VIRTUES AND ARGUMENTS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY

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REFERENCES


Virtue ethics is perhaps the fastest growing field in ethical theory. Virtue theories have also been proposed in other disciplines, such as epistemology and jurisprudence. This paper stakes a claim in another area: argumentation.


Virtue theories have become influential in ethics and epistemology. This paper argues for a similar approach to argumentation. Several potential obstacles to virtue theories in general, and to this new application in particular, are considered and rejected. A first attempt is made at a survey of argumentational virtues, and finally it is argued that the dialectical nature of argumentation makes it particularly suited for virtue theoretic analysis.


If good argument is virtuous, then fallacies are vicious. Yet fallacies cannot just be identified with vices, since vices are dispositional properties of agents whereas fallacies are types of argument. Rather, if the normativity of good argumentation is explicable in terms of virtues, we should expect the wrongness of fallacies to be explicable in terms of vices. This approach is defended through case studies of several fallacies, with particular emphasis on the ad hominem.


Several authors have recently begun to apply virtue theory to argumentation. Critics of this programme have suggested that no such theory can avoid committing an ad hominem fallacy. This criticism is shown to trade unsuccessfully on an ambiguity in the definition of ad hominem. The ambiguity is resolved and a virtue-theoretic account of ad hominem reasoning is defended.


I want to say something about the sort of arguments that it is possible to lose, and whether losing arguments can be done well. I shall focus on losing philosophical arguments, and I will be talking about arguments in the sense of acts of arguing. This is the sort of act that one can perform on one’s own or with one other person in private. But in either of these cases it is difficult to win—or to lose. So I shall concentrate on arguments with audiences. We may think of winning or losing such arguments in terms of whether the audience is convinced. Of course, this doesn’t necessarily have anything to do with who is in the right. That means that there are two sorts of loser: real losers, who lose the argument undeservedly, because they are in the wrong, and mere losers, who lose the argument undeservedly, because they are in the right. Hence there must also be two sorts of winner: real winners, who win the argument deservedly, because they are in the right, and mere winners, who win the argument undeservedly, because they are in the wrong. An optimal outcome for arguments with losers would be if all the losers are real losers.


What should a virtue theory of argumentation say about fallacious reasoning? If good arguments are virtuous, then fallacies are vicious. Yet fallacies cannot just be identified with vices, since vices are dispositional properties of agents whereas fallacies are types of argument. Rather, if the normativity of good argumentation is explicable in terms of virtues, we should expect the wrongness of bad argumentation to be explicable in

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Courage is a paradigm moral virtue. Intellectual courage has been studied as an epistemic virtue. But is courage a virtue of argument? ‘Courageous argument’ can be a euphemism for ‘indefensible argument’, and misplaced appeals to argumentative courage have been offered as excuses for needless aggression. This paper defends courage as a virtue of argument. Not only is courage essential to the defence of unpopular views, it is also necessary for the proper acknowledgement of defeat. The latter aspect challenges a popular analysis (King 2014, Battaly 2017) of intellectual courage in terms of perseverance.


What are the prospects (if any) for a virtue-theoretic account of inference? This paper compares three options. Firstly, assess each argument individually in terms of the virtues of the participants. Secondly, make the capacity for cogent inference itself a virtue. Thirdly, recapture a standard treatment of cogency by accounting for each of its components in terms of more familiar virtues. The three approaches are contrasted and their strengths and weaknesses assessed.


This paper proposes that virtue theories of argumentation and theories of visual argumentation can be of mutual assistance. An argument that adoption of a virtue approach provides a basis for rejecting the normative independence of visual argumentation is presented and its premises analysed. This entails an independently valuable clarification of the contrasting normative pre-suppositions of the various virtue theories of argumentation. A range of different kinds of visual argument are examined, and it is argued that they may all be successfully evaluated within a virtue framework, without invoking any novel virtues.


Deep disagreements are characteristically resistant to rational resolution. This paper explores the contribution a virtue theoretic approach to argumentation can make towards settling the practical matter of what to do when confronted with apparent deep disagreement, with particular attention to the virtue of courage.


Some of the key features of virtue theories of argument (VTA) are anticipated by earlier argumentation theories. This paper explores the dispositional account of critical thinking, and argues that it may be retrospectively assimilated to the VTA programme. A full exploration of this story is not only an independently interesting piece of recent intellectual history, it also serves to ground VTA in the substantial body of empirical research into critical thinking dispositions.


Virtue theories of argumentation comprise several conceptually distinct projects. Perhaps the boldest of these is the pursuit of the fully satisfying argument, the argument that contributes to human flourishing. This project has an independently developed epistemic analogue: eudaimonistic virtue epistemology. Both projects stress the importance of widening the range of cognitive goals beyond, respectively, cogency and knowledge; both projects emphasize social factors, the right sort of community being indispensable for the cultivation of the intellectual virtues necessary to each project. This paper proposes a unification of the two projects by arguing that the intellectual good life sought by eudaimonistic virtue epistemologists is best realized through the articulation of an account of argumentation that contributes to human flourishing.


In this chapter I argue that intellectual humility is related to argumentation in several distinct but mutually supporting ways. I begin by drawing connections between humility and two topics of long-standing importance to the evaluation of informal arguments: the ad verecundiam fallacy and the principle of charity. I then explore the more explicit role that humility plays in recent work on critical thinking dispositions, deliberative virtues, and virtue theories of argumentation.

Andrew Aberdein. Persuasion, adversariality, and virtue in jurisprudence and argumentation, 2020. To be presented at Evidence, Persuasion and Diversity: 12th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation, University of Windsor, ON.

Persuasion and adversariality present similar issues for virtue theories of argumentation and jurisprudence:
both are central to the practice of each discipline, but also ethically controversial. Persuasion can be vicious; adversariality has been attacked as undermining the interests of justice and the satisfactory resolution of arguments. This paper argues that establishing the parameters of virtuous persuasion and virtuous adversariality is essential to both jurisprudence and argumentation, and incidentally demonstrates the interconnectedness of the two disciplines.


It has been a decade since the phrase virtue argumentation was introduced, and while it would be an exaggeration to say that it burst onto the scene, it would be just as much of an understatement to say that it has gone unnoticed. Trying to strike the virtuous mean between the extremes of hyperbole and litotes, then, we can fairly characterize it as a way of thinking about arguments and argumentation that has steadily attracted more and more attention from argumentation theorists. We hope it is neither too late for an introduction to the field nor too soon for some retrospective assessment of where things stand.


There are at least two reasons why contemporary moral and political philosophers should be attentive to Aristotle’s account of practical reason. First, in contradistinction with views that characterize the emotions primarily as a hindrance to practical reasoning, moral philosophers have become increasingly impressed with the revived Aristotelian insight that good practical reasoning systematically relies on the emotions. Second, accounts of practical reason have become increasingly important for political philosophers seeking to theorize the regulative principles governing democratic deliberation. My intention in this paper is to demonstrate that Aristotle shows how an account of practical reason and deliberation that constructively incorporates the emotions can illuminate key issues about deliberation at the political level. First, I argue that, according to Aristotle, character (êthos) and emotion (pathos) are constitutive features of the process of phronetic practical deliberation: in order to render a determinate action-specific judgment, practical deliberation cannot be simply reduced to logical demonstration (apodeixis). This can be seen, I argue, by uncovering an important structural parallel between the virtue of phronêsis and the art of rhetoric. Second, this structural parallel helps to tease out the insights of Aristotle’s account of practical deliberation for contemporary democratic theory—in particular, the ethical consequences that follow from the fact that passionate political deliberation and judgment are unavoidable in democracy and are always susceptible to straying from issuing forth properly ethical outcomes.


Educators concerned with critical thinking have two distinguishable objectives: to teach a set of skills and to offer an ideal for a liberally educated citizen. Either objective requires focus on the development of the person, not simply the teaching of methods. Positive attitudes and dispositions toward critical inquiry must be encouraged. With such lofty and valuable goals, attention must be devoted to the prospects for success.


Can one be open-minded about a strongly held belief? I defend a reconciliation of the suggested conflict that turns on open-mindedness as an educational aim subordinate to the aim of knowledge, and as an attitude about one’s beliefs (a second-order or meta-belief); not a weakened attitude toward a proposition believed. The reconciliation is applied to a number of related issues such as the tension between teaching for autonomy and rightful claims to authority.


The best way to nail your opponent – to succeed at the base motivation of winning or embarrassing or destroying him – within legal bounds – is to genuinely refute him, and because the refutation is likely to be a surprise to the ill-motivated and to have to meet high standards, the base motives will likely lead to no different a result than if the motives were pure. If an Aristotelian VE is to work, it will do so only for domains with intellectually weak standards and either where the inquirer works in isolation or he is a member of a inquiring community that is already varied.


Mark Warren argues that good manners facilitate democratic deliberation. Their absence or violation impedes it. Consequently, efforts should be taken to ensure that one’s speech displays good manners, extending to insincerity and hypocrisy. Those whose speech is ill-mannered should be ignored or condemned, expressive, I infer, of our disgust or contempt. They are not deserving of challenge or dispute. My main critical comment is that great effort must go into realizing Warren’s recommendations. Implementing them courts dangers of their own for democratic deliberation. Warren does not produce evidence either that the problems motivating his recommendation are severe enough to justify his recommendations or that the consequences of his recommendations are likely to work out as he envisages. Finally, testable, alternative proposals extend reasonable hope to manage those problems in less intrusive ways.


Western rhetorical history reveals conflicting claims about where the strength of our discipline lies. Plato’s suspicion that sophistic rhetoric offers nothing more than political advancement and the ability to win audiences over to a predetermined position is challenged by alternative strains that perceive rhetorical skill as an ethical enterprise grounded in the pursuit of a just society. While these opposing perspectives have been...
highly visible in historical accounts of our field’s development, perhaps our most significant contribution to public discourse resides not in the promise that rhetoric can achieve particular material outcomes, but in our longstanding commitment to the virtue of intellectual humility. The focus on language and symbols in rhetorical studies, alongside our field’s historic relationship to preparing students for civic deliberation, provides rhetorical scholars and teachers with a unique role in exploring the potential of pedagogical methods that promote this virtue, particularly as a resource for revitalizing academic and public discourse. To embrace this role entails acknowledging the challenge of promoting intellectual humility as a virtue, coming to terms with forces that have historically undermined this virtue’s centrality to our discipline, and exploring ways in which we can ensure that intellectual humility flourishes within our academic community and beyond.


Recently, it has become popular to account for knowledge and other epistemic states in terms of epistemic virtues. The present paper focuses on an epistemic virtue relevant when deferring to others in testimonial contexts. It is argued that, while many virtue epistemologists will accept that epistemic virtue can be exhibited in cases involving epistemically motivated hearers, carefully vetting their testimonial sources for signs of untrustworthiness prior to deferring, anyone who accepts that also has to accept that an agent may exhibit epistemic virtue in certain cases of blind deference, involving someone soaking up everything he or she is told without any hesitation. Moreover, in order to account for the kind of virtue involved in the relevant cases of blind deference, virtue epistemologists need to abandon a widespread commitment to personalism, i.e., the idea that virtue is possessed primarily on account of features internal to the psychology of the person, and accept that some virtues are social virtues, possessed in whole or in large part on account of the person being embedded in a reliable social environment.


There is a tension with regard to regulative norms of inquiry. One’s commitments must survive critical scrutiny, and if they do not survive, they should be revised. Alternately, for views to be adequately articulated and defended, their proponents must maintain a strong commitment to the views in question. A solution is proposed with the notion of holding one’s own as the virtue of being reason-responsive with the prospects of improving the view in question.


The bottom line is that war and sport metaphors reflect the intrinsic adversariality of argument. That does not mean that arguments thereby must be hypercombative. Rather, once we recognize this intrinsic adversariality of argument, we must develop techniques to moderate the heat of argumentative exchanges. My argument is that the alternative models of arguments can achieve these ends. In this respect, I fully endorse the development of nonadversarial metaphors for argument but precisely for the reason that argument is adversarial and they help its management.


Fallacy theory has been criticized for its contributing to unnecessary adversariality in argument. The view of minimal adversariality by Trudy Govier has received similar criticism. A dialectical modification of Govier’s minimal view is offered that makes progress in replying to these challenges.


We argue that there are three norms of critical discussion in stark relief in *Republic I*. The first we see in the exchange with Cephalus—that we interpret each other and contribute to discussions in a maximally argumentative fashion. The second we see in the exchange with Polemarchus—that in order to cooperate in dialectic, interlocutors must maintain a distance between themselves and the theses they espouse. This way they can subject the views to serious scrutiny without the risk of personal loss. Third, and finally, from Socrates’ exchange with Thrasymachus, it is clear that uncooperative discussants must be handled in a fashion that reinforces the goals of dialectic. So Thrasymachus is refuted and silenced not just for the sake of correcting his definition of justice, but also for the sake of those listening.


The straw man fallacy consists in inappropriately constructing or selecting weak (or comparatively weaker) versions of the opposition’s arguments. We will survey the three forms of straw men recognized in the literature, the straw, weak, and hollow man. We will then make the case that there are examples of inappropriately reconstructing stronger versions of the opposition’s arguments. Such cases we will call iron man fallacies. The difference between appropriate and inappropriate iron man naming clarifies the limits of the virtue of open-mindedness.


In this paper, the authors argue for two main claims: first, that the epistemic results of group deliberation can be superior to those of individual inquiry; and, second, that successful deliberative groups depend on individuals exhibiting deliberative virtues. The development of these group-deliberative virtues, the authors argue, is important not only for epistemic purposes but political purposes, as democracies require the virtuous deliberation of their citizens. Deliberative virtues contribute to the deliberative synergy of the group, not only in terms of improving the quality of the group’s present decisions, but also improving the background conditions for continued group deliberation. The authors sketch a preliminary schedule of these group-deliberative virtues modelled on Aristotle’s conception of virtue as the mean between two extreme vices. The virtues discussed in this article include deliberative wit,
friendliness, empathy, charity, temperance, courage, sincerity, and humility.


Restating an interlocutor’s position in an incredulous tone of voice can sometimes serve legitimate dialectical ends. However, there are cases in which incredulous restatement is out of bounds. This article provides an analysis of one common instance of the inappropriate use of incredulous restatement, which the authors call “modus tonens.” The authors argue that modus tonens is vicious because it pragmatically implicates the view that one’s interlocutor is one’s cognitive subordinate and provides a cue to like-minded onlookers that dialectical opponents are not to be treated as epistemic peers.


This paper will discuss how narrative arguments should be evaluated, i.e. I will offer a means of differentiating between acceptable and unacceptable narrative arguments. I will argue that narrative arguments should not be evaluated as products; hence narrative argument evaluation will be a rhetorical evaluation focused on the process. In line with the rhetorical model of argument evaluation, I develop an account of the virtuous audience, which will be the standard for assessing narrative arguments.


