resemblance, commonality, or relations that exist between parts of a larger whole. Of the various kinds of arguments he presents, Day says it is obvious that "while some are applicable to all subjects, others are adapted only to particular kinds of subjects" (p. 152). Despite this variation in applicability, it is clear that Day intends the topics presented to exhaust the possibilities of rhetorical argument.

Although Day believes the neglect of topical argument was a serious deficiency of many rhetorical texts, The Art of Discourse is not devoted exclusively to invention. For Day invention is only half of the art of rhetoric. Style, "the expression of thought in language" (p. 288) comprises the only essential department of rhetoric. And while invention may be conceived as "a distinct branch of the art, style is yet involved even in that; as the exercises of invention cannot proceed but in the forms of language" (pp. 208-09). Thus invention and style, "while they may easily be conceived of as distinct … are nevertheless bound together by an essential bond of life" (p. 209). Not only does Day not reduce rhetoric to style, but he also affirms the irreducibility of the art itself. And in his treatment of style does not devolve to a discussion of tropes. Indeed, the tropes make up a relatively small part of his treatment of style.

3. David J. Hill, the science of rhetoric (1877)

Like Day, Hill begins *The Science of Rhetoric* (1877) by promising readers a

complete rhetoric. He complains that “most of the text-books on Rhetoric take a one-sided view of the subject. In language reminiscent of, and probably derived from, Day’s The Art of Discourse, Hill complains that rhetoric was treated by Whately “as a branch of Logic,” by Blair as a “department of applied Aesthetics,” and by Theremin “as belonging to Ethics” (p. 3). Unlike these distinguished predecessors, Hill “aims to explain the whole theory of effective discourse, for whatever purpose and in whatever form it may be used” (p. 4).

Although Hill, like Day, believes that many writers on rhetoric have been too limited, he does not agree with Hill that rhetoric is an art. Rather, for Hill rhetoric is a science and as such the rhetorician must search for scientific laws to explain its workings. This for him rhetoric, or discourse, “aims to produce a change (1) in the mind, (2) by means of ideas, (3) expressed through language. The science of producing mental changes must account for the laws of the mind, the idea, and the form” (p. 39). The mind, the idea, and the form serve as the three fundamental divisions of The Science of Rhetoric. The “laws of the mind” include considerations of reason, imagination, feeling as well as age, experience, affiliation. The “laws of form” comprehend the traditional category of style. The “laws of idea” seek to explain the nature of the idea to be communicated. There are, according to Hill, four classes of ideas which require four different types of discourse:“(1) The parts of a simultaneous whole are presented to the mind by Description. (2) The parts of a successive whole are presented to the mind by Narration. (3) A general notion is unfolded to the mind by Exposition. (4) A proposition is confirmed to the mind by Argumentation” (p. 74, italics original).
Thus Hill, much like Day, devotes a significant portion of his work to argumentation. However, Hill does not use the terms “topics” or “invention” when discussing argument. Indeed, Hill maintains that invention has little place in rhetoric. Rather than organizing arguments by topics Hill proposes to categorize them by their “essential nature.” A classification derived from the essential nature of argument looks to “the kinds of relation which may subsist between things” (p. 109). The resulting classification of relations bears a remarkable resemblance to the topical scheme presented by Day. There are three categories of argument. The first is a priori arguments or arguments from cause to effect. The second category is argument from sign or arguments from effect to condition including testimony & authority. The third and final category is argument from resemblance.
Just as Hill follows the same general pattern of argument presented by Day, so

too, he omits arrangement or disposition as a separate part of rhetoric. He does, however, discuss arrangement in the context of argumentation and offers advice on the order of argument. He suggests that arguments should be ordered according to type and that a priori arguments precede a posteriori arguments. While Hill does indeed discuss argument, he also includes a lengthy discussion of style under the "laws of form." And once again like Day, Hill's discussion of style goes well beyond an account of the tropes. Hill devotes more attention to the figures than Day, but his "laws of form" are about more than figures.

The rhetorics of Day and Hill clearly indicate that in nineteenth-century America rhetoric neither died nor was reduced to a theory of tropes. Nor can it be said that rhetoric abandoned argument on its way to embrace tropology. But both Day and Hill do recognize with concern earlier attempts to restrict rhetoric's scope. In particular, both object to a tendency to restrict rhetoric, not only to style, but to any one of its traditional counterparts: logics, ethics, and aesthetics. One consequence of these restricted rhetorics is frequently the neglect of argument. Day, in particular, believes that "invention must constitute the very life of an art of rhetoric" (p. 40). And yet "In many of the most popular treatises on rhetoric in the English language… invention, has been almost entirely excluded from view" (p. 39).

Day attributes this exclusion to reluctance on the part of many rhetoricians to separate invention from its ancient origins. Greek and Roman founded their systems of invention "on their peculiar logical views, inapplicable to present modes of thought" (p. 39). In particular, "the ancient systems of invention which were constructed in strict reference to the modes of speaking then prevalent are ill-adapted to present use. The systems of Cicero and Quintilian, for example, are for the most part illustrated from the peculiar practice of the Roman bar" (p. 40).

British rhetoricians had long expressed reservations about the applicability Roman argumentation to modern oratory. Hugh Blair, in his immensely influential Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres (1783) expressed the common view that the complexity of British law limited the utility of classical precepts. Blair says that our "system of law is become much more complicated. The knowledge of it is thereby rendered so laborious an attainment, as to be the chief object of a lawyer's education … The Art of Speaking is but a secondary accomplishment" (II, p. 43). This is very different from antiquity when "strict law was much less an object of attention than it is become among us. In the days of Demosthenes and

Cicero, the municipal statutes were few, simple, and general; and the decision of causes was trusted, in a great measure to the equity and commonsense of the Judges. Eloquence, much more than Jurisprudence, was the study of those who were to plead causes" (II, p. 76).
Thus ancient forensic oratory and ancient topical systems based upon it were no longer relevant in the modern world. Day says that modern writers "have been reduced to this alternative,–either of leaving out this part of the science, or of constructing an entirely new system" (p.40). According to Day, most writers in English, at least, opted for the second alternative and omitted invention altogether. There is, however, a third alternative and that is the restriction of invention or argumentation to specific forms of discourse. It is this third alternative that Day and Hill in fact pursue.

Both writers accept the validity of what would come to be called in the United States the "modes of discourse." These four modes or kinds of composition are explained concisely by Adams Sherman Hill in another popular nineteenth-century text, The Principles of Rhetoric (1878). The four are: "DESCRIPTION, which deals with persons or things; NARRATION, which deals with events; EXPOSITION, which deals with whatever admits of analysis or requires explanation; ARGUMENT, which deals with any material that may be used to convince the understanding or to affect the will" (p. 247).The modes of discourse appear in both The Science of Rhetoric and The Art of Discourse. Hill employs these four modes as a way to organize his "laws of idea." Day, on the other hand, employs a somewhat different four–part division (explanation [including description], confirmation, excitation, and persuasion) to explain invention.