In this dissertation I attempt to accomplish three goals. The first goal is to develop a narrative account of argumentation. I show that storytelling serves as a legitimate mode of argumentation. Further, I develop an account of narrative argument based on generalized features of narrative and a conception of argument that is rhetorical and in line with Charles Willard’s notion of argument as an interaction (1989). I identify features of narrative argument that enable narrative to function as an argument and thus to provide reasons for a claim in the context of disagreement. As a result, I synthesize literatures on narrative and argumentation to provide a definition of narrative argument. The second goal of the dissertation is to argue for maintaining the narrative as a process without reconstructing the narrative into the dominant model of argument, the Critical-Logical Model. In this part of the dissertation, I further elaborate on the definition of narrative argument and argue that narrative argument must be understood as a process, and not as a product of argument. While the product view focuses on the form and structure of an argument as being linear, explicit, and containing premises and a conclusion, and thus treats arguments as things, the process view focuses on the whole act of arguing, thus highlighting the importance of the context of argumentation and the people involved. In support of this thesis, I show that reducing the narrative into premises and a conclusion is problematic because it deprives it of some of its persuasive force. As such, I argue against the reductionist approach to narrative argument that seeks to extract premises and a conclusion from a narrative, because I contend that the whole act of storytelling is an argument. Reducing the narrative into a product removes the real argument—part of which is implicit—from its context, its unique situation, and its complex social setting. The third goal of this dissertation is to develop an account of argument evaluation that is suitable for narrative argument understood as a process. I offer an account of how to evaluate narratives using ‘the virtuous audience,’ a novel evaluative method that combines theories of virtue argumentation and rhetorical audiences. In sum, this dissertation provides a definition of narrative argument, stipulates the conditions of narrative arguments that make them successful, and offers ways of evaluating the narrative while maintaining its form as a process.


I intend to argue here that Aristotle’s identification of aretē with dynamics in Rhetoric can be understood within the highly specific context of rhetoric as an art as more appropriate, both metaphysically and ethically, than would have been an identification of aretē with hexis. I also intend to argue that, while certain tensions and difficulties are created by the classification of aretē as a dynamics in the Rhetoric and as a hexis in the Nicomachean Ethics, Aristotle can be defended against the charge of inconsistency.


I consider three questions arising from Cohen’s interesting paper: Is sincerity in premise assertion a premise virtue? Are arguers who are insincere in the assertion of one or more of their premises necessarily indifferent to the truth? Does their insincerity necessarily prevent their argumentation from producing cognitive benefits?


The concept of virtue figures prominently in current approaches to moral and epistemic reasoning. This chapter aims to apply virtue theory to the domain of legal reasoning. My claim is that a virtue approach to legal reasoning illuminates some key aspects of legal reasoning which have, at best, been peripheral in the standard theory of legal reasoning. From a virtue perspective, I shall argue, emerges a picture of legal reasoning that differs in some essential features from the prevalent rule-based approach to legal reasoning.


There are many potential applications of virtue theory to law. One could hold an aretēic theory of law, according to which the aim of the law is to make citizens virtuous. One could develop a theory of legal ethics on a model of virtues, as some scholars have started to do. Virtue theory could also be applied to examine problems in diverse areas of the law, beyond criminal law, such as torts, evidence law, or constitutional law.
Virtue approaches to justice, which is arguably, a pivotal virtue in law and the more legal of the virtues, could be developed as well. Finally, one could also develop an aretaic approach to adjudication, that is, an account that explains in aretaic terms the conditions under which legal decisions are justified. In what follows, I shall focus on the possibilities of developing a virtue-based account of adjudication. First, I shall provide some reasons why one might find an aretaic approach to legal justification appealing. Secondly, I shall distinguish different versions of virtue jurisprudence, depending on the role that they assign to virtue in a theory of justification. Last, I shall explore some of the implications of an aretaic approach to legal justification to the theory of legal reasoning.

[40] Amalia Amaya. Virtud y razón en el derecho: Hacia una teoría neo-aristotélica de argumentación jurídica. In Guillermo Larcuet & René de la Vega, eds., Cuestiones Contemporáneas de Filosofía del Derecho, pp. 1–13. Temis, Bogotá, 2013. In Spanish. The concept of virtue occupies a prominent place in contemporary approaches to moral reasoning and epistemic reasoning. The objective of this work is to apply the theory of neo-Aristotelian virtue to the field of legal reasoning. The neo-Aristotelian conception of practical reason, as I will try to show in this paper, brings to light some central aspects of legal reasoning that are buried in the standard theories of legal argumentation. In addition, an aretaic approach to legal argumentation allows us to appreciate that there are important connections between the theory of legal argumentation and judicial ethics. Therefore, and this is the central thesis of this work, the neo-Aristotelian conception of practical reason has important implications for the theory of legal argumentation.

[41] Amalia Amaya. The virtue of judicial humility. *Jurisprudence*, 9(1):97–107, 2018. This paper articulates an egalitarian conception of judicial humility and justifies its value on the grounds that it importantly advances the legal and political ideal of fraternity. This account of the content and value of the virtue of humility stands in sharp contrast with the dominant view of judicial humility as deference or judicial restraint. The paper concludes by discussing some ways in which the account of humility and of its value provided in the paper furthers our understanding of the judicial virtues and of the political implications of giving virtue a role in adjudication.

[42] Ruth Amossy. Ethos at the crossroads of disciplines: Rhetoric, pragmatics, sociology. *Poetics Today*, 22(1):1–23, 2001. Examining the rhetorical notion of ethos at the crossroads of disciplines, this article builds up an integrated model attempting to reconcile Bourdieu’s theory of language and power with pragmatic views of illocutionary force. For the sociologist, the authority of the orator depends on his institutional position; for Ducrot or Maingueneau, drawing on Aristotle, the image of the orator is built by the discourse itself. Analyzing political as well as literary texts, this essay takes into account the institutional position of the speaker; his “prior ethos” (the image his audience has of him before he takes the floor); the distribution of roles inherent in the selected genre and the stereotypes attached to these roles; and the verbal strategies through which the speaker builds an image of self in his discourse. “Argumentative analysis” thus explores a dynamic process in which social, institutional, and linguistic elements are closely connected.

[43] Anne-Maren Andersen. Pístis—the common Ethos? In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., *Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA)*, May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. The classical Greek term pístis (trust) is presented as a relevant norm in the analysis of parliamentary debate. Through exploration of pístis apparent similarities to the term ethos have appeared. It is proposed that pístis can be viewed as the equivalent to ethos, concerning the common space or connection between the speaker and the audience. Tentatively “truth”, “faith” and “respect” are proposed as the elements equivalent to phronesis, aretē and eunoia.


[45] Marcela Andoková & Silvia Vertanová. Is rhetoric ethical? The relationship between rhetoric and ethics across history and today. *Graecolatina et Orientalia*, 37–38:133–145, 2016. The theme of the relationship between rhetoric and ethics brings us back to old Greece, which has become a cradle of European civilization. The need to develop speech abilities was conditioned by the need for individual defense during court trials, and gradually became important in political discourse within Athenian democracy. Sometimes, the voices of such philosophers as Plato began to echo very quickly, accusing rhetoric of being unethical. Over the course of history, many scientists and thinkers have overlooked rhetoric and even rejected it, considering it to be an effective means of manipulation. For this reason, communicators sometimes deny the fact that they are using rhetoric in their speech. Definitely the most effective forms of rhetoric are those that hide their own strategies and intentions. The complete denial of freedom of public expression during the political totalitarian regimes of the 20th century can be considered the culmination of the decline of rhetoric. With the spread of mass media and ongoing globalization, however, the need for rhetorical education within education systems appears more urgent in today’s world than ever before. Current society is under heavy pressure from mass media, which often does not even count on real or fictitious dialogue with its recipients as it used to be in antiquity. Therefore, we strive to emphasize that ethics is in no way contradictory to rhetoric, but it can become an effective weapon in the hands of both the speakers and their listeners. What rhetoric makes good or bad is the ethical/unethical attitude of the person who uses it.


This paper explores the possible rapprochement between Marxism and argumentation attempted in Proletarian Eloquence, a 1930 Japanese publication. Against a Western Marxist commonplace that “as far as rhetoric is concerned,... a Marxist must be in a certain sense a Platonist” (Eagleton, 1981), the paper discusses how this work seeks to take advantage of the inquiry and advocacy dimensions of argumentation for the Marxian strategy of “agitprop” and rearticulate it as part of civic virtues.


[48] Adam E. O. Auch. Virtuous argumentation and the challenges of hype. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. In this paper, I consider the virtue of proportionality in relation to reasoning in what I call ‘hype contexts’ (contexts in which otherwise perfectly temperate claims take on an outsized or inappropriate importance, simply due to their ubiquity). I conclude that a virtuous reasoner is one that neither accepts nor rejects a claim based on its ubiquity alone, but who evaluates its importance with reference to the social context in which it is made.

[49] Jason Baehr. The structure of open-mindedness. Canadian Journal of Philosophy, 41(2):191–213, 2011. I take as my immediate focus that which is distinctive of open-mindedness as compared with other intellectual virtues—not the qualities that make open-mindedness an intellectual virtue per se or the qualities it has in common with other intellectual virtues. In addition to sketching an account of the basic nature and structure of open-mindedness, I shall also give brief consideration to two further issues: first, the characteristic function of open-mindedness vis-à-vis other intellectual virtues; and second, the issue of when (or to whom or how much) an exercise of open-mindedness is intellectually appropriate or virtuous.


[51] Jason Baehr. Intellectual virtues, critical thinking, and the aims of education. In Miranda Fricker, Peter J. Graham, David Henderson, & Nikolaj J.L.L. Pedersen, eds., The Routledge Handbook of Social Epistemology, pp. 447–456. Routledge, London, 2019. The so-called “value turn” in epistemology has led to increased attention to the upper normative dimensions of the cognitive life—to states like understanding and wisdom and to the sorts of character traits or “intellectual virtues” that facilitate the acquisition of these epistemic goods. This richer, more normative focus has brought with it a renewed interest in the intersection of epistemology and the philosophy of education. The present chapter explores this intersection by examining the relationship between critical thinking conceived of as an educational ideal and intellectual virtues like curiosity, open-mindedness, intellectual courage, and intellectual perseverance. How exactly are intellectual virtues related to critical thinking? Can a person be intellectually virtuous while failing to be a critical thinker? Or do intellectual virtues secure a certain level of competence at critical thinking? In light of these issues, which of these two ideals is a more suitable educational aim?

[52] Sharon Bailin. The virtue of critical thinking. Philosophy of Education Yearbook, 15:327–329, 2003. In his title, Emery Hyslop-Margison boldly proclaims the failure of critical thinking. He decries its vices and concludes that critical thinking is beyond rehabilitation. As an alternative, he extols the virtues of virtue epistemology. I shall argue that critical thinking is in no need of rehabilitation as Hyslop-Margison’s case against it is misdirected. I shall also examine to what extent the notion of epistemic virtue provides a viable conceptual or pedagogical alternative to critical thinking.

[53] Sharon Bailin. Commentary on: Moira Hawes’s “Does happiness increase the objectivity of arguments?”. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. I find myself in agreement with some specific claims, for example, that a certain type of community is important for objectivity (critical thinking), that there is a connection between emotion or affect and objectivity (critical thinking), and, more broadly, that psychological research can be relevant to discussions of critical thinking (for example, the cognitive bias research). Where I shall focus my commentary is on her conception of the two main concepts which underpin the central claim, objectivity and happiness, and on her account of the relationship between them.


One becomes either a Principled Advocate or a Pathological Partisan by habitually enacting or embodying the virtues or vices in the context of professional practices.

[59] Sherry Baker & David L Martinson. The TARES test: Five principles for ethical persuasion. Journal of Mass Media Ethics, 16(2-3):148–175, 2001. Whereas professional persuasion is a means to an immediate and instrumental end (such as increased sales or enhanced corporate image), ethical persuasion must rest on or serve a deeper, morally based final (or relative last) end. Among the moral final ends of journalism, for example, are truth and freedom. There is a very real danger that advertisers and public relations practitioners will play an increasingly dysfunctional role in the communications process if means continue to be confused with ends in professional persuasive communications. Means and ends will continue to be confused unless advertisers and public relations practitioners reach some level of agreement as to the moral end toward which their efforts should be directed. In this article we advance a five-part test (the TARES test) that defines this moral end, establishes ethical boundaries that should guide persuasive practices, and serves as a set of action-guiding principles directed toward a moral consequence in professional persuasion. The TARES Test consists of five principles: Truthfulness (of the message), Authenticity (of the persuader), Respect (for the persuadee), Equity (of the persuasive appeal) and Social Responsibility (for the common good). We provide checklists to guide the practitioner in moral reflection and application of TARES Test principles.

[60] Andrew Ball. Are fallacies vices? Topoi, 35(2):423–429, 2016. Why are some arguments fallacious? Since argumentation is an intellectual activity that can be performed better or worse, do we evaluate arguments simply in terms of their content, or does it also make sense to evaluate the ‘arguer’ in light of the content put forward? From a ‘virtue’ approach, I propose understanding fallacies as having some link with intellectual vice(s). Drawing from recent work by Paul Grice, Linda Zagzebski, Andrew Aberdein, and Douglas Walton, this essay argues that if there is some sense of argumentation where an argument is (1) truth-propagating and not (2) put forward in order to ‘win’, fallacies may be the vicious element in arguments that undermines (1), most often because the arguer’s goal is only (2). From this perspective, fallacies may not only be improper ‘moves’ in an argument, but may also reveal something lacking in the arguer’s intellectual character.

[61] Nathan Ballantyne. Debunking biased thinkers (including ourselves). Journal of the American Philosophical Association, 1(1):141–162, 2015. Most of what we believe comes to us from the word of others, but we do not always believe what we are told. We often reject thinkers’ reports by attributing biases to them. We may call this debunking. In this essay, I consider how debunking might work and then examine whether, and how often, it can help to preserve rational belief in the face of disagreement.


Presumably, The Daily Show has not achieved its status simply because of a vacuum in credible news media, but rather because the show exhibits qualities that lead its viewers to see it as trustworthy in its own right—in rhetorical terminology, qualities that lead its audience to judge it as possessing ethos, a trait that “brings to mind a person’s moral character, [and] communal existence,” exhibited through their skillful use of rhetoric (Hyde, 2004, p. xvii). Over the rest of this chapter we briefly review the concept of ethos, then turn to consider how The Daily Show exhibits its ethos.


The article calls for a departure from the common concept of autonomy in two significant ways: it argues for the supremacy of semantic understanding over procedure, and claims that clinicians are morally obliged to make a strong effort to persuade patients to accept medical advice. We interpret the value of autonomy as derived from the right persons have to respect, as agents who can argue, persuade and be persuaded in matters of utmost personal significance such as decisions about medical care. Hence, autonomy should and could be respected only after such an attempt has been made. Understanding suffering to a significant degree is a prerequisite to sincere efforts of persuasion. It is claimed that a modified and pragmatic form of discourse is the necessary framework for understanding suffering and for compassionately interacting with the frail.


Fogelin’s (1985) Wittgensteinian view of deep disagreement as allowing no rational resolution has been criticized from both argumentation theoretic and epistemological perspectives. These criticisms typically do not recognize how his point applies to the very argumentative resources on which they rely. Additionally, more extremely than Fogelin himself argues, the conditions of deep disagreement make each position literally unintelligible to the other, again disallowing rational resolution. In turn, however, this failure of sense is so extreme that it partly cancels its own meaning as a failure of sense. Consequently, it paradoxically opens new possibilities for sense and therefore rationally unexpected resolutions.


The recent literature on ad hominem argument contends that the speaker’s character is sometimes relevant to evaluating what she says. This effort to redeem ad hominem’s requires an analysis of character that explains why and how character is relevant. I argue that virtue epistemology supplies this analysis. Three sorts of ad hominems that attack the speaker’s intellectual character are legitimate. They attack a speaker’s: (1) possession of reliabilist vices; or (2) possession of responsible vices; or (3) failure to perform intellectually virtuous acts. Legitimate ad hominems conclude that we should not believe what a speaker says solely on her say-so.


I offer a working analysis of the trait of intellectual perseverance. I argue that it is a disposition to overcome obstacles, so as to continue to perform intellectual actions, in pursuit of one’s intellectual goals. Accordingly, I contend that the trait of intellectual perseverance is not always an intellectual virtue. I provide a pluralist analysis of what makes it an intellectual virtue, when it is one. Along the way, I argue that the virtue of intellectual perseverance can be contrasted with both a vice of deficiency (capitalization) and a vice of excess (recalcitrance). I also suggest that the virtues of intellectual courage and intellectual self-control are types of intellectual perseverance. The essay ends with several open questions about the virtue of intellectual perseverance.

My hope is that this essay will stimulate further interest in, and analysis of, this important intellectual trait.


Building upon the role values take in Walton’s theory of practical reasoning, this paper will frame the question of how values should be evaluated into the broader question of what reasonable practical argumentation is. The thesis argued for is that if a positive evaluation of practical reasoning argumentation requires that the argument avoid a morally negative conclusion, then the role of values should be given a central, rather than supportive, position in practical argumentation evaluation.


In this paper I argue that underlying *phronēsis* is the more foundational virtue of a willingness to be rationally persuaded (WTBRP). A WTBRP is a virtue in the sense that it fulfills the doctrine of the mean by falling between two vices—never sticking to your position and never giving it up. Articulating a WTBRP in this way also helps address problems *phronēsis* faces in light of implicit bias research.


In this paper, I extend contemporary virtue ethics by pointing to a philosophical insight that emerges from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*: technical mastery of a discipline or practice involves cultivating the virtue of practical wisdom. After reviewing features of Alasdair MacIntyre’s virtue ethics, I draw attention to specific virtues identified by MacIntyre while noting the relative absence of the virtue of practical wisdom in his discussion of social practices. I compare and contrast MacIntyre’s virtue ethics with that of Aristotle. Focusing on Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, I show how Aristotle suggests that the
virtue of practical wisdom is integral to technical mastery in the art of persuasive public speaking. I argue that Aristotle’s insight about the tight connection between practical wisdom and technical mastery is not limited to the art of rhetoric. Retrieving insights from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* brings into focus ways in which the virtue of practical wisdom is requisite to technical mastery more generally.


In our search for an appropriate assessment of the place of rhetoric in courts, we see that the history of philosophy offers a variety of descriptions of what rhetoric is as well as a variety of notions of what rhetoric should be. The paper shows that in the work of Aristotle rhetoric and ethics are inextricably connected. Aristotle’s limitation of rhetorical activity to three domains, his description of rhetoric as an offshoot from politics, his view on emotions and his elaboration of rhetoric as ‘technē’ all imply that the art of rhetoric is directly related to the orientation towards the good life. Subsequently the paper shows that *Nicomachean Ethics* has a rhetorical calibre. The contingent character of practical truth implies that discovering and communicating practical truth inevitably has a rhetoric dimension.


There seems to be a trend toward interpreting what are usually thought of as mental abilities or cognitive skills and treating them instead as dispositions. Schrag (1988) and Brell (1990) both argued for interpreting critical thinking in this way—treating it as a virtue, like honesty and kindness, rather than as a mental skill like deductive reasoning and problem solving. Perkins (1991) made a similar proposal regarding creativity, offering what he called a dispositional view—in which creative accomplishment is seen as depending on a combination of personal characteristics, such as persistence and willingness to take risks, which thus dispose a person to do creative work. I offer a dispositional view of transfer. This is a somewhat different matter from the previous ones, because transfer is not usually thought of as an ability but rather as an event, and the potential for transfer is not usually thought of as residing in the learner but rather in whatever has been learned.


In this essay, Ryan Bevan explores the pedagogical implications of taking virtue epistemology as the philosophical foundation of educational theory rather than following the instrumentalist approach that is currently dominant. According to Bevan, the critical thinking strategies characteristic of instrumentalism generally work to further the vocationalization of educational discourse as well as the cultivation of unreflective moral agents. He contends that critical thinking should be expanded beyond its rationalist criteria to focus on the process of inquiry. Such a virtue epistemology approach, according to Bevan, has the potential to uncover and change fundamental misconceptions that pervade current theoretical assumptions by encouraging learners to engage in a more inclusive inquiry that draws out alternative perspectives. Bevan concludes that citizenship education in particular can benefit greatly from this more expansive theory with concrete pedagogical implications.


The most long-standing criticism of virtue ethics in its traditional, eudaimonistic variety centers on its apparently foundational appeal to nature in order to provide a source of normativity. This paper argues that a failure to appreciate both the giving and taking of reasons in sustaining an ethical outlook can distort a proper understanding of the available options for this traditional version of virtue ethics. To insist only on giving reasons, without also taking (maybe even considering) the reasons provided by others, displays a sadly illiberal form of prejudice. The paper finds and criticizes such a distortion in Jesse Prinz’s recent discussion of the “Normativity Challenge” to Aristotelian virtue ethics, thus highlighting a common tendency that we can helpfully move beyond.


This essay seeks to answer the question whether there can be an ethics of argumentation. The alternatives, that no norms apply to argumentation, and that any norms that apply to argumentation are exclusively non-moral, are rejected. Three arguments support the moral normativity of argumentation. First, some standard moral norms apply to argumentation in particular; second, some standard obligations of argumentation seem to have a moral supervenience in some situations; third, there do seem to be moral vices and virtues attributable to arguers. However, the moral normativity of argumentation, where it occurs, has only pro tanto application.


The aim of this paper is to adapt Miranda Fricker’s concept of testimonial injustice to cases of what I call “argumentative injustice”: those cases where an arguer’s social identity brings listeners to place too much or little credibility in an argument. My recommendation is to adopt a stance of “metadistrust”—we ought to distrust our inclinations to trust or distrust members of stereotyped groups.

This paper will have two parts. In the first, it will point out the agreement between lists of paradigm epistemic and argumentative virtues, and it will take that agreement as prima facie support for the epistemic approach to argument evaluation. Second, it will consider the disagreement over whether successful argument resolution requires change of belief or whether it only requires change of commitment. It turns out that the epistemic approach is neutral on that question.


Argumentation theorists are beginning to recognize that ad hominem arguments are often legitimate. Virtue argumentation theorists argue that a character trait approach to argument appraisal can explain why ad hominems are legitimate, when they are legitimate. But I argue that we do not need to appeal to virtue argumentation theory to explain the legitimacy of ad hominem arguments; a more straightforward evidentialist approach to argument appraisal is also committed to their legitimacy. I also argue that virtue argumentation theory faces some important problems, and that whereas the virtue-theoretic approach in epistemology is (arguably) well-motivated, that motivation does not carry over to virtue argumentation theory.


This paper will explain that, while justified biases can give rise to both legitimate and illegitimate ad hominem attacks, unjustified biases only give rise to illegitimate ad hominems. It will also point out that, just as unjustified biases can make fallacious ad hominems seem persuasive even when the bias is made explicit, so too can unjustified biases make legitimate ad hominem arguments seem unpersuasive, even when the bias is made explicit.


I am grateful to Andrew Aberdein for his thorough and helpful commentary; he points out a number of places where I need to clarify my view. In this brief reply, I will address three of his points.


This chapter will discuss some outstanding examples of persuasion that are presented in the Homeric poem *The Iliad*. Even if it is a mythical narrative, it reflects the influence of dialogue and poetry in the Heroic Ages of Greek culture some centuries before the Golden Age of Athens and the creation of the art of rhetoric. This approach emphasizes the cultural development of natural skills of persuasion and relates them to the virtues that are necessary for sustaining a democratic commercial society.


I argue that much moral disagreement between cultures centers on what metaethicists call “thick concepts,” such as cruelty and courage. The main question I will address is “What are the advantages of combining virtue ethics with casuistry for addressing thick concepts central to media ethics disagreements between cultures?” A related secondary question is “How does this framework compare with ‘global media ethics’ approaches that prioritize thin concepts, such as ‘right’ and ‘ought’?” I will argue that the virtue/casuistry combination: (a) preserves the contexts that give thick ethical concepts their meaning; (b) conceives of moral agents as situated selves and confirms the value of moral expertise; and (c) presses for closure while resisting codification.


This paper considers whether there are limits to responsible argumentation when confronting positions that are a manifestation of bigotry, are racist, misogynistic, homophobic, or highly offensive in other ways. Can responsible arguing become irresponsible in such contexts? And do we become irresponsible as teachers if we encourage responsible engagement with positions such as these? And are there situations in which a refusal to engage is the most responsible way to deal with particular position?


In this paper we consider the prospects for an account of good argument that takes the character of the arguer into consideration. We conclude that although there is much to be gained by identifying the virtues of the good arguer and by considering the ways in which these virtues can be developed in ourselves and in others, virtue argumentation theory does not offer a plausible alternative definition of good argument.


In this paper we argue that while a full-blown virtue-theoretical account of argumentation is implausible, there is scope for augmenting a conventional account of argument by taking a character-oriented turn. We then discuss the characteristics of the good epistemic citizen, and consider approaches to nurturing these characteristics in critical thinking students, in the hope of addressing the problem of lack of transfer of critical thinking skills to the world outside the classroom.

In this paper we suggest that a virtues-oriented approach to teaching critical thinking has the potential to help bridge the transfer gap. If critical thinking skills are not sticking, perhaps that is at least in part because students lack certain intellectual virtues or dispositions toward conscientious inquiry. We conclude with some suggestions about how these virtues might be fostered in the context of a first-year undergraduate critical thinking course.


In previous work we have outlined a distinction between three kinds of intellectual virtues: cognitive, regulatory, and motivational. In the first part of this paper we outline this distinction. Using it as a framework for analysis, we develop some case studies through which we consider which of those characteristics are most crucial to inquiring responsibly when occupying particular roles in professional and personal lives. We then consider possible impediments to acquiring and exercising those intellectual virtues.


Dewey defines open-mindedness as “freedom from prejudice, partisanship, and other such habits as close the mind and make it unwilling to consider new problems and entertain new ideas” (1910, p. 30). It is commonly included in lists of epistemic and argumentative virtues. We begin this paper with brief discussion of various accounts of open-mindedness. Our principal interest is in what it is to behave as an open-minded enquirer. Drawing on two cases, we consider whether open-minded behaviour varies between the contexts of solitary and community enquiry and whether inquirers face different challenges to behaving open-mindedly in each of these contexts. We conclude that although group deliberation introduces some extra barriers to open-mindedness, it can also make it easier to achieve by providing an external check that is absent in solitary inquiry.


According to virtue argumentation theorists, virtues displayed by the arguer are constitutive of good argument. In earlier work we raise some problems for this approach, but as Paglieri points out, our objections presuppose a view of what argument is, and what good argument is, not accepted by virtue theorists. Here we first clarify our position. Then, prompted by Paglieri and Aberdeen, we step back from this particular debate to consider more general questions it raises.


In Aristotle’s Rhetoric, logos must be conceived as enthymematic argumentation relative to the issue of the case. Ethos and pathos also can take the form of an enthymeme, but this argumentation doesn’t relate (directly) to the issue. In this kind of enthymeme, the conclusion is relative to the ethos of the speaker or (reasons for) the pathos of the audience. In an ideal situation—with a good procedure and rational judges—logos dominates and in the real situation of Aristotle’s time—with an imperfect procedure and irrational judges—ethos and pathos prevail.


Contemporary argumentation theory has developed an impressive array of norms, goals and virtues applicable to ideal argument. But what is the moral status of these prescriptions? Is an interlocutor who fails to live up to these norms guilty of a moral failing as well as an epistemic or cognitive error? If so, why? In answering these questions, I argue that deliberation’s epistemic and cognitive goods attach to important ethical goods, and that respect for others’ rationality, the ethics of joint action, and the importance of consensus join forces with these goods to provide strong reasons for cleaving to high standards of argument. I sketch an illustrative continuum of argument practices of different deliberative-cum-ethical standards, and consider how one should ethically respond when faced with an interlocutor employing less than ideal standards.


Examines the theoretical underpinnings of the debate on the transferability of critical thinking skills and discusses methods of fostering critical thinking in the classroom. The foremost task in teaching critical thinking is fostering in students habits of inquiry which lead to a disposition to seek intellectual, moral, and social integration.


There are at least three possible readings of the vir bonus doctrine in Book XII, and it seems clear that Quintilian intends all three: (1) an orator ought to be good; (2) an orator will be effective only if good; (3) an orator is good as a matter of definition. The remainder of this essay will be devoted to an examination of each of these three, in turn, with some emphasis on connections between the second and third and Platonism.


There has been extended discussion of “ethical proof” by recent speech theorists; but it has for the most part centered around diluted conceptions of ¤θος and focused almost exclusively on empirical questions. It is the question of the nature of the appeal to ¤θος as a form of argument which is the subject of the present essay. Our discussion will begin with Aristotle’s conception of “ethical proof” in the Art of Rhetoric, but will then turn to the Nicomachean Ethics for a fuller conception of ¤θος and for materials which will be sufficient for a more adequate account of its role in argument, with a view toward its justification. We will then
turn to some actual uses of ἵθος in reasoning by Seneca and other Stoics. Finally, we will consider briefly the role of ἵθος in wider contexts of argumentation.


When the logician proclaims triumphantl, as a result of the way he orders his premises, that Socrates is mortal, he does not need to know anything about himself or his respondents (except that they are “rational” and will follow the rules) to know the conclusion is entailed by the premises. But when an arguer maintains a philosophic position, a scientific theory, or a political policy—in short, any substantive proposition—the coarguer’s response may be influenced by who he is, who the arguer is, and what their relationship is. Perhaps as good a way as any to distinguish the study of logic from the study of argument is to understand that logicians can safely ignore the influence of people on the transaction; arguer cannot.


In section I, I argue that the current epistemic environment of liberal democracies – especially the one found on social media – is not conducive to good democratic decision-making by identifying three distinct threats that relate to their use: epistemic bubbles, echo chambers and misinformation. Section II argues that the acquisition of a set of four intellectual virtues – open-mindedness, intellectual caution, intellectual courage and intellectual humility – is a partial remedy to these epistemic threats. It also sketches pedagogical strategies that can facilitate the acquisition of such virtues in the classroom. Finally, section III discusses two possible justifications for the inclusion of intellectual virtues in school curricula. While the most straightforward way to justify this claim is on intellectually perfectionist grounds, I contend that individuals who reject intellectual perfectionism can still support the teaching of intellectual virtues for properly democratic reasons.


Starting as a reaction to the dominant ideology, [political correctness] has become the dominant ideology. It defines the terms and parameters of any national debate. Anything that is not PC is automatically condemned. Across much of the public sphere, it has replaced reason with emotion, subordinating objective truth to subjective virtue.


The aim of the paper is to explore the interrelation between persuasion tactics and properties of speech acts. We investigate two types of arguments ad: ad hominem and ad baculum. We show that with both of these tactics, the structures that play a key role are not inferential, but rather ethotic, i.e., related to the speaker’s character and trust. We use the concepts of illocutionary force and constitutive conditions related to the character or status of the speaker in order to explain the dynamics of these two techniques. In keeping with the research focus of the Polish School of Argumentation, we examine how the pragmatic and rhetorical aspects of the force of ad hominem and ad baculum arguments exploit trust in the speaker’s status to influence the audience’s cognition.