Arguments or topics no longer seen as specific to a genre or "scene" of oratory (forensic, deliberative, and epideictic) but rather argument is restricted to one type of discourse. Arguments, then, occurred only in argumentation. This is restriction from the earlier classical view which saw all discourse as persuasive and therefore dependent upon argumentation. The relegation of argumentation to one of four modes does not necessarily mean that argument is diminished. There is, however, yet a fourth alternative to the three mentioned above. This is an alternative Day does not consider, and of which he may have been unaware. This fourth option would be to detach argumentation from rhetoric and elevate it to an independent discipline to ensure that argument could not be neglected.

4. George Pierce Baker, Principles of argumentation (1895)

Baker's Principles of Argumentation is almost certainly the first work of its kind written in English or perhaps in any other language. Baker was compelled to write a book about argumentation exclusively because of his dissatisfaction with the four modes of discourse which had come to dominate rhetoric in England and the United States. Baker observes that some believe that "Argumentation is far less important to them than Narration, Description, or Exposition" (p. v). He further maintains that argumentation was receiving insufficient attention in most late nineteen-century texts and so what was needed was "a more elaborate treatise than that which in most books on Rhetoric space permits" (p. vi). Argumentation, as "the art of producing in the mind of someone else a belief in the ideas which the speaker or writer wishes the hearer or reader to accept," transcends both logic and rhetoric (p. 1). Logic, as "the science of the laws of thought… teaches us how to think correctly" (p. 14) but "argumentation means much more than the mere application of the Laws of Logic" (p. 20). This is so because argumentation includes three elements that go beyond coherent thinking: persuasive methods; rhetoric; and rules of evidence. The compelling arguer must understand emotional appeals of persuasion, the style and structure of rhetoric, and the credibility of witnesses as defined by evidentiary rules. Therefore, "Formal Logic, — is but the warp which runs through the cloth of Argumentation; and knowledge of the rules of Persuasion, of Rhetoric, and Evidence are the threads of the woof" (p.20).

Baker's advancement of argumentation as a field rooted in logic and rhetoric and yet distinctive from either obviously struck a cord in late nineteenth-century America. Other works adhering to the precedent set by Baker to regard argumentation as a separate field of study followed in a few years time. These include: Gertrude Buck, A Course in Argumentative Writing (1899); Elias J. Mac Ewan, The Essentials of Argumentation (1899); and Craven Laycock, Argumentation and Debate (1904). Baker's Principles appeared in 1895, 1989, 1902, and 1905. In the preface to the 1905 edition he could proudly proclaim that "the study of argumentation has increased so rapidly in schools and colleges during the ten years since the first edition of this book was published that it is no longer necessary to justify the educational importance of the subject. Nor is it necessary now to explain in detail the kind of argumentation taught in this book. For these reasons a large amount of justificatory and explanatory material which filled the early pages of the first edition has been removed" (p. v). Baker no longer finds it necessary to explain in detail how argumentation differs from rhetoric and

logic. Baker is confident, and probably correctly so, that augmentation has emerged as a new field of study together with the arrival of a new century.

5. Conclusion

An examination of the works of Day, Hill, and Baker demonstrate quite clearly that the "death" of rhetoric in the nineteenth century simply did not occur. Indeed, much of the evidence indicates that quite the opposite occurred: that rhetoric, rather than collapsing, experienced a renewal. Title and keyword searches of library databases reveal that the number of works on rhetoric published in the nineteenth century increased by at least tenfold over the number published in the previous century. Obviously, the volume of published works alone does not tell the entire story of a discipline. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine that publishers would print so many books in a field which no longer existed.

Nor is it the case that rhetoric experienced a "contraction of competence" from a broad study of discourse, to a catalogue of the figures, and finally to a theory of metaphor. While this "generalized restriction" may explain some aspects of rhetoric's history in the nineteenth century, the thesis cannot be applied universally. Some authors certainly did restrict rhetoric to style, but others maintained a much more comprehensive view. The work of Day and Hill are, of course, clear evidence of this. Day recognizes two broad divisions of rhetoric, invention and style, and devotes about one half of The Art of Discourse to each of them. His treatment of style is comprehensive and the figures are but a small part of it. Metaphor receives no more attention than do many other tropes. For Hill style, or the 'Laws of Form," is one of three major division of rhetoric. Although Hill devotes more attention than does Day to the figures, the figures are by no means the only concern of the "Laws of Form." For both Day and Hill the figures maintain their traditional importance as an apparatus of style, but they do not displace other stylistic concerns.

Although rhetoric does not disappear in the nineteenth century, it most certainly undergoes significant changes. The alterations to rhetoric are complex and have been detailed by many historians of rhetoric. And perhaps no change is more important than the emergence, already noted, of the four modes of discourse. The effects of this quadruple division on argumentation were decidedly mixed. On the one hand, this approach ensured that argument would remain a part of rhetoric. Yet, on the other hand, argument was only one of four modes and thus restricted to specific kinds of discourse. Argumentation, or invention, now merely one of the

four modes, could not be, in Days words, “the soul and substance of discourse” (40). In particular, argument was often presented by textbook authors as the final of the four modes. This was more than an organizational convenience. Rather, it signified that argument was not inventional—that is, the creation of discourse did not necessarily, or even typically, begin with the discovery of arguments. Indeed, composition often began with description and proceeded to narration, exposition, and only then to argument (or persuasion). Invention and argument were not abandoned, but they were compartmentalized and condensed.

Day attempted to change this displacement of argument by reasserting the centrality of invention in rhetoric. Day’s work was well-received, but he does not seem to have been entirely successful in his efforts. Baker offered another approach to correct this neglect of argument. By advancing argument as a discrete discipline—separate from rhetoric, from logic, and from law—its importance becomes more conspicuous. Argumentation is allied to these other fields but for Baker, at least, the study he conceives is broader than any of its cognate disciplines. His concern is “the argumentation of everyday life” which all intelligent human beings must understand (p. vi). Given the success of The Principles of Argumentation and the many similar works which followed upon its publication, Baker had obviously recognized a serious intellectual need. An examination of the variety of rhetorical texts written in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century and of those of the emerging field of argumentation reveals that neither rhetoric nor argument disappeared from the modern intellectual milieu. Therefore, it is really more accurate to talk not of “Modern Rhetoric and the End of Argument” but rather “Modern Rhetoric and the Beginning of Argumentation.”