Becoming a reasonable thinker and actor has a central place among our educational aims. Whatever else we might want students to become, most accounts of education include the desire to foster in them the habits of thought of a reasonable, reflective, open-minded person. Debates, however, arise over three issues: first, exactly what becoming “rational” or “reasonable” entails; second, how best to pursue that aim; and third, what other educational aims we might hold, and how they relate to or conflict with that goal. In this paper I want to sketch some answers to these issues and suggest a defensible conception of “reasonableness” as an educational aim.


Introductory-level undergraduate classes in Logic or Critical Thinking are a staple in the portfolio of many Philosophy programs. A standard approach to these classes is to include teaching and learning activities focused on formal deductive and inductive logic, sometimes accompanied by teaching and learning activities focused on informal fallacies or argument construction. In this article, I discuss a proposal to include an additional element within these classes—namely, teaching and learning activities focused on intellectual virtues. After clarifying the proposal, I identify three reasons in favor of implementing it and I discuss how to implement it, focusing on questions about pedagogical strategies and pedagogical resources.


The decline of civility has increasingly become the subject of lament both in popular media and in daily conversation. Civility forestalls the potential unpleasantness of a life with other people. Without it, daily social exchanges can turn nasty and sometimes hazardous. Civility thus seems to be a basic virtue of social life. Moral philosophers, however, do not typically mention civility in their catalogues or examples of virtue. In what follows, I want to suggest that civility is a particularly interesting virtue for moral philosophers because giving an adequate account of the virtue of civility requires us to rethink the relationship between moral virtue and compliance with social norms.

The theoretical possibility of deep disagreement gives rise to an important practical problem: a deep disagreement may in practice look and feel like a merely stubborn normal disagreement. In this paper I critique two strategies for dealing with this practical problem. According to their proponents these strategies exhibit argumentative virtue, but I will show that they embody serious argumentative (and even moral) vices. I will close by outlining several genuinely virtuous approaches to the problem.


The concept of deep disagreement is useful for highlighting skills and resources required for reasons-giving to be effective in restoring cooperative or joint action. It marks a limit. When it is instead understood as a challenge to be overcome by using reasons, it leads to significant practical, theoretical, and moral distortions.


How should we respond when someone challenges the very norms we assume when evaluating arguments? I challenge a widely-accepted dogmatist answer according to which we can justly assert or rely on foundational norms or principles even when we know our interlocutors reject them. I go on to develop a virtue-theoretic approach to argumentation, highlighting the central role played by open-mindedness and related virtues in distinguishing good from bad arguments. The resulting theory elucidates the pragmatic nature of argumentative circularity, offers normative guidance for those looking to improve their discursive behavior, and makes some progress towards resolving ongoing debates over the proper response to peer disagreement.


Vices of distrust are dangerous in their own right, and in ways that often harm others along with oneself. The three vices of distrust we want to explore—with a particular focus on their manifestations online—are: close-mindedness, emulation, and arrogance. Each contributes to vicious distrust in its own distinctive way.


Some argue that adversariality is extraneous to the core concept of argument. I argue that if we take argument to be about beliefs, rather than commitments, then two considerations show that adversariality is an essential part of it. First, beliefs are not under our direct voluntary control. Second, beliefs are costly both for the psychological states they provoke and for the fact that they are causally related to our actions.


Despite objections, the argument-as-war metaphor remains conceptually useful for organizing our thoughts on argumentation into a coherent whole. More significantly, it continues to reveal unattended aspects of argumentation worthy of theorizing. One such aspect is whether it is possible to argue heroically, where difficulty or peril preclude any obligation to argue, but to do so would be meritorious if not indeed glorious.


Any attempt to regulate how prosecutors should “act” in certain highly contextualized and nuanced situations by developing more specific normative rules is unworkable. Prosecutorial discretion would be better constrained in these areas by focusing on what type of character traits prosecutors should possess or strive to acquire. Only after we answer the critical preliminary question of who we want our public prosecutors to “be” can we possibly hope to discern what we expect our prosecutors to “do.” In the concluding Part of the Article, I will demonstrate that a renewed emphasis on character and virtue has direct implications for how prosecutor’s offices should be structured and organized in this country, and how individual prosecutors working within these offices should aspire to conduct their professional lives.


What qualities do we need in order to be good philosophers? Wittgenstein insists that virtues of character—such as honesty, humility, courage, and strength—are more important for our philosophizing than the relevant intellectual talents and skills. These virtues are essential because doing good philosophy demands both knowing and overcoming the deep-seated desires and inclinations which lead us astray in our thinking, and achieving such self-knowledge and self-overcoming demands all of these virtues working in concert. In this paper I draw together many of Wittgenstein’s seemingly offhanded remarks on these issues in order to re-construct his understanding of philosophy’s ‘difficulties of the will’ and the virtues needed to overcome them.


Michael Gilbert argues that Cartesian reasoning defined as rational, linear thought processes preclusive of emotions, intuitions and lived experience, i.e., “Natural Light Theory” (NLT), fails because it arbitrarily excludes standard feminine forms of reasoning and neglects the essentially social nature of argumentation. In this paper, I supplement Gilbert’s view by showing that NLT fails in a distinctive manner in moral argumentation contexts. Specifically, by requiring arguers to value truth and justice above their relationship with their argumentative partner, it tends to alienate the arguer from her moral motives, engendering a kind of moral schizophrenia.
A persuasive argument is one that responds to the concerns and priorities of the particular person one is trying to persuade, one that resonates with his or her worldview and self-understanding. On this account, when we persuade we have done more than offer a list of reasons for holding an opinion or taking an action. We have, whether consciously or not, evoked and appealed to some particular set of beliefs, concerns, and priorities. In the process, we may have done more than simply persuade that person on the issue at hand. We may also, whether intentionally or not, have helped to reinforce and entrench the particular “hierarchy of values” to which we have appealed.

I suggest that argument itself—including legal scholarship, law teaching, political rhetoric, and public policy advocacy—is also potentially constitutive. Moreover, I would suggest that the ways in which we argue, and in particular the assumptions on which we base our arguments, are potentially constitutive not just of particular norms, but of something arguably deeper. What we let or make matter in our collective conversation about law and policy may help construct our sense of what matters in life. And what we let matter in our lives determines to some extent our capacity to thrive—to live full and productive lives.

Legal speech and religious speech inevitably do some of the same work. Both are vehicles through which we both talk about and become the kind of people we are. Granted, those of us who teach and argue about the law do not often conceive of our work in this way. That is part of what I hope to begin to remedy in this essay. While the construction of character is a more obvious aspect of religious than legal thought, law, including legal argument, can be constitutive in similar ways. If so—if our ways of talking about the law serve some of the same ends as do our ways of talking about religion—then we may be able to learn how better to talk about the law by thinking about how we talk about religion. I do not mean things like paragraph structure or argument organization or the proper use of headings, but rather something more subtle and more fundamental. One way to put it is this: legal speech can learn from religious speech how to be less small, and perhaps more ennobling.

I hope here to highlight a set of concerns about the impact of our speech that are deeper than mere civility or even honesty. Following Socrates, I suggest that the way we speak, particularly when we seek to persuade, can play a role in forming the character of our listeners. Arguments are, in that sense, potentially constitutive. As Socrates describes and demonstrates, how we speak to people can influence how they think about themselves and their world. And that in turn can influence whether and how they thrive.

It is a virtue of virtue theory approaches to argumentation that they integrate many of the different factors that make arguments good arguments. The insights of virtue argumentation are brought to bear on a variety of versions of the requirement that good arguments must have good premises, concluding that a sincerity condition serves better than truth or assertability conditions, despite apparently counterintuitive consequences for arguments involving heterogeneous coalitions.

VE has had great success: broadening our perspective, providing new answers to traditional questions, and raising exciting new questions. I offer a new argument for VE based on the concept of cognitive achievements, a broader notion than purely epistemic achievements. The argument is then extended to cognitive transformations, especially the cognitive transformations brought about by argumentation.

Categoricity of versions of the requirement that good arguments must have good premises, concluding that a sincerity condition serves better than truth or assertability conditions, despite apparently counterintuitive consequences for arguments involving heterogeneous coalitions.

If arguing is a game that philosophers play, then it’s a rigged game. Although many theories of argumentation explicitly connect argumentation with reason, rationality, and knowledge, it contains certain built-in biases against knowledge and towards skepticism. Argumentation’s skeptical biases can be put into three categories: those built into the rules of play, those embedded in the skills for playing, and finally some connected to the decision to play. Three ancient philosophers from different traditions serve exemplifying case studies: the Middle Way Buddhist Nagarjuna, the Greek Pyrrhonian Sextus Empiricus, and the Chinese Taoist Zhuangzi. They have very different argumentation styles and they reach very different kinds of skepticism, but in each case, there is an organic connection between their argumentation and their skepticism: Nagarjuna produced arguments for the Truth of No Truth; Sextus generated strategies for counter-argumentation; while Zhuangzi deftly avoided all direct argumentation—in an implicit argument against arguing. I conclude that Virtue Argumentation Theory, with its focus on arguers and their skills, provides the best lens for understanding the lessons to be learned about argumentation and skepticism from this idiosyncratic trio.

Virtue-based approaches to epistemology have enjoyed notable success recently, making valuable contributions to long-standing debates. In this paper, I argue, that many of the results from Virtue Epistemology (VE) can be carried over into the arena of argumentation theory, but also that a virtue-based approach is actually better suited for argumentation than it is for justification. First, some of the unresolved challenges for VE, such as the limitations of voluntarism with respect to beliefs, do not have counterparts in argumentation. Second, a virtue-based approach is actually better suited for argumentation than it is for justification. Third, because virtue-based approaches shift in focus from products and processes to agents, and arguments are essentially inter-agent transactions, important new questions come into focus, along with signposts leading to their resolution. Questions about different roles in argument (protagonists, antagonists, judges, spectators) and the virtues needed for each, come into focus, as do questions about when, why and with whom to argue, which often get lost in the shadow of the primary question, how we should argue. Finally, two specific virtues—open-mindedness and a sense of proportion—are offered as test cases for Virtue Argumentation Theory.

I begin by noting three attractive features of—perhaps even compelling reasons for—virtue argumentation theories. I then consider some objections that have been raised to such approaches, one concerning virtue approaches in epistemology and a set of related objections directed at the specific project of integrating the aforementioned senses of “good argument.” Together, the reasons for and the objections against VAT focus and finalize the discussion on three interconnected concepts: good arguments, good arguers, and good arguing—leading to yet a third argument for the virtue approach, viz. that there is an integrated and holistic conception of good argument that escapes traditional approaches to argument evaluation and that requires its own special virtues.


If arguing is a game that philosophers play, then it’s a rigged game. Although many theories of argumentation explicitly connect argumentation with reason, rationality, and knowledge, it contains certain built-in biases against knowledge and towards skepticism. Argumentation’s skeptical biases can be put into three categories: those built into the rules of play, those embedded in the skills for playing, and finally some connected to the decision to play. Three ancient philosophers from different traditions serve exemplifying case studies: the Middle Way Buddhist Nagarjuna, the Greek Pyrrhonian Sextus Empiricus, and the Chinese Taoist Zhuangzi. They have very different argumentation styles and they reach very different kinds of skepticism, but in each case, there is an organic connection between their argumentation and their skepticism: Nagarjuna produced arguments for the Truth of No Truth; Sextus generated strategies for counter-argumentation; while Zhuangzi deftly avoided all direct argumentation—in an implicit argument against arguing. I conclude that Virtue Argumentation Theory, with its focus on arguers and their skills, provides the best lens for understanding the lessons to be learned about argumentation and skepticism from this idiosyncratic trio.

Virtue argumentation theory provides the best framework for accommodating the notion of an argument that is “fully satisfying” in a robust and integrated sense. The process of explicating the notion of fully satisfying arguments requires expanding the concept of arguers to include all of an argument’s participants, including judges, juries, and interested spectators. And that, in turn, requires expanding the concept of an argument itself to include its entire context.


Why do we argue? To out-reason our opponents, prove them wrong, and, most of all, to win! ... Right? Philosopher Daniel H. Cohen shows how our most common form of argument—a war in which one person must win and the other must lose—misses out on the real benefits of engaging in active disagreement.


Why do we hold arguments culpable for missing obvious objections against their arguments but not for missing obvious lines of reasoning for their positions? In both cases, their arguments are not as strong as they could be. Two factors cause this: adversarial models of argumentation and the permeable boundaries separating argumentation, meta-argumentation, and argument evaluation. Strategic considerations and dialectical obligations partially justify the asymmetry; virtue argumentation theory explains when and why it is not justified.

Data from neuroscience suggest that, contrary to the conference theme, argumentation and reasoning are not the main vehicles for our decisions and actions. They are “five wheels” on those vehicles: ornate but ineffective appendages whose maintenance costs exceed their contributions. Although the data, their interpretations, and their putative implications all deserve challenge, this paper explores how to accept and incorporate these findings into a coherent view of what we do when we reason.

Technology has made argumentation rampant. We can argue whenever we want. With social media venues for every interest, we can also argue about whatever we want. To some extent, we can select our opponents and audiences to argue with whenever we want. And we can argue however we want, whether in carefully reasoned, article-length expositions, real-time exchanges, or 140-character polemics. The concepts of arguing, arguing well, and even being an arguer have evolved with this new multiplicity and diversity; theory needs to catch up to the new reality. Successful strategies for traditional contexts may be counterproductive in new ones; classical argumentative virtues may be liabilities in new situations. There are new complications to the theorist’s standard questions – What is an argument? and Who is an arguer? – while new ones move into the spotlight – Should we argue at all? and If so, why? Agent-based virtue argumentation theory provides a unifying framework for this radical plurality by coordinated redefinitions of the concepts of good arguers and good arguments. It remains true that good arguers contribute to good arguments, and good arguments satisfy good arguers, but the new diversity strains the old unity. Ironically, a unifying factor is provided by examining those paragons of bad arguers, argument trolls whose contributions to arguments are not very good, not really contributions, and, ultimately, not genuine argumentation.

Psychological and neuroscientific data suggest that a great deal, perhaps even most, of our reasoning turns out to be rationalizing. The reasons we give for our positions are seldom either the real reasons or the effective causes of why we have those positions. We are not as rational as we like to think. A second, no less disheartening observation is that while we may be very effective when it comes to giving reasons, we are not that good at getting reasons. We are not as reasons-responsive as we like to think. Reasoning and argumentation are, on this view, charades without effect. This paper begins by identifying a range of theoretical responses to the idea that reasoning and argumentation have little casual role in our thoughts and actions, and, consequently, that humans are not the reasons-giving, reasons-responsive agents that we imagine ourselves to be. The responses fall into three categories: challenging the data and their interpretations; making peace with the loss of autonomy that is implied; and seeking ways to expand the causal footprint of reasoning and argumentation, e.g., by developing argumentative virtues. There are indeed possibilities for becoming more rational and more reasons-responsive, so the reports of our demise as the rational animal are greatly exaggerated.

Argumentation theory often focuses very narrowly on a very narrow conception of arguments, but some aspects of argumentation need a broader backdrop than the study of discrete arguments affords. Much of what makes argumentation important occurs before and after arguers engage. This paper examines the category of “inter-argument argumentative virtues” that are characteristic of good arguers when they are preparing for and processing arguments rather than actively arguing.

Argumentation theory misses: The case of empathetic argumentation. *Topoi*, 35(2):451–460, 2016. While deductive validity provides the limiting upper bound for evaluating the strength and quality of inferences, by itself it is an inadequate tool for evaluating arguments, arguing, and argumentation. Similar remarks can be made about rhetorical success and dialectical closure. Then what would count as ideal argumentation? In this paper we introduce the concept of cognitive compathy to point in the direction of one way to answer that question. It is a feature of our argumentation rather than my argument or your argument. In that respect, compathy is like the harmonies achieved by an accomplished choir, the spontaneous coordination of athletic teamwork, or the experience of improvising jazz musicians when they are all in the
flow together. It is a characteristic of arguments, not a virtue that can be attributed to individual arguers. It makes argumentation more than just the sum of its individual parts. The concept of cognitive compathy is brought into focus by locating it at the confluence of two lines of thought. First, we work up to the concept of compathy by contrasting it with empathy and sympathy in the context of emotions, which is then transplanted into epistemic, cognitive, and argumentative soil. Second, the concept is analytically linked to ideal argumentation by way of authenticity in communication. In the final section, we explore the extent to which argumentative virtues are conducive to producing compathetic argumentation, but reach the unhappy conclusion that the extra value of compathetic argumentation also transcends the evaluative reach of virtue argumentation theory.


How is it possible that biases are cognitive vices, objectivity is an exemplary intellectual virtue, but objectivity is itself a bias? We argue that objectivity is indeed a bias but an argumentative virtue nonetheless. Using courtroom argumentation as a case study, we analyze and explain objectivity’s contextually variable value. The conclusions from this study ground a response to recent criticisms from Goddu and Godden regarding the conceptual foundations of virtue-based approaches to argumentation.

[136] Daniel H. Cohen & Katharina Stevens. Why devil’s advocates are the angels of argumentation, 2019. Presented at 3rd European Conference on Argumentation, Groningen, The Netherlands. Is argumentation essentially adversarial? The concept of a devil’s advocate — a cooperative arguer who assumes the role of an opponent for the sake of the argument — serves as a lens to bring into clearer focus the ways that adversarial arguers can be virtuous and adversariness itself can contribute to argumentation’s goals. It also shows the different ways arguments can be adversarial and the different ways that argumentation can be said to be “essentially” adversarial.


My topic is an issue in the individuation and epistemology of fallacious inferences. My thesis is that there are instances of reasoning that are fallacious not in themselves, that are not intrinsically fallacious, but are fallacious only relative to particular reasoning agents. This seems like a peculiar notion. It would seem that if it was fallacious for you to reason a certain way, and I do the same thing, I would be committing a fallacy as well. But actually reasoning is bad reasoning, no matter who is doing it. But it is useful to ask: What would it take for it to be possible for there to be such a thing as an agent-relative fallacy? Here are two sets of conditions, the obtaining of either of which would be sufficient for the existence of agent-relative, or extrinsic, fallacies. Type One is that there are two agents who are intrinsically alike, molecule-for-molecule doppelgangers, one of whom is reasoning fallaciously while the other is not, due to differences in their respective environments. The other scenario, Type Two, is that there are two agents (who are not doppelgangers) who engage in intrinsically identical instances of reasoning, one of whom reasons fallaciously while the other does not, due to differences located elsewhere in their minds that affect the epistemic status of their respective inferences. I will attempt to demonstrate that it is at least possible for agents to meet either set of conditions, and that in fact some people do meet the Type Two conditions, so agent-relative fallacies are not only possible, but actual.


Recent theorists have tended to deprecate the role of rhetoric in constructing public morality, and have resorted to “privatized” models of morality. This essay outlines weaknesses in the foundational metaphors of that position and offers a theory of the rhetorical crafting of public morality. Morality is described as humanly generated, objectively constrained, and contingent. The theory is illustrated and substantiated by a description of the public moral struggle over moral justice for Afro-Americans.


The pedagogy of virtue has identified certain specific habits of intellect and will which characterize human flourishing. In the intellectual realm, virtue theory traditionally distinguishes between speculative and practical virtues. The speculative virtues are those habits of thought which permit the intellect to pursue truth for its own sake. The practical virtues are those habits of mind which guide the intellect in pursuing knowledge for the sake of action.


In replying to Griffin’s critique, I would like to clarify my conception of the dynamics of assent within the context of critical thinking. I would also like to suggest a recent area in critical-thought literature where some resources for a more affirmative concept of critical inquiry have emerged. This is the resurgence of virtue theory in the description of the poetic agent committed to the process of critical scrutiny.


Norms—that is, specifications of what we ought to do—play a critical role in the study of informal argumentation, as they do in studies of judgment, decision-making and reasoning more generally. Specifically, they guide a recurring theme: are people rational? Though rules and standards have been central to the study of reasoning, and behavior more generally, there has been little discussion within psychology about why (or indeed if) they should be considered normative despite the considerable philosophical literature that bears on
this topic. In the current paper, we ask what makes something a norm, with consideration both of norms in general and a specific example: norms for informal argumentation. We conclude that it is both possible and desirable to invoke norms for rational argument, and that a Bayesian approach provides solid normative principles with which to do so.


Normative theories of argumentation tend to assume that logical and dialectical rules suffice to ensure the rationality of debates. Yet empirical research on human inference shows that people systematically fall prey to cognitive and motivational biases which give rise to various forms of irrational reasoning. Inasmuch as these biases are typically unconscious, arguers can be unfair and tendentious despite their genuine efforts to follow the rules of argumentation. I argue that arguers remain nevertheless responsible for the rationality of their reasoning, insofar as they can (and arguably ought to) counteract such biases by adopting indirect strategies of argumentative self-control.


This paper sought to elucidate the problem of how goals and emotions can influence people’s reasoning in everyday-life debates. By distinguishing between three categories of motivational biases, we were able to show that arguers tend to engage in different forms of fallacious reasoning depending on the type of motive that underlies their tendentiousness. We have examined some plausible connections between certain types of biases and certain types of fallacies, but many other correlations could be found.


This article argues that debiasing techniques meant to reduce biases in argumentation and decision-making are more effective if they rely on environmental constraints, rather than on cognitive improvements. I identify the four main factors that account for the inefficiency of critical thinking with regard to debiasing and claim that extra-psyche strategies are more reliable tools for counteracting biases in contexts of uncertainty. Finally, I examine several examples of debiasing strategies that involve contextual change.


While there is growing consensus over the need to counteract biases in contexts of argumentation and decision-making, researchers disagree over which debiasing techniques are likely to be most effective. I attempt to show that contextual debiasing is more effective than cognitive debiasing in preventing biases, although I challenge the claim that critical thinking is utterly ineffective. In addition, a distinction is introduced between two types of contextual debiasing: situational correction, and dispositional correction. Drawing on empirical work on accountability, I argue that the later type of correction is more likely to prove effective against biases in everyday contexts. Holding arguers accountable is a contextual constraint that has the virtue of also enhancing cognitive skills and virtues.


In this article I argue that most biases in argumentation and decision-making can and should be counteracted. Although biases can prove beneficial in certain contexts, I contend that they are generally maladaptive and need correction. Yet critical thinking alone seems insufficient to mitigate biases in everyday contexts. I develop a contextualist approach, according to which cognitive debiasing strategies need to be supplemented by extrapsychic devices that rely on social and environmental constraints in order to promote rational reasoning. Finally, I examine several examples of contextual debiasing strategies and show how they can contribute to enhance critical thinking at a cognitive level.


The problem I address is: how are cogent inferences possible? In §1 I distinguish three senses in which we say that one is “compelled” by an inference: automatic, seductive-rhetorical and epistemic compulsion. Cogency (in my sense) is epistemic compulsion: a cogent inference compels us to accept its conclusion, if we accept its premises and we aim at truth. In §§2–3 I argue that cogency is intelligible if we consider an inference as a compound linguistic act in which several component acts (assertions and hypotheses) are related to one another by a commitment that the premises support the conclusion. Non-automatic inferences are primarily public acts in an intersubjective context. But cogency arises in special contexts described in §4, epistemic contexts, where the participants care for truth, i.e. are intellectually virtuous. An inference is cogent in an epistemic context if it stands up to all the objections raised in the context. In §5 I consider three different kinds of cogent inferences. In §6 I argue that in all three cases cogency is fallible and propose a fallibilist variety of inferentialism. In §7 I distinguish context of utterance and contexts of evaluation. Cogency is relative to epistemic contexts of evaluation. However, validity, i.e. stable cogency, is transcontextual.


Is open-mindedness a moral virtue? Surprisingly, this question has not received much attention from philosophers. In this paper, we fill this lacuna by arguing that there are good grounds for thinking that it is. In particular, we show that the extant account of open-mindedness as a moral virtue faces an objection that appears to show that exercising the character trait may not be virtuous. To offset this objection, we argue that a much stronger argument can be made for the case that open-mindedness is a moral virtue by appealing to the notion of moral understanding. Specifically, we provide a new rationale as to why we should exercise open-mindedness and offer several arguments to allay the concern that
doing so can at times cause us to be in an epistemically and morally weaker position.


Two prominent features of the current educational-theoretical landscape are the mountains of literature on critical thinking and on moral education. Between them lies a fertile wilderness, where the streams fed by those mighty sources vanish in a lusty tangle of confusion. Those who sit on the mountains above look across with suspicion, and are hesitant to descend from the security of the high ground and meet each other below in the darkness of a jungle floor where friends and enemies may be hard to distinguish. From the vantage point of these heights it is not easy to detect, through the overgrowth of supposition and forgetting, the paths of previous expeditions and the neglected remnants of their outposts, the bodies of thought once laid out so carefully, lying long since in a vegetative state. Little notice is taken, and not much made, of the fact that the dominant aim of higher education, from its birth in fifth-century Athens onward, was good judgment (phronesis), which was understood to be a product of both virtue and reason and the consummation of both.


Based on an examination of Josina Makau and De- bian Marty’s *Cooperative Argumentation*, and James Crosswhite’s *The Rhetoric of Reason*, this essay identifies concepts and premises central to a dialogical argumentation theory and argues that that theory may be further developed by concepts and principles from Ivan Boszormenyi-Nagy’s contextual theory, a theory based on Martin Buber’s philosophical anthropology. The paper begins by identifying central concepts and premises of the emerging dialogical argumentation theory, develops the resultant model of dialogical argumentation in light of concepts from contextual theory, and concludes with a discussion of the implications of the relational-ethical view of argument for argumentation and rhetorical studies.


Philosophers often seek the truth through methods taught under the banner “Critical thinking”. For most, some variation on this method is used to organize thoughts and filter away subjectivity and biases. Feminist philosophers have highlighted a critical set of shortcomings within such methods that are yet to be fully addressed. In this paper, we explore these critiques and how they can be mitigated by incorporating elements from critical pedagogy and dispositional thinkers. The result is a set of recommendations for improved critical thinking methods which better account for contextualized bias while also more accurately tracking the truth.


The central topic of this brief study is the linguistic-discursive creation of ethos in rhetorical and argumentative texts. In order to understand why ethos plays a fundamental role in those text types it seems necessary to first discuss the very notions of rhetoric and argumentation. The main goal of rhetorical and/or argumentative texts is persuasion. For this reason it also has to be clarified how persuasion works in those text types. After that we will look at the topic of ethos from various points of view: ethos beside pathos and logos as one of the key elements of rhetoric; Aristotle’s classification of the constituents of ethos into phronesis, eunoia, and arête; ethos seen almost as a mask in the Jungian sense; the distinction between ethos as a discursive phenomenon and ethos as a prediscursive phenomenon; the role of topoi and doxa in the construction of ethos and finally the differentiation between rhetorical argumentation and linguistic argumentation, the latter of which being of particular interest for our applied analysis. In that final part we will eventually analyze a few exemplary morphosyntactic structures which in a way create the speaker’s ethical portrait or, to put it differently, which discursively construct the speaker’s ethos. The speeches we will draw upon were delivered by Mussolini between 1921 and 1941.


This paper employs mixed methods, namely, corpus linguistic and rhetorical analysis methods, to examine Confucius’s theory on language, persuasion, and virtue as reflected in the Analects. The triangulation of methods allows in-depth analysis of Confucius’s use of key concepts surrounding the language–virtue relationship and the way these concepts operate in different levels of persuasion. The study shows Confucius’s theory as a virtue-centered rhetoric. For him, virtuous conduct, rather than artful words, should be employed as the primary persuasive tool.


Many French-speaking approaches to argumentation are deeply rooted in a linguistic background. Hence, they “naturally” tend to adopt a descriptive stance on argumentation. This is why the issue of “the virtues of argumentation”—and, specifically, the question of what makes an argument virtuous—is not central to them. The argumentative norms issue nevertheless cannot be discarded, as it obviously is crucial to arguers themselves: the latter often behave as if they were invested with some kind of argumentative policing duty when involved in dissensual exchanges. We describe several researches developing a descriptive approach to such ordinary argumentative policing: we claim that the virtues of argumentation may be an issue even for an amoral analyst. We will connect this issue with linguistic remarks on the lexicon of refutation in English and in French.

Argumentation virtue theory is a new field in argumentation studies. As in the case of virtue ethics and virtue epistemology, the study of virtue argumentation draws its inspiration from the works of Aristotle. First, I discuss the specifics of the argumentational virtues and suggest that they have an instrumental nature, modeled on the relation between the Aristotelian intellectual virtue of ‘practical wisdom’ and the moral virtues. Then, inspired by Aristotle’s discussion of *akrasia*, I suggest that a theory of fallacy in argumentation virtue theory can be built upon the concept of ‘incontinence’.


In my paper I aim to present a possible approach to the theory of fallacy specific to virtue argumentation theory. This shall be done employing conceptual pairs as virtue/vice or incontinence, and illustrated by means of Aristotelian practical syllogisms. Based on these considerations I will then focus on two topics: 1. the possibility of a causal relation between incontinence and vice; 2. the difference between sophisms and paralogisms from the perspective of virtue argumentation.


The purpose of the present paper is to sketch the possibility of an audience theory specific to virtue argumentation taking as a starting point what Aristotle has to say about political audiences in the context of specific political constitutions and building on insights offered by the New Rhetoric argumentation theory of Chaîm Perelman and Lucie Obleherts-Tyteca and the responsibilist virtue epistemology of Linda Trinkaus Zagzebski.


In response to Lawrence Solum’s advocacy of a ‘virtue-centred theory of judging’, I argue that there is indeed important work to be done in identifying and characterising those qualities of character that constitute judicial virtues—those qualities that a person needs if she is to judge well (though I criticise Solum’s account of one of the five pairs of judicial vices and virtues that he identifies—avarice and temperance). However, Solum’s more ambitious claims—that a judge’s vice necessarily corrupts her decisions, and that in at least some contexts we must define a legally correct decision as one that would be reached by a virtuous judge—should be rejected: we can undermine the former by attending to the requirements of due process, and the latter by attending to the ways in which a judge would try to justify her decision.


The Rush Limbaugh debate and other examples of political incivility point to the need for the kind of instruction offered in many first-year writing courses, writes John Duffy.