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Argumentation, Keywords And Worldviews

The aim of this paper is to show how the semantics of natural languages implies some consequences which are basic to the very definition of argumentation and to the analysis of the structure of arguments. I am particularly interested in emphasizing how the persuasiveness of any discourse, observed in its concrete effectiveness, relies for the most part on the semantic flexibility of keywords, that is, of those concepts which articulate the main structural components of the argumentation: the analytical question and the thesis (Dell'Aversano & Grilli 2005, pp. 555-564; 169-211). My work has developed as an effort to pin down some implications of the theory of argumentation set out by Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca in their *Traité de l'argumentation.* Theirs is an avowedly asystematic model: in delineating dichotomy between argumentation and demostration they are well aware of the complex interplay of linguistic and pragmatic factors which contribute to the functioning of an effective argumentation. Demonstration is not

open to dispute, while an argumentation cannot achieve its persuasive aim without the voluntary engagement of its audience. This is because, from the semantic viewpoint, a demonstration links concepts whose definition is completely explicit, unambiguous and context-independent, while argumentation not only allows for the semantic variability of its keywords but is actually, as I will show, dependent on it for its efficacy. Not surprisingly, the *Traité* keeps itself clear of any perscriptive ambitions: its authors do not look for rules but are interested in explaining the way individual argumentations work with reference to the objects of prior agreement which their audiences share with their authors. Their method is based not on a general reflection on abstract models but on hundreds of enlightening and painstaking analyses of real argumentative texts which are examined against the background of their cultural contexts. Following their example, my own reflections will not take the shape of a systematic classification, but will simply put forward a description of some peculiarities of the structure of argumentative texts starting from some concrete examples.
The most important theoretical element which I derive from the *Traité de l'argumentation* is the notion of prior agreement. As the *Traité* repeatedly emphasizes (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1958, pp. 65-66), no argumentation is possible unless the speaker be able to rely on some shared foundation on which he can build his relationship with the audience. More specifically, this notion can be used to define an effective argumentation as a discourse which modifies the boundaries of the prior agreement by extending them: the result of an effective argumentation is that an element which was external to those boundaries (the thesis which the speaker upholds) will eventually be included within them, as a part of the notions speaker and audience share.

As a first step towards a better definition of the role of keywords in argumentative dynamics it will be useful to introduce a distinction according to where keywords are situated in relation to the *boundaries* of the prior agreement connecting the speaker to the argumentative community before which he is arguing. Keywords may accordingly be divided into *conventional* and *original concepts*: the first category will include all concepts which, because they belong to the vocabulary the speaker shares with his audience, can be used to refer in a recognizable way to any element included within the boundaries of the prior agreement. The category of original concepts includes concepts which are absent from that shared vocabulary, and which are therefore not included among the objects of prior agreement, and cannot be assimilated to them. This distinction can be made

clearer by quoting an example from a historical monograph by Philippe Ariès:

In medieval society the feel for childhood did not exist; which does not mean that children were neglected, abandoned or despised. The feel for childhood is not identical with the affection for childhood: it entails the awareness of the peculiarities of childhood, peculiarities which essentially distinguish children from adults, however young. This awareness did not exist. Accordingly, as soon as children were able to survive without the constant care of their mothers or nannies, they belonged to adult society and were no longer distinct from it. This adult society often appears childish to us: this is no doubt a consequence of its mental age, but also of its biological age, because it was in part composed of children and youngsters. The language did not give the word "child" the specific sense I now attribute to it: "child" was the equivalent of our "boy". This indeterminacy with respect to age extended to the whole of social activity: games, trades, weapons. There is no collective representation where children, younger or older, do not have their place, huddled, sometimes, two at a time, in the trousse which hangs from the women's neck, or portrayed while they urinate in a corner, or while they play their part in a traditional pageant; as apprentices in shops, as pages waiting on knights and so on.(Ariès 1962, p. 145)

The thesis of this excerpt, as it appears in the text is, "In medieval society the feel for childhood did not exist". This statement can easily be reduced to the predicative structure which is normal for a thesis by outlining it as:
(I) Medieval society (II) is (III) without feel for childhood

The origin and relevance of this thesis are only too clear: the author of the text is a specialist of the social history of the European Middle Ages; not surprisingly, his object of enquiry is directly connected with that historical period and, more specifically, with the abstract entity commonly referred to as "society". The keyword "medieval society" is therefore not specific to the speaker's argumentation but derives from the disciplinary framework to which the text refers to, and connects it to a well-structured enviroment of shared notions and codified issues. Thanks to its use, shared by the community of specialists, the thesis of the speaker can be correctly framed as the statement of a new element which aims to refer to, and to pinpoint more exactly the meaning of, an existing and familiar entity, even though this entity (like any word belonging to a natural language) is not known through an exhaustive analytical definition of its properties. A complex and unmanageable mass of facts, data, phenomena of

various kinds (economic, political, social, anthropological, religious…) which came about in various places and during a time embracing several centuries of the common era (from the fourth to the fifteenth), has been labeled by an already standard convention as “medieval society”. The task of knowing, understanding and describing synthetically this huge mass of objects can therefore be transformed by the discipline we call historiography into the much simpler one of understanding the specific traits of the concept “medieval society”.
The very existence of this sort of keywords may appear to be an oversimplification, but it is a necessary prerequisite to the formulation of reasonable discourses in all disciplines: without such generalizing categories our thought would disperse in the painstaking enumeration of an infinite variety of individual phenomena among which it would be very difficult to discern any link.

The case of the other keyword is very different. Unlike “medieval society” “feel for childhood” is not a current term in the disciplinary vocabulary of medieval history. Of course Ariès did not invent the words “feel” and “childhood”; however he does not assume the resulting term to be universally and immediately intelligible: this is shown by the fact that he feels himself compelled to explain its precise meaning, by opposing it to an apparently contiguous concept, “affection for childhood”. The very precision and caution with which this second keyword is introduced are enough to confirm both its novelty and its crucial importance for the whole discourse. In order to define this new conceptual category the speaker used words which are commonly used in contemporary language, but bended them to express a meaning which does not belong in a commonly accepted inventory of shared notions.
Logically and semantically original and conventional concepts are not separated by an intrinsic qualitative difference. Their distinction is only perceptible with reference to a frame of reference, that is, to the boundaries of the prior agreement between speaker and audience: conventional concepts are currently used in a given argumentative community and are no longer problematized; this makes it possible to use them to introduce new and ever more precise original concepts, which in their turn will be discussed and refined, and will maybe eventually become part of the shared store of concepts of a disciplinary community, or which will maybe always remain outside the boundaries of the prior agreement and never become conventional concepts. The reception of Ariès’ books about medieval history leads us to believe that the concept of “feel for childhood” may well have become, or be on its way to becoming, a conventional

concept, used as a reference point for the formulation of more and more novel and more and more refined theses.
With reference to this distinction we may now attempt to delineate the role of keywords in the definition and transformation of worldviews, that is of the different sets of objects of agreement of different argumentative communities. One assumption of my work is that a worldview may be modeled as a set of concepts and propositions. From this set every speaker derives the keywords of his argumentations, that is his conventional concepts, and with reference to this set original concepts are defined.