In this paper, I will argue that to teach writing is by definition to teach ethics; more specifically it is to teach what I will call “ethical dispositions,” or the communicative practices of honesty, accountability, compassion, intellectual courage, and others. I will propose that the teaching of writing is “always and already” the teaching of ethics, and that in the discourse of ethical dispositions we are offered a language through which we may tell the story of our discipline and effectively intervene in the conduct of public argument. I will conclude by suggesting that an engagement with what I am calling “ethical dispositions” may help us rediscover and perhaps recover an older, richer, more fully realized tradition of ethics that we have forgotten or purposefully discarded.


What does it mean to teach ethical discourse? How can we help students develop ethical habits of speech and writing? In the very brief time we have today, I’d like to consider toward that end three concepts, three ways of thinking about pedagogy of rhetorical ethics. And these concepts are *situation*, *exemplar*, and *dissensus*, or pronounced disagreement within groups of people.


Whether or not the concept of virtue will find a place in Writing Studies remains to be seen. I have tried to suggest that it provides a language for thinking about the ethics of rhetorical practice, and that it may offer us a way out of the bind alloys of our current dysfunctional discourse. But I think it finally does more than that. In the tradition of the virtues we find, or so it seems to me, the very telos or purpose of our work as teachers and scholars of writing: why we do what we do. Why do we care so deeply about the teaching of writing? Toward what ends do we work? What visions move and animate us?


I will attempt in this essay to address the following: ∗ What is “virtue”? “Virtue ethics”? What do we understand these terms to mean? How do we derive from these terms the concept of “rhetorical virtues”? ∗ Why virtue ethics for writing studies, and why now? What reasons—political, cultural, and rhetorical—suggest a disciplinary reconsideration of the virtues? ∗ Finally, what might a commitment to rhetorical virtues mean in the writing classroom? How might it shape teachers’ and students’ understandings of what it means to be a “good writer”?


When to be tolerant or intolerant, how to justify the decisions one makes, how to express these judgments in speech and writing, and finally what it means to be a tolerant speaker and writer in the intolerant rhetorical climate of the contemporary U.S.—these are among the lessons we teach each day, in different ways, in our rhetoric and writing courses. In teaching such lessons, we have the opportunity to make explicit, for our students and ourselves, the language of the impossible virtue of tolerance.
In *Provocations of Virtue*, John Duffy explores the indispensable role of writing teachers and scholars in countering the polarized, venomous “post-truth” character of contemporary public argument. Teachers of writing are uniquely positioned to address the crisis of public discourse because their work in the writing classroom is tied to the teaching of ethical language practices that are known to moral philosophers as “the virtues”—truthfulness, accountability, open-mindedness, generosity, and intellectual courage. Drawing upon Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* and the branch of philosophical inquiry known as “virtue ethics,” *Provocations of Virtue* calls for the reclamation of “rhetorical virtues” as a core function in the writing classroom. Duffy considers what these virtues actually are, how they might be taught, and whether they can prepare students to begin repairing the broken state of public argument. In the discourse of the virtues, teachers and scholars of writing are offered a common language and a shared narrative—a story that speaks to the inherent purpose of the writing class and to what is at stake in teaching writing in the twenty-first century. This book is a timely and historically significant contribution to the field and will be of major interest to scholars and administrators in writing studies, rhetoric, composition, and linguistics as well as philosophers and those exploring ethics.

**References**


In *Provocations of Virtue*, John Duffy explores the indispensable role of writing teachers and scholars in countering the polarized, venomous “post-truth” character of contemporary public argument. Teachers of writing are uniquely positioned to address the crisis of public discourse because their work in the writing classroom is tied to the teaching of ethical language practices that are known to moral philosophers as “the virtues”—truthfulness, accountability, open-mindedness, generosity, and intellectual courage. Drawing upon Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* and the branch of philosophical inquiry known as “virtue ethics,” *Provocations of Virtue* calls for the reclamation of “rhetorical virtues” as a core function in the writing classroom. Duffy considers what these virtues actually are, how they might be taught, and whether they can prepare students to begin repairing the broken state of public argument. In the discourse of the virtues, teachers and scholars of writing are offered a common language and a shared narrative—a story that speaks to the inherent purpose of the writing class and to what is at stake in teaching writing in the twenty-first century. This book is a timely and historically significant contribution to the field and will be of major interest to scholars and administrators in writing studies, rhetoric, composition, and linguistics as well as philosophers and those exploring ethics.

[166] **Matthew Duncombe.** Is the elenchus an example of virtuous adversariality?. 2017. Presented at Ninth European Congress of Analytic Philosophy (ECAP9), LMU Munich.


Most theorists agree that the ability to think critically is distinct from the disposition to do so. Many of us may have the ability to be critical thinkers, but unless we are consistently and internally motivated to think and reason this way, these abilities are effectively redundant. Such dispositions are both intellectual character traits, and dispositions to behave in certain ways. As such, the first step to understanding critical thinking requires us to develop an operationalized taxonomy of critical thinking dispositions. To avoid explicating these dispositions in abstracto, this article draws upon a murder trial in order to demonstrate the central role dispositions play in critical thinking.


Endorsing the character of allies and destroying credibility of opponents is a powerful tactic for persuading others, impacting how we see politicians and how we vote in elections, for example. Our previous work demonstrated that ethos supports and attacks use different language, we hypothesise that further distinctions should be made in order to better understand and implement ethic strategies which people use in real-life communication. In this paper, we use the Aristotelian concept of elements of ethos: practical wisdom, moral virtue and goodwill, to determine specific grounds on which speakers can be endorsed and criticized. We propose a classification of types of ethos supports and attacks which is empirically derived from our corpus. The manual classification obtains a reliable Cohen’s kappa $\kappa = 0.52$ and weighted $\kappa = 0.7$. Finally, we develop a pipeline to classify ethos supports and attacks into their types depending on whether endorsement or criticism is grounded in wisdom, virtue or goodwill. The automatic classification obtains a solid improvement of macro-averaged F1-score over the baseline of 10%, 25%, 9% for one vs all classification, and 16%, 18%, 10% for pairwise classification.


In my talk, I will develop a model for philosophical inquiry that I call ‘virtuous adversariality’, which is meant to be a response to critics from both sides [those who criticize and those who endorse adversariality in philosophy]. Its key feature is the idea that a certain form of adversariality, more specifically disagreement and debate, is indeed at the heart of philosophy, but that philosophical inquiry also has a strong cooperative, virtuous component which regulates and constrains the adversarial component. The main inspiration for this model comes from ancient Greek dialectic.


Argumentation is very often conceived as a form of battle; as the title of an influential piece by D. Cohen (1996) summarizes, ‘Argument is war... and war is hell!’ This conceptualization of argumentation, while still widely held, has also been forcefully criticized in particular by feminist writers. But if argumentation is not war, what is it then? In this talk, I explore alternative metaphors/conceptualizations for argumentation, as well as their implications for philosophical practice. I discuss in particular the well-known argumentation-as-therapy metaphor, and a novel argumentation-as-social-exchange metaphor, which I am currently developing.


In controversy as a method of decision making the validity of the conflicting cases can be enforced neither by the “club” of logic nor by the “club” of fact; instead it depends on the conscience and good will of the disputants and hence is neither more nor less than a matter of moral obligation on their part.


Beginning in his PhD program, and over a period of years in the 1960s, Richard Paul thoughtfully examined and deliberately critiqued existing theories of logic and reasoning. This laid the foundation for what was to become a long and splendid career of scholarship,
culminating in the reconstruction and enrichment of the theory of logic, of reasoning, and of critical reasoning. Paul took what was a very narrow conception of reasoning (still used widely among philosophers today), and broadened it to more accurately represent what in fact happens in human thinking when people reason. He captured the idea of universal intellectual standards by exploring standards typically used by skilled reasoners, and then assembling these standards into a constellation of ideas easily understandable by scholars attempting to reason at the highest levels within their fields, as well as by everyday persons. Recognizing the importance of placing ethics at the heart of a substantive conception of critical thinking, Paul cultivated and extensively developed the theory of intellectual virtues; early on Paul distinguished between what he termed strong sense (or ethical) critical thinking and weak sense (or unethical) critical thinking, and staunchly advocated for fostering critical thinking in the strong sense—in education and throughout society. Paul realized that, without intervention in egocentric and sociocentric tendencies, the mind was likely to miss pathologies in thinking. He revolutionized our conceptions of reasoning, of critical reasoning and of logic, and called into question both historical and contemporary conceptions of philosophy itself. Paul made it clear that neither metaphysics, nor formal logic, nor mathematical reasoning, nor informal logic, nor argumentation, nor any other individual subject could ever adequately guide the human mind through the myriad complexities it faces in dealing with the difficult problems of real life. Following the tradition of Socrates, Paul continually emphasized the importance of developing deep conceptual understandings based in foundational ideas and principles of analysis and critique and tested through the real living of one’s life. Paul’s work laid the groundwork for what may be termed first principles in critical thinking and for a legitimate field of critical thinking studies, a field which has yet to emerge due to a number of complex academic, social, and political barriers.


Assuming that critical thinking dispositions are at least as important as critical thinking abilities, Ennis examines the concept of critical thinking disposition and suggests some criteria for judging sets of them. He considers a leading approach to their analysis and offers as an alternative a simpler set, including the disposition to seek alternatives and be open to them. After examining some gender-bias and subject-specificity challenges to promoting critical thinking dispositions, he notes some difficulties involved in assessing critical thinking dispositions, and suggests an exploratory attempt to assess them.


The authors, all critical thinking teachers, have presented the results of a comparison of five possible ways to measure critical thinking, the fifth of which served as the criterion variable for judging the others. The ultimate goal is to have a valid critical thinking test to check the effectiveness of different approaches to teaching critical thinking.


Theorists have hypothesized that skill in critical thinking is positively correlated with the consistent internal motivation to think and that specific critical thinking skills are matched with specific critical thinking dispositions. If true, these assumptions suggest that a skill-focused curriculum would lead persons to be both willing and able to think. This essay presents a research-based expert consensus definition of critical thinking, argues that human dispositions are neither hidden nor unknowable, describes a scientific process of developing conventional testing tools to measure cognitive skills and human dispositions, and summarizes recent empirical research findings that explore the possible relationship of critical thinking skill and the consistent internal motivation, or disposition, to use that skill. Empirical studies indicate that for all practical purposes the hypothesized correlations are not evident. It would appear that effective teaching must include strategies for building intellectual character rather than relying exclusively on strengthening cognitive skills.


This essay describes the questions which shaped and continue to fuel Peter and Noreen Facione’s passionate involvement with critical thinking, its definition, measurement, training, and practical application to everyday decisions, big and small. In reflecting on their work they say “we have identified three groups of questions: those vexing, recurring questions that motivate us to explore critical thinking, those scholarly questions around which we organized our empirical and conceptual research, and those urgent practical questions which demand the development of applications and assessment solutions. We conclude with two recommendations for the consideration of all those who value fair-minded, well-reasoned, reflective decision making.”


This essay reintroduces Rhetoric as the principle art for giving emphasis and importance to contested matters; in other words, for making things matter. In a speculative reading of the Aristotelian rhetorical tradition, Aristotle’s interpretations of magnitude, contingency
and practical wisdom are critically examined from both an aesthetic and an ethical-political point of view. The concluding discussion attempts to apply these same concepts to a growing dilemma in the present age. The dilemma is that monumental changes in scale have all but eroded the prospects for engaged encounters with contemporary contingency. It remains the challenge of rhetorical practice to reframe actions and events so that they and we may hold some hope for an engaged civic life.


Integrating insights from the Ancient Greeks (e.g. concerning virtue, eudaimonia, and the original meaning of “democracy”), John Dewey, and recent work in virtue epistemology, this chapter develops a virtue-based defense of democracy, one that conceives of democracy as an inquiry-based mode of social existence. This account of democracy is developed by responding to three common concerns raised against democracy, which the author calls the Irrationality Problem, the Problem of Autonomy, and the Epistocracy Objection. Virtue epistemology can help elucidate the link between democracy and human flourishing by drawing attention to democracy’s potential for cultivating and refining the “intellectual virtues” (e.g. intellectual humility, fairness in evaluating the arguments of others, the social virtue of being communicative, etc.) constitutive of the good life.


Democratic education requires people who desire to practice civility, mutual respect, and reasoned debate; it requires people who are motivated to recognize the integrity of views they do not accept. According to the account I have provided here, one cannot sustain such practices without having been shaped by the right kinds of dispositions. Humility is just such a disposition, and for this reason we should include it within democratic education’s catalogue of virtues. In short, we should consider humility a deliberative virtue. Of course, a person might be reluctant to embrace the theological commitments that accompany traditional accounts of humility. And while my defense of humility does not require her to accept those commitments, her allegiance to democratic education may be measured by whether she is willing to consider and evaluate their alleged truth. At the very least, she should recognize that humility—a virtue on which the success of our deliberative practices depends—is tied to and bequeathed by the Christian tradition.


Aristotle recognized that presentations of good character need not aim at working an emotional effect. They may be intended to establish the credibility of the speaker and so to meet the demands of soberminded auditors. Aristotle, therefore, created a third mode of persuasion which he labeled “persuasion through character” and placed alongside argumentational and emotional appeal.


In his work on rhetoric—his Τέχνη ῥητορική—Aristotle established the framework with which many of us, perhaps most of us, still approach the subject. In particular, the Stagirite recognized three modes of persuasion: namely, through the character of the orator, through the emotions of the hearers and through the arguments of the speech. In addition, he marked off style from delivery and distinguished all of the foregoing from arrangement conceived of as the parts of an oration. His discussion of the three modes of persuasion takes place in the first two books; and his remarks on delivery, style and the parts of an oration are found in the third book. None of that is news. Nor is the fact that Aristotle’s treatment of persuasion presupposes some fundamental advances in logic and philosophical psychology. The development of a formal dialectic underlies the account of rhetorical argumentation, and clarifying the relationship between thought and emotion is basic to the account of persuasion through the hearers. Less clear, however, is the thinking that stands behind Aristotle’s discussion of persuasion through character. That is not to say that the subject has been passed over in the scholarly literature. In fact, it has recently received considerable attention, and advances have been made. But there is, I think, room for further study; and in my own case, it may be time to collect scattered remarks and to attempt a comprehensive analysis.


Virtue approaches to communication ethics have experienced a resurgence over the last decades. Tied to rhetoric since the time of Aristotle, virtue ethics offers scholars in the broad field of communication an approach to ethics based on character and human flourishing as an alternative to deontology. In each major branch of communication scholarship, the turn to virtue ethics has followed a distinctive trajectory in response to concerns about the adequacy of theoretical foundations for academic and applied work in communication ethics. Recent approaches to journalism and media ethics integrate moral psychology and virtue ethics to focus on moral exemplars, drawing on the work of Philippa Foot and Rosalind Hursthouse, or explore journalism as a MacIntyrean tradition of practice. Recent work in human communication ethics draws on MacIntyre’s approach to narrative, situating communication ethics within virtue structures that protect and promote particular goods in a moment of narrative and virtue contention.

I shall discuss legal argument in terms of how in making arguments the speaker or writer “show[s] himself to be of a certain character” and seeks to have his listeners (or readers) identify with that kind of character. When we advance arguments, we say “be like me” (or, at least, be like the character I am presenting myself to be in this argument). When we respond, “yes, that’s what I think” after listening to another’s arguments, we expose and foster an aspect of our own character, advancing a conception of who we consider ourselves to be. Arguments soothe, nurture, move people toward a conception of themselves. They also offend, disturb or repel us. In both these ways, they help create the character of those who respond to them. People often say that arguments appeal to values, but values are not “things” people “have” on which they “base” their decisions. Values are defined, modified, rejected, nurtured, suppressed and clarified in the process of forming one’s character.


In its recent attention to reasoning that is agent-based and target-driven, logic has re-taken the practical turn and recovered something of its historic mission. In so doing, it has taken on in a quite general way a game-theoretic character, precisely as it was with the theory of syllogistic refutation in the Topics and On Sophistical Refutations, where Aristotle develops winning strategies for disputations. The approach that the present authors take toward the logic of practical reasoning is one in which cognitive agency is inherently strategic in its orientation. In particular, as is typically the case, individual agents set cognitive targets for themselves opportunistically, that is, in such ways that the attainment of those targets can be met with resources currently or foreseeably at their disposal. This is not to say that human reasoning is so game-like as to be utterly tendentious. But it does make the point that the human player of the cognitive game has no general stake in accepting undertakings that he has no chance of making good on. Throughout its long history, the traditional fallacies have been characterized as mistakes that are attractive, universal and incorrigible. In the present essay, we want to begin developing an alternative understanding of the fallacies. We will suggest that, when they are actually employed by beings like us, they are defensible strategies in game-theoretically describable pursuit of cognitive (and other) ends.


I am imagining a sense of form, a sense of beauty, a sense of playfulness, a sense of humility, a sense of compassion and justice, a sense of musicality, a sense of humor, seen in their rhetorical manifestations. How therapeutic for our sick rhetorical culture would it be if these virtues guided the choice of how to argue? But it occurs to me that this is the wrong question, since there may be no rhetorical action that does not arise from some felt sense of its rightness, perhaps in both the strategic and ethical sense. So, how much more interesting would our critique of our rhetorical culture be if we thought of arguments as deriving from and therefore revealing such qualities of character? Not in order to call names and judge those who sometimes fail, as we all do, but in order to in-habit such qualities in our own arguments. The ethical question for any act of argumentation, then, is not “Is this virtuous?” in order to praise or blame the character of the speaker, but instead “From what virtue does this arise?” and “Can I make it my own?”


The questions I use as my title derive from the assumption that since rhetorical actions may be judged as ethical as well as effective, the teaching of such actions must entail, at some level, a theory of moral deliberation. In thinking about what an ethical rhetoric requires and how to teach it, phronesis—as practical wisdom in the moral realm—provides a helpful concept, but one that is elusive or perhaps even unknowable. It is the paradox of teaching something that may be both theoretically necessary and necessarily enigmatic that prompts this inquiry.


Contemporary discourse is littered with nasty and derailed disagreements. In this paper we hope to help clean things up. We diagnose two patterns of thought that often plague and exacerbate controversy. We illustrate these patterns and show that each involves both a logical mistake and a failure of intellectual charity. We also draw upon recent work in social psychology to shed light on why we tend to fall into these patterns of thought. We conclude by suggesting how the intellectual virtues can mitigate against these fallacies, focusing on the virtues of charity and humility.


I contend that in matters of practical argument and judgment, ethical criteria apply to arguments, not only arguers. Because our judgments of arguments are often ethical, and appropriately so, the arguments themselves are ethical. When an argument is ethical, we respond and evaluate ethically. Understanding and judging practical argument is as much an ethical matter as it is a logical matter. An alternative way of putting my thesis is to say that judging ethical arguments—indeed, arguments in general—takes intellectual virtues and, more controversially, that those same intellectual virtues are the subject of our judgments.


These are the three constituent elements of rhetoric: the speech, or logos; the disposition of the audience, or pathos; the character of the speaker, or ethos. One of the purposes of this paper is to show their interrelations in the realm of global governance. Despite its fragmentation in different academic traditions, the constituent elements of rhetoric do not have internal hierarchy and
they all take part in shaping legal debates. This paper aims at describing how there can be a responsible rhetoric without privileging one element over the other. The purpose is to identify a form of rhetoric that is not only aimed at ‘winning’ an argument, but to obtain cooperation towards global common goods. As Aristotle pointed out, the art of rhetoric is not about defeating an opponent, but it is the ability ‘to see the available means of persuasion’.


A virtue approach to argumentation would focus on the arguers’ character rather than on her arguments. Therefore, it must be explained how good arguments relate to virtuous arguers. This article focuses on this issue. It is argued that, besides the usual logical, dialectical, and rhetorical standards, a virtuously produced good argument must meet two additional requirements: the arguer must be in a specific state of mind, and the argument must be broadly conceived of as an argumentative intervention and thus excel from every perspective.


This article offers a brief overview of the argumentative practices and the traits that are regarded as intellectual virtues in Judaism and Buddhist India, as well as several criticisms and proposals for argumentation theory from the ranks of Feminism. The motivation for this work is the aspiration to develop a theory of argumentative virtues that takes into account the variety of cultures and that avoids ethnocentrism as much as possible.

José Ángel Gascón. ¿Es posible (y deseable) una teoría de la virtud argumentativa? In *Actas I Congreso internacional de la Red española de Filosofía*, vol. 11, pp. 41–51. 2015. In Spanish.


In this paper I argue that a virtue approach to argumentation would not commit the ad hominem fallacy provided that the object study of our theory is well delimited. A theory of argumentative virtue should not focus on argument appraisal, but on those traits that make an individual achieve excellence in argumentative practices. Within this framework, argumentation theory could study argumentative behaviour in a broader sense, especially from an ethical point of view.


While, in common usage, objectivity is usually regarded as a virtue, and failures to be objective as vices, this concept tends to be absent in argumentation theory. This paper will explore the possibility of taking objectivity as an argumentative virtue. Several problems immediately arise: could objectivity be understood in positive terms—not only as mere absence of bias? Is it an attainable ideal? Or perhaps objectivity could be explained as a combination of other virtues?


Is a virtue approach in argumentation possible without committing the ad hominem fallacy? My answer is affirmative, provided that the object study of our theory is well delimited. My proposal is that a theory of argumentative virtue should not focus on argument appraisal, as has been assumed, but on those traits that make an individual achieve excellence in argumentative practices. An agent-based approach in argumentation should be developed, not in order to find better grounds for argument appraisal, but to gain insight into argumentative habits and excellence. Only this way can we benefit from what a virtue argumentation theory really has to offer.


The virtue of critical thinking has been widely emphasised, especially the habit of calling into question any standpoint. While that is important, argumentative practice is not possible unless the participants display a willingness to trust. Otherwise, continuous questioning by one party leads to an infinite regress. Trust is necessary in order to allow for testimony and expert opinion, but also to exclude unwarranted suspicions that could damage the quality of an argumentative discussion.


Virtue argumentation theory focuses on the arguers’ character, whereas pragma-dialectics focuses on argumentation as a procedure. In this paper I attempt to explain that both theories are not opposite approaches to argumentation. I argue that, with the help of some non-fundamental changes in pragma-dialectics and some restrictions in virtue argumentation theory, it is possible to regard these theories as complementary approaches to the argumentative practice.


The place that belongs to virtue argumentation theory in the field of argumentation studies has been recently discussed by Gensollen, who proposes that it should be characterized as a complementary theory that deals with moral evaluation. Against this assessment, in the present article I argue that a virtue approach to argumentation is not restricted to moral evaluation, but it is also relevant to the study of human cognition and reasoning. Moreover, I criticize such a distinction between “complementary” and “fundamental” theories, as well
as the criterion Gensollen uses in order to demarcate them.


Virtuous arguers are expected to manifest virtues such as intellectual humility and open-mindedness, but from such traits the quality of arguments does not immediately follow. However, it also seems implausible that a virtuous arguer can systematically put forward bad arguments. How could virtue argumentation theory combine both insights? The solution, I argue, lies in an analogy with virtue epistemology: considering both responsible and reliabilist virtues gives us a fuller picture of the virtuous arguer.


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The virtue approach to argumentation is an approach to the philosophical field of argumentation that gives a primordial role to the psychological dispositions of the subjects that argue. In general terms, the supporters of this approach maintain that the different branches of argumentation (such as formal or informal logic) do not account for all the aspects necessary for argumentative processes to be performed correctly. According to these authors, it is necessary to take into account a set of psychological traits of ethical character (the virtues), which ensure that the logical resources and different types of reasoning are applied properly. In the present article we will make a brief exposition of the virtue approach to argumentation. First, we will address its precedents in other philosophical disciplines, which can be found in virtue ethics and in virtue epistemology. In fact, a thread can be drawn from the application of the doctrine of virtues to ethics, through virtue epistemology, and ending in the argumentative virtues themselves, which are no more than the extrapolation of the virtues to the field of argumentation. Secondly, we will present the argumentative virtues approach historically and we will discuss some of the problems that such an approach faces. Finally, not to leave aside the practical character that in one way or another is usually present in all virtue approaches, we will offer a provisional typology of what the argumentative virtues should be.


The aim of this paper is to analyze the importance and relevance of Carlos Pereda’s thought in argumentation theory, focusing on his work entitled Vértigos Argumentales, which has as its central purpose the defense of an emphatic reason, not deprived of uncertainty, but neither of objectivity. Keeping in mind that Carlos Pereda’s theory of argumentation is close to his conception of rationality, the author turns to the analysis of issues that intersect, such as epistemic virtues, the concept of rationality, an ethics of argumentation, etc. The paper concludes with the view of argumentation through the concept of ‘practice’, where different aspects to be considered in argumentative action are pointed out. It concludes that Vértigos Argumentales formulated and developed some basic intuitions that are present in the contemporary debate about argumentation and virtue.


We live in a plural world. It is increasingly clear to us that other people have beliefs, desires and wishes different from our own. They live different or opposing lifestyles. Plurality is a fact. This means that it is not something that we may like or not like: it is something we have to deal with. Each essay in this book seeks to illuminate a perspective or relationship. One central concern guides them all: what role should argumentation play in public life? For this reason, some essays seek to clarify the relationship between argumentation, imposition and other forms of violence; sketch some aspects of our argumentative culture; or deal with some particular problem in our public life in which argumentation plays (or should play) a central role. All share the principle that it is necessary to notice the character traits (be they virtuous or vicious) of those who argue. Virtues and argumentative vices have a high explanatory potential with respect to what often happens when we argue in public life.


In this paper my purpose is to locate Virtue Argumentation Theory’s place within Contemporary Argumentation Theory. There are some possibilities that have been opened in considering argumentation as a communicative practice. I consider some typical features of argumentative practice that are relevant to locate Virtue Argumentation Theory, and indicate some difficulties that are faced by contemporary theorists of argumentation. Then, from the previous coordinates, I seek to locate virtue argumentation theorists as bidders of a complementary approach to the logical approach or to the pragma-dialectical approach, while they consider argumentation as a cooperative practice. Finally, my point is that the possibility opened with Virtue Argumentation Theory is the moral analysis and evaluation of argumentation.
This article examines the critical thinking (CT) dispositions, as measured by the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory, of students at a four-year, private, liberal arts, comprehensive university. This paper follows up results first published in 1995. The present findings represent another snapshot of CT dispositions among students who participated in 1996 and during the original investigation in 1992. Longitudinal results about students tested as freshman in 1992 and again as seniors in 1996 are presented. Cross sectional results are reported as well. Questions explored include the relationship between the disposition toward critical thinking, as measured by the CCTDI, and students’ major, gender, class level, and grade point average.

The author assesses three major problems in critical reasoning methods as taught in introductory logic courses. First, the author critiques the use of fallacies as a mode of analysis. Second, the author objects to the negative outlook expressed in the name “critical reasoning.” Lastly, the author scrutinizes the critical reasoning method’s lack of focus on the people that are arguing or their relevance to the arguments under examination. The author suggests that critical reasoning should focus more on the process of argumentation rather than treating the argument presented as an artifact since the argumentative process takes place between people who are in disagreement. Critical reasoning should not be replaced but expanded and modified to a new method which embraces arguers and not just their arguments.

Informal Logic, as presented by both Blair and Johnson describes a system of organization and analysis of arguments that can be applied in a multitude of contexts. While some minimal background and description of situation is required to undertake an analysis, the system does not take into account the personal makeup of the proponent or, when appropriate, the interlocutor. The speakers do not have gender, cultural, racial, geographic, class or educational characteristics that may be relevant to understanding or judging their arguments. This essay undertakes an investigation of the need for incorporating psychosocial information regarding the participants and what consequences that has for Informal Logic. The results suggest that the argument analysis component of Informal Logic is best viewed as a skeleton, that prior to judging the legitimacy of an argument based on such an analysis the context must be fleshed out by relations of person, power, and so on. So, forms of argument, for example, that are not legitimate in one culture may be acceptable in another. Fallacy theory must also be amended so that intersectional differences become relevant. E.g., an individual in a position of power may be committing an ad baculum when the same words spoken by someone not in power may be admissible.

Michael A. Gilbert. Natural normativity: Argumentation theory as an engaged discipline. Informal Logic, 27(2):149–161, 2007. Natural normativity describes the means whereby social and cultural controls are placed on argumentative behaviour. The three main components of this are Goals, Context, and Ethos, which combine to form a dynamic and situational framework. Natural normativity is explained in light of Pragmatic-dialectics, Informal Logic, and Rhetoric. Finally, the theory is applied to the Biro-Siegel challenge.

Michael A. Gilbert. Arguing with People. Broadview Press, Peterborough, ON, 2014. Arguing with People brings developments from the field of Argumentation Theory to bear on critical thinking in a clear and accessible way. This book expands the critical thinking toolkit, and shows how these tools can be applied in the hurly-burly of everyday arguing. Gilbert emphasizes the importance of understanding real arguments, understanding just who you are arguing with, and knowing how to use that information for successful argumentation. Interesting examples and partner exercises are provided to demonstrate tangible ways in which the book’s lessons can be applied.


One question in the debate between the rhetorical and dialectical approaches concerns the availability of rules and standards. Are there objective standards, or are they changeable and situational? In Part One I briefly identify three concepts, context, audience and ethos. In Part Two I focus on ethos and how it is endemic to argument with familiaris. Part Three shows that ethos concerns many local factors is situational. Finally, in Part Four, it is shown how the pragma-dialectical Rule 1 is situational.

Michael A. Gilbert. Ethos, familiaris and micro-cultures. In Fabio Paglieri, Laura Bonelli, & Siviah Felletti, eds., The Psychology of Argument: Cognitive Approaches to Argumentation and Persuasion, pp. 275–285. College Publications, London, 2016. In this chapter I want to examine the nature of personal ethotic standings that we, as individual arguers, apply to others and seek to have applied to us. Toward this end three core concepts of Persuasion Theory, knowledgability, trustworthiness, and liking will be used as meta-concepts in an analysis of Grice’s maxims as they apply to individual judgments of ethos. Grice’s maxims, and adherence to them, provide a ready and familiar frame for those traits that tend to create positive ethos. In addition, it will be argued that Grice’s maxims need to be localized for both cultural and specific context. Using Gilbert’s notion of familiaris we will examine how the maxims apply both across the board and in specific contexts in forming and maintaining personal ethotic standing.