The semantic modifications operated on a common store of concepts (by the introduction of new concepts or by variation on existing ones) are the ultimate way in which a given worldview turns into a different one. For instance, if our worldview includes the Copernican model of the solar system, and is therefore different from the worldview of Copernicus' times, it is ultimately only because the keyword "heliocentrism", which started out as a highly problematical original concept, over the centuries became (together with several other original concepts) a conventional concept, contributing to the definition of the framework of normalcy and reasonableness which our reflections and argumentations inevitably start out from.

Within the framework of argumentation theory I believe that two main mechanisms of semantic transformation may be singled out: updating and resemantization. They are closely connected, and only differ because of the different path followed by the discourse in the definition of the new keyword. Updating is intimately and necessarily connected to the predicative structure of theses; in this case the semantic transformation is triggered by the very functioning of the predicative proposition which, without apparently taking issue with the base meaning of the subject of the proposition, updates it through a subtle variation just as it introduces new specific elements through the predicate: if we go back to the previous example, our idea of medieval society, which before Ariès' argumentation did not contain the notion "lacking the feel for childhood" after the persuasive action of his argumentation will end up being different, insofar as its meaning will have been updated in the sense suggested by predicative part of the thesis. The transformation of knowledge which follows from any successful argumentation is thus revealed to be dependent on the semantic updating of conventional concepts; this highlights the fundamental

contribution of argumentation to the ongoing process of change in which worldviews are involved: by slow additions and small alterations, the meaning of the keywords we are used to employing shifts, and ultimately changes. Little by little all these changes add up, and transform the words we use, the ideas they express, and ultimately the very world we live in.

In addition to semantic updating, which is a consequence of the predicative structure of argumentative texts, the meaning of keywords changes through a process of resemantization, which plays a major role in argumentative dynamics. Its exact functioning and its role in argumentative structure can be illustrated by another example, drawn from a paper by the great computer science theorist Donald Knuth:

> The title of my talk this morning is *Theory and Practice* […]. Both of these English words come from the Greek language, and their root meanings are instructive. […] The Greek qewrei'n means seeing or viewing, while pravssein means doing, performing. The English word 'and' has several meanings, one of which corresponds to the mathematical notion of 'plus'. When many people talk about theory and practice, they are thinking about the sum of two disjoint things. In a similar way, when we refer to 'apples and oranges', we're talking about two separate kinds of fruit. But I wish to use a stronger meaning of the word 'and', namely the logician's notion of 'both and', which corresponds to the intersection of sets rather than a sum. The main point I want to emphasize this morning is that both theory and practice can and should be present simultaneously. Theory and practice are not mutually exclusive; they are intimately connected. They live together and support each other.
>
> This has always been the main credo of my professional life. I have always tried to develop theories that shed light on the practical things I do, and I've always tried to do a variety of practical things so that I have a better chance of discovering rich and interesting theories. It seems to me that my chosen field, computer science – information processing – is a field where theory and practice come together more than in any other discipline, because of the nature of computing machines (Knuth 1991, pp. 1-2).

The crucial part of Knuth's analysis of his title does not deal with either "theory" or "practice", which are conventional concepts, but aims to transform a concept which starts out as conventional, the conjunction "and" into an original one. As shown by the first paragraph of the example, the speaker states his thesis by

analyzing the keyword “and” in such a way as to draw out an idea of conjunction which goes beyond the mere juxtaposition of independent factors. The semantics of the word “and”, which is structured, like that of any other word, as a series of distinct, more or less contiguous and overlapping, meanings, gives the speaker the opportunity to transform a statement (“Theory and practice” in its first meaning: “there exist two distinct realities called theory and practice”) into a statement which has the same form (“Theory and practice”) but whose meaning is: “There must exist an intellectual experience which is defined as the intersection of two concepts normally considered to be separate such as theory and practice.” Semantic transformation is the deepest core of argumentative dynamics; in this case we can observe another very important feature of its functioning, which we consider to be one of the main objects of this communication: the argumentative effectivenes of a thesis is increased by the possibility to operate a transformation which acts on the meaning of the keywords while keeping their form intact. It is as though Knuth’s thesis were so much more credible, more acceptable, more true for its audience because the thesis “theory and practice must be connected” is *implicit* in the very form of the statement “theory and practice”, which apparently means something else entirely.

The mechanism I am analyzing may appear to be nothing more than a “rhetorical artifice”, that is, a mode of meaning organization which has to do essentially with the expressive dimension of the text rather than with the logical connection of the arguments. But the whole point is exactly that it is impossible to conduct an analysis of the “logical structure” of argumentative texts which does not take into account their concrete and individual verbal form, because in argumentative texts, just as in literary ones, the form is the content. The success of an argumentation is defined by the end of persuading the audience, and the achievement of this end depends on a synergy of extremely different factors, from aesthetic to intellectual ones, from emotional to factual ones. If it were necessary to justify my interest for this mode of textual structuring, I could point to its ubiquitousness, which affects in equal measure all genres of argumentation, from texts belonging to mass culture to the most original works of earnest and rigorous thinkers, and above all to its central role in the dynamics of persuasive communication. The formal identity between the thesis to be argued (“theory and practice” in the second sense) and the assumption shared by speaker and audience (“theory and practice” in the first sense) works as an irrefutable argument which makes the thesis natural on the linguistic plane, and thus

aproblematic on the argumentative one. The reason for this is one of the most widespread general assumptions both of our and of other cultures: that words are a faithful mirror of reality. In this framework everything that happens on the level of words must have a parallel in reality: if a word is split into two different meanings, an exactly parallel split is thought to rend the reality which corresponds to it. This mechanism is one of the most basic foundations of argumentative dynamics, which thus reveal, notwithstanding the rational basis of argumentative principles, an uncanny relation to the world of magic, which is also defined by the assumption of an unseverable sympathetic link between words and things.

The exact functioning of this mechanism may be better illustrated by a passage by Günther Anders, where we can observe a process of resemantization analogous to the one we observed in Knuth:
Suspekt sind die Science-Fiction-Autoren nicht deshalb, weil sie zu hemmungslos ins Blaue des Utopischen hineinphantasierten (das tun nur die Unbegabtesten), oder weil sie sich zuweilen irrten (das tun sie nur selten), sondern umgekehrt deshalb, weil ihre Reportagen aus dem Übermorgen gewöhnlich recht behalten; weil dieses ihr Rechtbehalten beweist, wie hemmungslos sie sich dem Realismus verschrieben haben.
Jawohl, dem 'Realismus'. Denn primär bezeichnet dieses Wort nicht die getreue Darstellung des Wirklichen, sondern eine bestimmte *Stellungnahme gegenüber dem Wirklichen*: nämlich die Stellungnahme derer, die die Welt, unbekümmert um deren moralische Qualität, einfach deshalb, weil sie ist wie sie ist, d.h.: weil sie *Macht* ist, bejahen und fördern. Also die Stellungnahme der Opportunisten und der Komplizen, deren Maxime lautet: 'Seien wir realistisch'. In diesem wenig ehrenvollen Sinne sind die Science-Fiction-Autoren Realisten, und das auch dann, wenn sie sich surrealistisch zurechtschminken, oder wenn die Kluft zwischen den von ihnen geschilderten Superwelten und dem jeweils heutigen Weltzustand phantastisch breit bleibt (Anders 1980, pp. 133-134).

The thesis of the excerpt is "science fiction authors […] are suspect because […] they surrendered […] to realism". It is easy to understand that the original concept here is "realism". This notwithstanding the fact that the word "realism" (just like "and" in Knuth's text) belongs to the common vocabulary, where its main sense is the one Anders quotes in order to reject it, "representation of reality". The sense "taking a stand towards reality" is not present in the basic

meaning of the term but can only be inferred from it. This kind of inference, which works on the meaning of a word transforming it into an almost-equivalent from the semantic viewpoint, is one of the moments of the argumentative process where the intelligence and the creativity of a speaker can best be displayed. The originality of a thesis, and the strength of a whole argumentation, often derive from the cleverness with which the novel and counterintuitive ideas around which the argumentation is built are led back to a semantic analysis which "normalizes" them, making them appear already implicit in the keywords which build the starting point of the argumentation, and therefore ultimately in the objects of prior agreement When the most original concepts in an argumentation are connected to those which at first sight would appear to be the most conventional ones, it is as though the speaker were implicitly pointing out to the audience "My thesis is not so weird as it might appear to be at first, since everything that I am trying to argue is already implicit in your own words, those which you commonly use; therefore your own way of talking compels you to accept it."
In this example Anders infers that, if realism is representation, this representation is not so much in the object as in the subjectivity of whoever is doing the representing; consequently the choice of representing reality in a certain way reveals the worldview of an author, and in the case of science fiction authors their worldview accepts the power system of the world as it is instead of transcending it. In this sense it is actually self-evident that any "representation" is in itself a "taking issue with".

This kind of resemantization, illustrated so eloquently by the Anders excerpt, highlights a crucial aspect of the workings of argumentative dynamics: words, even the most common ones, are in some way pliable and, if used skilfully, can be led to mean whatever is most appropriate and convenient for the speaker in his argumentation. If the word "realism" had admitted only of the sense "representation of reality", like the mathematical symbol π admits only the numerical value 3,14…, Anders would never have been able to argue that science fiction authors are too realistic. His thesis is possible, even before it is arguable, thanks to the fact that a skilful semantic analysis can extrapolate from the basic meaning of a term inferential implications which are cleverly and arbitrarily selected, and which the speaker can use in his argument. Of course this does not mean that any word can be made to mean anything, but simply that skilful inferential work can allow the meaning of some carefully selected terms to be extended in a direction which is helpful to the overall trend of a particular

argumentation, giving them the role of supporting it not only conceptually but also structurally.

Even where the shift in the meaning of keywords is not so evident and so explicit as in the texts by Knuth and Anders, keyword manipulation is often observed to be a basic preliminary procedure for the construction of an argumentative text. Countless argumentations hinge on an original semantic analysis of their keywords, that is on the creation of new concepts by resemantization, and the fact that this procedure is applied to conventional concepts, creating a version of them which is favourable to a given argumentative trend, leads ultimately to a blurring of the distinction between conventional and original concepts. Every time that in an argumentative text a keyword is explained or defined, be it only through a brief aside such as "By X I mean the following", we witness an instance of one of the most interesting argumentative strategies, that of modulating (with the implicit assent of the audience) the expression of the objects of prior agreement in such a way as to strengthen the structural links of the argumentation, with the end of making the connections which hold it together (which are by definition open to dispute) seem like a self-evident necessity.

That such a necessity may never be anything but an optical illusion is of course evident from an analysis, however cursory, of the difference between the functioning of keywords in two different forms of reasoning, argumentation and demonstration. The possibility, indeed the necessity, of semantic transformation is one of the most important traits which distinguish argumentation from demonstration. A demonstration is a tautology which unfolds implications which are objectively and necessarily present in the definitions; an argumentation, on the other hand, is an inferential process which works by transforming the meaning of keywords. As a consequence demonstrations do not need the assent of their audiences, since an agreement on the initial definition necessarily entails that on their deductive developments, while in argumentations the assent of the audience is nothing short of vital because, even if it were possible to reach a completely explicit and exhaustive agreement on the starting points (which it isn't) these very starting points would be necessarily continuously subject to renegotiations in the unfolding of the discourse. This is why Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's contribution in highlighting the radicality of the dichotomy between demonstration and argumentation must be acknowledged as a great one, and as a definitive result in argumentation theory.

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ISSA Proceedings 2006 – Virtue Argumentation

1. Virtue in ethics

After centuries of obscurity, the study of the virtues is now one of the most prominent methodologies in ethics. Proponents of this so-called 'aretaic turn' differ substantially in the details of their respective proposals, but they tend to see a renewed focus on ethical virtues as a fresh source of insight into problems which have deadlocked more familiar approaches, such as Kantianism or utilitarianism. Moreover, virtue ethics has an immediacy to everyday human interests which its competitors have often been criticized as lacking. Yet, despite its fashionability, the roots of virtue ethics go back much further than those of its modern rivals.

An emphasis on virtue, or *aretê*, was characteristic of Ancient Greek thought from the time of Homer, if not earlier. Both Socrates and Plato could be said to have virtue theories, and the latter is responsible for the so-called Cardinal Virtues, of courage, temperance, wisdom (or prudence), and justice (Protagoras 330b). This list was subsequently incorporated into the Christian tradition by the successive authority of Saints Ambrose, Augustine of Hippo, and Thomas Aquinas. However the principal theorist of virtue in (Western) philosophy is Aristotle. Both of his major ethical works defend an account of the good life as an activity in

accordance with our highest virtues. He catalogues many different ethical virtues. His earlier *Eudemian Ethics* (1220b-1221a) lists gentleness; courage; modesty; temperance; righteous indignation; the just; liberality; sincerity; friendliness; dignity; hardiness; greatness of spirit; magnificence; and wisdom. A similar list may be found in the later *Nicomachean Ethics* (1107a).

A distinctive feature of Aristotle's approach is his 'doctrine of the mean': the thesis that each virtue represents the right degree of some property, of which either an excess or deficit would constitute vice. Hence every virtue is situated between a pair of opposite vices. For example, gentleness is the mean of irascibility and spiritlessness, and courage that of rashness and cowardice. This doctrine provides a plausible analysis of at least some familiar virtues, but few if any modern virtue theorists endorse it wholeheartedly. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the mean has a substantial intellectual legacy. In particular, since the good agent must be able to know what the mean is in any specific case, the doctrine obliged Aristotle to develop his ethics in an epistemological direction with the introduction of intellectual virtues. These include knowledge, art, prudence, intuition, wisdom, resourcefulness, and understanding (*Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VI). Chief amongst them is prudence, the traditional translation of *phronesis*, which might better be rendered as practical wisdom, or common sense. For Aristotle this is a disposition to deliberate well, that is, so as to arrive at a course of action which brings about the good.

2. Virtue in epistemology

In recent years virtue theory has not only undergone a resurgence in ethical thought, but has spilled over into other philosophical disciplines, most conspicuously epistemology. As in ethics, the aretaic turn in epistemology has been promoted as cutting through entrenched positions to provide new solutions to old debates. In the epistemological case, these debates principally concern the definition of such traditional concepts as knowledge, truth and justified belief. However, the proposed appeal to salutary intellectual virtues can take divergent forms. Different virtue epistemologists defend different sets of epistemological virtues. Nor is there consensus as to the precise role which the virtues should play in a reformed epistemology. They have been represented variously as possessing conceptual priority over the traditional concepts, or as explanatorily but not conceptually prior, or merely as a reliable guide.

However, there are two principal schools of thought within which most virtue epistemologists may be situated. The earlier of these, initially developed by

Ernest Sosa, is an offshoot of epistemological reliablilism, that is the thesis that knowledge may be understood as the product of a particular sort of reliable process. In its virtue theoretic form the reliable process is characterized in terms of such 'virtues' as sight, hearing, introspection, memory, deduction, and induction (Battaly 2000).

By contrast, other virtue epistemologists, particularly Linda Zagzebski, deny that such innate faculties qualify as virtues. Instead, her virtues are acquired excellences. She lists 'the ability to recognize the salient facts; sensitivity to detail; open-mindedness in collecting and appraising evidence; fairness in evaluating the arguments of others; intellectual humility; intellectual perseverance, diligence, care and thoroughness; adaptability of intellect; the detective's virtues: thinking of coherent explanations of the facts; being able to recognize reliable authority; insight into persons, problems, theories; the teaching virtues: the social virtues of being communicative, including intellectual candour and knowing your audience and how they respond' (Zagzebski 1996, p. 114). Elsewhere she also identifies intellectual courage, autonomy, boldness, creativity, and inventiveness as virtues (Zagzebski 1996, pp. 220, 225). Although Zagzebski's list of virtues more closely resembles Aristotle's list of intellectual (or indeed moral) virtues, several of Sosa's virtues could also be found on that list. Perhaps, as some commentators have argued (Battaly 2000), a rapprochement between these ostensibly divergent schools is overdue.

3. virtue in argument

We have seen how virtue theory has found proponents in both ethics and epistemology. This paper will argue that it is also a potentially rich and fruitful methodology for informal logic. Our first step in this argument will be to address some recurring problems which beset all virtue theories (*cf*. Statman 1997, pp. 19 ff.). If these problems prove especially pernicious in the case of informal logic, we will have shown that the methodology is poorly suited to its intended application. Conversely, the provision of satisfactory answers should leave us well-placed to address issues peculiar to argumentation. In the remainder of this section we shall explore lines of response to each of these issues.

3.1 Justification

The first of these problems is one of justification: if argumentational virtues are to be understood as possessing normative force, where does that normativity come from? This is a problem for any foundational theory. One cannot keep appealing

to ever deeper foundations on pain of infinite regress. It is not clear that virtue theories, whether in ethics, epistemology, or argumentation, are any worse placed than foundational theories of other kinds. More specifically, the virtue theorist can, as other theorists do, defend his position as coherent with our intuitions. Indeed, in so far as his virtues are familiar and intuitive, he is better placed to do this than many of his competitors. In the next section we shall see whether there are familiar and intuitive argumentational virtues to be found.

3.2 Universality

A second problem arises from the observation that different cultures or communities may subscribe to different conceptions of the ideal arguer. If we are comfortable with this, we appear to sacrifice the traditional assumption of logical universality; if not, how do we ground a common conception? Different cultures endorse different virtues. In ethics these can differ profoundly. In argumentation the differences are perhaps less extreme, but concerns may remain. In particular, some accounts of ethical conduct seek to associate certain virtues with specific groups, identified by race, class, or gender. This is also a familiar tactic in discussion of rationality: might there be, for example, specifically male or female argumentational virtues? If so, an argument which was good for a man might not be good for a woman, and *vice versa*.

Moreover, a superficial appearance of similarity can mask a deeper division. For example, the Brahma Viharas (or divine abiding practices) of Buddhism may be stated as *metta* (loving-kindness), *karuna* (compassion), *muddita* (appreciative joy), and *uppeka* (equanimity). These seem closely related to the virtues itemized above, tempting us to hypothesize some deep, intercultural consensus. However, their practical application can be surprising: for instance, many Buddhists interpret *uppeka* as discouraging smiling.**[i]** A pessimistic response to such moments of culture shock would be to suspect that the sets of virtues endorsed by different cultures may be irreconcilable.

In virtue ethics, a standard response to the former problem is to stipulate that all competent virtues must apply equally to all sentient agents. This rules out merely local ‘virtues’, and ‘virtues’ predicated of a specific race, class, or gender. The same tactic could be deployed against putative local argumentational virtues. The latter problem may be addressed in a similarly robust manner by insisting that, if the different sets of virtues are genuinely irreconcilable, some (perhaps all) of them must be spurious, even if we are unable to determine which. Alternatively, both of these problems could be understood as opportunities for virtue

argumentation to capture pre-existing debates over the nature of logic. The latter situation—irreconcilable accounts of logical inference, each claiming to apply universally—is otherwise familiar as (global) logical pluralism. This scenario has been defended by some proponents of non-classical logics as capturing their quarrel with classical logic. Of course, the advocates of these systems do not characteristically wish to deny topic neutrality, let alone to relativize logical inference to identity groups, as embracing the former problem would suggest. However, there are other more radical critics of logic who do. Notably, some feminist commentators have sought to stigmatize (formal) logic as inherently masculine, and to promote alternative, female modes of reasoning (see the papers in Falmagne and Hass 2002, for further discussion). Anyone endorsing this position would presumably be comfortable with local argumentational virtues specific to each gender.

3.3 Applicability

How should virtue argumentation be applied in practical cases? In virtue ethics, practical advice often takes the form of a recommendation to act as an ideal ethical agent would act. Hence virtue theories are sometimes cashed out as "What would [insert your choice of Heroic Figure] do? theories. But is this injunction helpful to the non-ideal arguer? One problem with this approach is that the right course of action for an ideal agent may not be right for anyone else. For an example showing that this worry applies to argumentation too, consider the following anecdote from the British barrister and humorist John Mortimer:

I greatly admired the smooth and elegant advocacy of Lord Salmon, who … would … stroll negligently up and down the front bench lobbing faultlessly accurate questions over his shoulder at the witness-box. Here, I thought, was a style to imitate. For my early cross-examinations I would … pace up and down firing off what I hope were appropriate questions backwards. I continued with this technique until an unsympathetic Judge said, "Do try and keep still Mr Mortimer. It's like watching ping-pong. ' (Mortimer 1984, p. 96)

Reflection on this anecdote may also show how the problem may be resolved. The young John Mortimer may have believed that he was conducting his arguments in the style of Lord Salmon, but as is painfully obvious to his later self, the imitation was wholly superficial. He ends up capturing some inessential mannerisms, but misses the argumentational virtues. (Presumably if he had got these too, the judge would have been more sympathetic.) The point is to imitate the right thing.

This suggests that it would be better to abstract virtues which we may imitate from the behaviour of the virtuous than to attempt to imitate the virtuous directly.

3.4 Status of Arguments

A substantial innovation of most virtue theories is that they are explicitly agent-based, rather than act-based. This can make the appraisal of acts unusually problematic. Moral and epistemic virtues are typically ascribed to the agent, not to his deeds or beliefs. In the case of argument, this would mean that virtues were qualities of the arguer, rather than of his arguments. Of course, it is entirely reasonable to speak of the 'virtues of an argument', and we could take *these* 'virtues' as primitive instead. In that case, we could still talk of virtuous arguers, by defining their virtues in terms of the virtues of their arguments, making the virtuous arguer one disposed to advance or accept virtuous arguments. However, the virtue talk in this approach would be wholly ornamental, since the 'virtues of an argument' could presumably be cashed out in terms of more familiar forms of argument appraisal. Hence, if a virtue theory of argumentation is to do any work, it must be agent-based. Is this a problem for the appraisal of arguments?

It would seem to present a very specific problem, which does not arise in the corresponding ethical and epistemological cases. Would not any agent-based appraisal of argumentation commit the ad *hominem* fallacy? In general terms, an *ad hominem* argument may be said to 'consist in bringing alleged facts about Jones to bear in an attempt to influence hearers' attitudes toward Jones's advocacy-of-P' (Brinton 1995, p. 214). This seems to fit exactly. Jones's virtues (or vices) are alleged facts about him, his argument-that-P is an instance of his advocacy-of-P, and our appraisal of his presentation of that argument is presumably an attempt to influence hearers' attitudes towards it. Thus, if all ad *hominem* arguments are fallacious, agent-based appraisal must be fallacious too, and can therefore have no normative force.

But are all instances of *ad hominem* necessarily fallacious? Conventional textbook treatments of the fallacies usually suggest as much, but it is not hard to find arguments that satisfy the description above, and yet seem perfectly sound. Indeed, many treatments of the *ad hominem* in the informal logic literature argue that it 'is a legitimate form of argument and is logically acceptable in many, perhaps most, of its actual occurences' (Brinton 1995, p. 222). For, if the alleged facts about the arguer are relevant to the persuasive force of his argument, where is the fallacy in using them to appraise his argument? All that remains is to

defend the relevance of the argumentational virtues, which we shall tackle in the next section. If this can be achieved, then our application of virtue theory to argument should be no worse off than applications to ethics or epistemology.

4. What sort of virtues?

We have seen that a virtue theoretic approach to argument must focus on agents rather than actions, seeking to identify those qualities most likely to give rise to particularly desirable (or undesirable) behaviour. This entails distinguishing good from bad arguers rather than good from bad arguments. This emphasis may be seen in some informal logicians' work, although such work typically makes no reference to virtue theory. Moreover, many of the qualities proposed by virtue epistemologists as characteristic of the good knower are also plausible desiderata for the good arguer. Some of the virtues advocated in other species of virtue theory may also be of use. In this section we shall see how a list of argumentational virtues (and vices) might be assembled from these diverse sources.

To begin with, many of Zagzebski's epistemological virtues (listed in Section 2) would seem as relevant to argument as to knowledge. Some other applications of virtue theory may seem even closer to our concerns. For example, Richard Paul has applied virtue theory to critical thinking. For Paul, the following virtues distinguish the 'true critical thinker' from the superficial rationalizer: intellectual courage; intellectual empathy; intellectual integrity; intellectual perseverance; faith in reason; and fairmindedness (Paul 2000, p. 168). Only the true critical thinker has genuine understanding, a quality thus lacking, Paul maintains, in those whose education has overlooked the pursuit of virtue. However, his emphasis on virtue in the service of the epistemological concept of understanding makes Paul's proposal of a piece with mainstream virtue epistemology. Hence, despite the proximity of critical thinking to informal logic, these are not necessarily specifically argumentational virtues.

Such virtues might be sought in virtue jurisprudence, which seeks to extend the scope of the aretaic turn to the philosophy of law, much as we are extending it to the philosophy of logic. Since law is largely composed of argument, this seems like a good place to look. Specifically, Lawrence Solum itemizes the following jurisprudential virtues (and corresponding vices): judicial temperance *vs*. corruption; judicial courage *vs*. civic cowardice; judicial temperament *vs*. bad temper; judicial intelligence *vs*. incompetence; judicial wisdom *vs*. foolishness

(Solum 2003). However, these are virtues for the judge, not the advocate, to be employed in the appraisal, rather than the construction, of arguments. It is important when putting together an argument to be able to anticipate its appraisal, and the appropriate appraisal of an interlocutor's argument is essential to debate. Nevertheless, Solum's virtues at most characterize only one aspect of argumentation.

A much less recent study of advocacy may help to fill out the roster of jurisprudential virtues. The following list is derived from the rhetorical manual of the Roman orator Quintilian: respect for public opinion; fortitude; bravery; integrity; eloquence; honour; responsibility; sincerity; common sense; justice; knowledge; sense of duty; and [moral] virtue. (*Institutio Oratoria*, xii. 1. 12-35, as glossed in Murphy and Katula 1995, p. 201). Unfortunately, Quintilian is extremely concise, and his focus is rhetorical rather than logical, leading him to endorse 'methods of speaking which, despite the excellence of their intention, bear a close resemblance to fraud' (xii. 1. 41). That does not sound virtuous, although several of his specific virtues echo ones we have already endorsed. We need to keep sight of core principles, lest our catalogue of virtues run astray. As far as virtue jurisprudence is concerned, we can do no better than to quote that notable ideal arguer Socrates: 'apply your mind to this: whether the things I say are just or not. For this is the virtue of a judge, while that of an orator is to speak the truth' (*Apology* 18a, West trans.).

This raises the question of what the virtues of the ideal arguer are expected to track. Ethical virtues track the good: virtuous people are disposed to do good things. Epistemological virtues track truth: virtuous knowers are disposed to believe true propositions. What should argumentational virtues track? Arguments cannot be true or false, but good arguments are often characterized as truth-preserving. Of course, outside of deductive logic, this preservation cannot be guaranteed, but that still makes it intelligible as a disposition. So, if argumentational virtues track truth-preservation, virtuous arguers will be disposed to accept or propose arguments which tend to preserve truth. Virtuous arguments will be those which virtuous arguers present or accept, when acting in accordance with their virtues. Or, more straightforwardly, the virtues of argument are those which propagate truth. By this standard, we can see that most of the epistemological and jurisprudential virtues considered above will also serve as argumentational virtues.

So far we have considered virtues relevant to argument, but advocated by virtue theorists from other disciplines. What about characterizations of argument which tacitly lend themselves to virtue theoretic interpretation? One such account is that of Daniel Cohen. He has seldom, if ever, explicitly endorsed a virtue theory—his paraphrase of Barry Goldwater, that 'agreeableness in the pursuit of resolution is no virtue, and tenacity in the defence of sound conclusions is no vice', might be seen as decorative (Cohen 2004, p. 85). However, his approach pays regard to arguers as well as arguments, he alludes to Aristotle's doctrine of the mean, and he makes explicit use of the concept of an ideal arguer. It is from this concept that we gain an impression of his argumentational virtues: 'genuine willingness to engage in serious argumentation … willingness to listen to others and to modify [one's] own position, and … willingness to question the obvious … should be prominently included in our descriptions of Ideal Arguers' (Cohen 2005, p. 64). He pays more attention to argumentational vices, which have been somewhat neglected in our survey. He explicitly situates willingness to listen between two positions he identifies as the 'Deaf Dogmatist', who ignores relevant objections and questions, and the 'Concessionaire', who undermines his own arguments with unnecessary concessions. With a little reflection we can see that Cohen's other two virtues are also means between pairs of vices identified by him. Willingness to question occupies middle ground between the 'Eager Believer', who endorses positions uncritically, and the 'Unassuring Assurer', who insists on defending what he might otherwise have been freely granted. Lastly, willingness to engage is opposed to the 'Argument Provocateur', who argues at all times, even when it is least appropriate, and the quietist, who won't argue at all.

5. Dialectical nature of argument

We have argued that epistemological virtues can be profitably applied to argument, perhaps as fine-tuned along the lines suggested by Cohen. However, there are still some significant differences between epistemology and logic. Argument, unlike knowledge, is intrinsically dialectical. Even when one argues with oneself, one plays two roles: that of arguer and respondent. This aspect of argument is one that a virtue theory should respect. Specifically, we might hope that it would explain a distinctive feature of arguments, that they can be bad in two ways: they can confuse others and they can confuse the arguer.

A perennial criticism of virtue theory in ethics and epistemology is that the theory does not adequately distinguish virtues from skills. Some virtue theorists, such as Sosa, explicitly identify the two, others, including Zagzebski, strive to maintain

the distinction, but have been criticized as not succeeding (Battaly 2000, for example). Philippa Foot retrieves an account of this distinction from Aristotle (1140b) and Aquinas: 'In the matter of arts and skills, they say, voluntary error is preferable to involuntary error, while in the matter of virtues … it is the reverse' (Foot 1978, p. 7). This seems right: exclaiming 'That was on purpose!' might help exculpate a failure of skill, falling off a skateboard say, but not a failure of virtue, such as leaving someone to walk home in the rain having forgotten to meet them by car.

One reason why this ostensibly straightforward distinction has nevertheless become confused in both ethics and epistemology may be that it has little work to do in either field. It is hard to make sense of what an 'ethical skill' might be, unless it is a virtue. Conversely, and *pace* Zagzebski, epistemological virtues are apt to resemble skills, in so far as both are deployed in pursuit of knowledge. However, when we turn to argument, the situation is more interesting. When we confuse ourselves, we have been let down by our argumentational skills; when we (deliberately or otherwise) confuse others, we display a lack of argumentational virtue.

The contrast might best be illustrated by an example. The exact same fallacy, say an equivocation on a word with two subtly but crucially distinct senses, could result from either a failure of virtue, if deliberately intended to deceive, or from a failure of skill, if the utterer did not notice the double meaning. The latter failure would also entail a (different) failure of virtue, since a virtuous arguer would have appreciated the potential for deception in his words. Some fallacy theorists have sought to represent this distinction as one between two different sorts of fallacy (Walton 1996, p. 67, attributes this view to Max Black). But that seems to miss the point: the argument is the same, so, since a fallacy is a sort of argument, the same fallacy should be committed. What is at issue is why. In fact, every fallacy can be deployed in ways that are either vicious but skillful, or vicious and not skillful. To see this, observe that any fallacy can be used deliberately to deceive another, who, if he lacks the skills to realize that he has been deceived, may guilelessly, but negligently, repeat the fallacy to a third party.

Is it possible for virtuous arguments to be either skillful or unskillful? Optimal arguments will clearly be both skillful and virtuous. Unskilled virtuous arguments are harder to find. In Plato's *Apology*, Socrates professes that his arguments will be of this kind (17b). However, what he clearly intends is that his arguments will

lack the meretricious skills of the sophists: skills inconsistent with virtue. On a broader understanding of 'skill', his arguments are highly skillful. We have seen that no fallacy can be unskilled but virtuous, because the potential for misunderstanding which results even from an unintentional fallacy is inconsistent with virtue. However, not all failures of skill are opportunities for misunderstanding. Some arguments fail innocently.

6. Conclusion

So what have we achieved? Phillipa Foot concludes her most recent book on virtue ethics as follows:

'I have been asked the very pertinent question as to where all this leaves disputes about substantial … questions. Do I really believe that I have described a method for settling them all? The proper reply is that in a way nothing is settled, but everything is left as it was. The account … merely gives a framework within which disputes are said to take place, and tries to get rid of some intruding philosophical theories and abstractions that tend to trip us up.' (Foot 2001, p. 116)

If we can say no more than this we shall still have made significant progress. In particular, this new framework has the potential to inspire a novel take on many open problems in argumentation theory. There is much work to be done in the provision of sensitive analyses of individual virtues. For instance, fairmindedness is essential to the avoidance of bias, although it can be confused with apathy or indifference. Even more significantly, virtue argumentation holds out the possibility of a systematic basis for the frequently unanalyzed appeals to moral obligations to be found in many discussions of reasoning.

NOTES

[i] The day I gave this paper in Amsterdam I was reminded of this by a television commercial for the Tourism Authority of Thailand. The advert commemorated the Diamond Jubilee of King Bhumibol, who was shown in multiple clips, in each of which, as an exemplary Buddhist monarch, he was unsmiling. It ended with the Authority's Western-oriented slogan: 'Come to Thailand—Land of Smiles'.

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