This paper argues against the priority of pure, virtue-based accounts of argumentative norms (VA). Such accounts are agent-based and committed to the priority thesis: good arguments and arguing well are explained in terms of some prior notion of the virtuous arguer arguing virtuously. Two problems with the priority thesis are identified. First, the definitional problem: virtuous arguers arguing virtuously are neither sufficient nor necessary for good arguments. Second, the priority problem: the goodness of arguments is not explained virtuistically. Instead, being excellences, virtues are instrumental in relation to other, non-aretaic goods—in this case, reason and rationality. Virtues neither constitute reasons nor explain their goodness. Two options remain for VA: either provide some account of reason and rationality in virtuistic terms, or accept them as given but non-aretaic goods. The latter option, though more viable, demands the concession that VA cannot provide the core norms of argumentation theory.

One of the greatest challenges confronting organizations is how to select and develop leaders. The dearth of inexpensive, easily administered assessment instruments contributes to the problem. The current explanatory, quantitative study examined the correlation between the critical thinking disposition and leadership behaviors of leaders in service industries in the United States. The study results indicate a moderately positive correlation between the critical thinking disposition and transformational behaviors of the study participants. The finding supports further research into whether critical thinking disposition could be used to predict leadership emergence. The study result has potential implications for trait theory of leadership and leadership development and may provide the foundation for a new model of leadership assessment: leadership disposition.

The California Critical Thinking Dispositions Inventory (CCTDI) is a commonly used tool for measuring critical thinking dispositions. However, research on the efficacy of the CCTDI in predicting good thinking about students’ own deeply held beliefs is scant. In this paper we report on preliminary results from our ongoing study designed to gauge the usefulness of the CCTDI in this context.
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From early modernity, philosophers have engaged in skeptical discussions concerning knowledge of the existence, state, and standing of other minds. The analogical move from self to other unfolds as controversy. This paper reposes the problem as an argumentation predicament and examines analogy as an opening to the study of rhetorical cognition. Rhetorical cognition is identified as a productive process coming to terms with an other through testing sustainable risk. The paper explains how self-sustaining risk is theorized by Aristotle’s virtue ethics in the polis. Moral hazard is identified as a threat to modern argument communities.


Metacognition, often glossed as ‘thinking about thinking’ or ‘ cognition about cognition,’ is a buzzword in education, a battleground in philosophy of mind, and a central area of study in psychology. But it is rarely discussed in epistemology, which is somewhat surprising given its deep roots in the field stretching back to Plato’s Charmides and Aristotle’s De Anima. In this paper, I will argue that metacognition deserves a bigger role in epistemology. More specifically, I will argue that metacognition qualifies as an epistemic virtue, and is therefore of interest in the currently flourishing subfield of virtue epistemology.


The purpose of this paper is to outline the way in which an epistemic virtue approach can be used to address epistemological issues in law. My claim is that responsibility is the right kind of approach. First, I will briefly examine the difference between this conception and the reliabilist conception of intellectual virtues. Then, I will explore two major responsibilist projects that contain several features required for an appropriate virtue approach to legal fact-finding. Next I will discuss the belief/acceptance dichotomy and attempt to show that it is acceptance – rather than belief – the right type of propositional attitude to be held by legal fact-finders, and that it may be regulated by intellectual virtues. In the end, it will be argued that the conjunction of a responsibilist epistemology and a theory of acceptance constitutes a good theoretical framework for the analysis of legal reasoning about matters of fact.


The purpose of this paper is to define the general features of a suitable epistemology for law. In particular, the paper is concerned with a very influential project that is nowadays offered in the literature: robust virtue epistemology. As I will show here, such a project is untenable for law, since a satisfactory and complete epistemology of legal proof requires the conjunction of both the agent’s perspective (the “trial-of-facts”) and the inquiry system’s perspective (the rules of evidence).


Critical thinking is an educational ideal with an accumulating canon of scholarship, but conceptualizing it has nevertheless remained contentious. One important issue concerns how critical thinking involves an interplay between cognitive abilities and associated character traits, dispositions, and motivations. I call these and other aspects of the critical thinker “critical thinking virtues,” taking them to be intellectual excellences of character, cultivated by people who tend to aim towards making reasoned judgments about what to do or believe. The central virtue that motivates any critical thinker to engage her skills in critical thinking I call “willingness to inquire,” connecting the character of the person to the skills she must use consistently to be a critical thinker. Willingness to inquire is the virtue that ranges over the application of all critical thinking skills, a basic motivational drive guiding a person towards the educational ideal. Other critical thinking virtues, such as open-mindedness, fairness, and respect for dialectical partners, also facilitate the appropriate application of critical thinking skills in a process of inquiry. Pedagogues should therefore seek not only to instruct for skills, but also to explicitly mention and instruct for the virtues as well. I conclude by offering curricular recommendations in this regard.


The willingness to suspend judgment while thinking carefully in an effort to reach a reasoned judgment, what I call the “willingness to inquire”, stands behind all skilled thinking that contributes to critical thinking. The willingness to inquire is therefore a more primary critical thinking virtue than open-mindedness, fair-mindedness, or intellectual courage, because without the disposition to employ the skills that aim toward reasoned judgment, there is no way to employ those skills appropriately to that end.


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reasoned judgment, there is no way to employ those skills appropriately to that end.


Many argumentative interactions proceed more or less as we would wish, with good reasons given and acknowledged. If this were always so, there would be no more use for this chapter than one on proper breathing during communication. But the fact is that sometimes we experience disagreement without reasoning, as when small children or enraged adults simply exchange demands. Sometimes reasons are present but fail elementary tests of textual coherence or connection to the other person. Sometimes reasons are given, answered, and then simply repeated. All of these are examples of incompetence, and people can learn to do better.


I wish to argue in favor of a particular orientation, one expressed in Brockriede’s remark that “arguments are not in statements but in people”. While much has been gained from textual analyses, even more will accrue by additional attention to the arguers. I consider that textual materials are really only the artifacts of arguments. The actual arguing is done exclusively by people, either the argument producers or receivers, and never by words on a page. In fact, most of our textual interpretations are quietly founded on the assumption that the artifact is fully informative about what people think.


In the film and play Twelve Angry Men, Juror 8 confronts the prejudices and poor reasoning of his fellow jurors, exhibiting an unwavering capacity not just to formulate and challenge arguments, but to be open-minded, stay calm, tolerate uncertainty, and negotiate in the face of considerable group pressures. In a perceptive and detailed portrayal of a group deliberation a ‘wheel of virtue’ is presented by the characters of Twelve Angry Men that allows for critical thinking virtues and vices to be analysed in context. This article makes the case for (1) the film being an exceptional teaching resource, and (2), drawing primarily on the ideas of Martha Nussbaum concerning contextualised detail, emotional engagement, and aesthetic distance, its educational value being intimately related to its being a work of fiction.


Starting from the observation that argumentation studies have low recognition value both within and without the academy, and mindful of the current desiderata that academic research should be relevant outside the academy, I introduce the concept of an argumentation profile as a panacea for our ills. Argumentation profiles are sketches of the argumentation behaviour of either individuals or groups (such as political parties) and are based on concepts unique to argumentation studies such as argumentation schemes, dialogical roles and responsiveness. It is argued that argumentation profiles would be of interest to voters as well as political parties.


With a theoretical focus, this study traces and examines how rhetoric’s relation to ethics has transformed over the past 60 years from our discipline’s Aristotelian/Platonic/Socratic inheritance to the introduction of multiple new perspectives and voices. In suggesting that the goal of rhetoric is more than persuasion—a major focus of the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition dominant in the field of rhetoric and composition in the early 20th Century—this study traces a “turn” within our discipline from “confrontational” rhetoric to “invitational” rhetoric. It suggests that invitational rhetoric challenges a strict definition of rhetoric as persuasion, seeks instead to understand rather than convert, support camaraderie and mutuality (if not unity) instead of reinforcing dominant power relationships, challenge the speaker as much as the audience, and privilege listening and invitation over persuasion when appropriate. Rhetorical ethics is defined as the ethical decisions made in the everyday interactions that constantly invite us to make rhetorical choices that inevitably have consequences in the world. The study examines kairos/sophistic rhetoric, identification, and responsibility to establish a potential framework for rhetorical ethics, as well as recognising that argumentation is not in statements but in people.


Written by four members of the Calvin College philosophy department, The Little Logic Book is a valuable resource for teachers and undergraduate students of philosophy. In addition to providing clear introductions to the modes of reasoning students encounter in their philosophy course readings, it includes a nuanced description of common informal fallacies, a narrative overview of various philosophical accounts of scientific inference, and a concluding chapter on the ethics of argumentation.


William Hare believes that open-mindedness – the disposition to form a belief, and if necessary to revise or reject it, in the light of available evidence and argument – stands in need of a defence because it is under widespread attack. In this sequel to his highly regarded Open-mindedness and Education [1979], he examines the numerous ways in which opposition to open-mindedness is expressed, and shows how these criticisms can be countered. He argues that the general indictment of open-mindedness as a habit of mind
leading to nihilism and scepticism, as well as to neglect of the emotions, is based upon a misunderstanding of the nature of the concept, which in his opinion is by no means incompatible with personal commitment and confidence. Similar confusions are exposed in such areas as elementary schooling, moral education, educational standards, methods of teaching, the administration of schools, and the teaching of science. In each of these areas, examples are taken from the writings of influential critics to illustrate the nature of the doubts concerning open-mindedness – doubts that are carefully analysed and show to rest ultimately upon erroneous assumptions. And since he believes that many who set out to champion open-mindedness manage to confuse this ideal with other notions, Hare undertakes in a concluding chapter to protect the ideal from its would-be friends and supporters.


The ideal of critical thinking is a central one in Russell’s philosophy, though this is not yet generally recognized in the literature on critical thinking. For Russell, the ideal is embedded in the fabric of philosophy, science, liberalism and rationality, and this paper reconstructs Russell’s account, which is scattered throughout numerous papers and books. It appears that he has developed a rich conception, involving a complex set of skills, dispositions and attitudes, which together delineate a virtue which has both intellectual and moral aspects. It is a view which is rooted in Russell’s epistemological conviction that knowledge is difficult but not impossible to attain, and in his ethical conviction that freedom and independence in inquiry are vital. Russell’s account anticipates many of the insights to be found in the recent critical thinking literature, and his views on critical thinking are of enormous importance in understanding the nature of educational aims. Moreover, it is argued that Russell manages to avoid many of the objections which have been raised against recent accounts. With respect to impartiality, thinking for oneself, the importance of feelings and relational skills, the connection with action, and the problem of generalizability, Russell shows a deep understanding of problems and issues which have been at the forefront of recent debate.


Open-mindedness is properly thought of as a kind of critical receptiveness in which our willingness to consider new ideas is guided by our best judgment with respect to the available evidence. Genuine open-mindedness requires finding some middle ground between being ready to entertain every idea seriously and being excessively resistant to reasonable possibilities. This line of thought suggests a natural connection with an Aristotelian account of virtue as involving a mean between two extremes to be determined by the use of practical wisdom. We may go too far in the direction of critical skepticism and lose sight of open-mindedness; but it is no mark of open-mindedness to be willing to embrace absurdity, to be unwilling ever to draw a conclusion, or to be ready to abandon a promising line of inquiry merely to pursue some other possibility.


This is a brief guide to the ideal of open-minded inquiry by way of a survey of related notions. Making special reference to the educational context, the aim is to offer teachers an insight into what it would mean for their work to be influenced by this ideal, and to lead students to a deeper appreciation of open-minded inquiry. From assumptions to zealotry, the glossary provides an account of a wide range of concepts in this family of ideas, reflecting a concern and a connection throughout with the central concept of open-mindedness itself. An intricate network of relationships is uncovered that reveals the richness of this ideal; and many confusions and misunderstandings that hinder a proper appreciation of open-mindedness are identified.


Open-mindedness involves a readiness to give due consideration to relevant evidence and argument, especially when factors present in the situation tempt one to resist such consideration, with a view to increasing our awareness, understanding and appreciation, avoiding error, and reaching true and defensible conclusions. It means being critically receptive to alternative possibilities and new ideas, resisting inflexible and dogmatic attitudes, and sincerely trying to avoid whatever might suppress or distort our reflections. Open-mindedness is relevant to whatever views we presently hold in the sense that we remain committed to reconsidering them in the light of new questions, doubts, and findings; and it also involves maintaining a certain outlook throughout the entire process of inquiry, whereby we remain willing to accept whatever view proves in the end to have the strongest evidential and reasoned support.


A philosophical conception of open-minded inquiry first emerges in western philosophy in the work of Socrates. This paper develops an interpretation of Socratic open-mindedness drawing primarily on Socratic ideas about (i) the requirements of serious argument, and (ii) the nature of human wisdom. This account is defended against a number of objections which mistakenly interpret Socrates as defending, teaching, or inducing skepticism, and neglecting the value of expert wisdom. The ongoing significance of Socratic open-mindedness as an ideal of inquiry is brought out through examination of a notorious Canadian case in the context of forensic pathology.


In this article four anxieties expressed by Peter Gardner about our conception of open-mindedness and its educational implications are examined. It is argued that none of Gardner’s anxieties undermine our view that open-mindedness requires neither neutralism nor indecision with respect to a matter in question, but rather that open-mindedness is compatible with holding of beliefs and commitments about such matters provided that the beliefs and commitments are formed and held
VIRTUES AND ARGUMENTS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY


I shall argue that how we behave with respect to forming our beliefs is as morally significant as other morally significant actions. As a result, there is a moral imperative to teach critical thinking, and teachers are under a moral obligation to help students acquire those skills and dispositions commonly associated with critical thinking. Not to do so may well be unethical.


Feminist philosophers have been some of the most vocal critics of reason and rationality. While most feminists realize that rationality is a concept that cannot be entirely abandoned, few have considered how to construct a positive account of rationality. This book represents a sustained argument for a feminist theory of rationality. It opens by asking the question: is reason inherently masculine? Deborah K. Heikes goes on to answer this question negatively and to examine what feminists actually want from a theory of rationality, specifying what a virtue theory of rationality is and how it works. She identifies those features that feminists believe are central to reason, identifying four dichotomies that are central to feminist thinking: mind/body, reason/emotion, identity/difference, objectivity/subjectivity, and argues that they can be captured by conceiving of rationality as a virtue concept. She further demonstrates how a specifically feminist theory of rationality can provide objective grounds for feminists’ moral, political and epistemic agendas.


During the Enlightenment, rationality becomes not a property belonging to all humans but something that one must achieve. This transformation has the effect of excluding non-whites and non-males from the domain of reason. Heikes seeks to uncover the source of this exclusion, which she argues stems from the threat of subjectivism inherent in modern thinking. As an alternative, she considers post-Cartesian reactions of modern representationalism as well as ancient Greek understandings of mind as simply one part of a functionally diverse soul. In the end, she maintains that treating rationality as an evolutionarily situated virtue concept allows for an understanding of rationality that recognizes diversity and that grounds substantive moral concepts.


This paper critically examines non-adversarial feminist argumentation model specifically within the scope of politeness norms and cultural communicative practices. Asserting women typically have a particular mode of arguing which is often seen as ‘weak’ or docile within male dominated fields, the model argues that the feminine mode of arguing is actually more affiliative and community orientated, which should become the standard within argumentation as opposed to the Adversary Method. I argue that the non-adversarial feminist argumentation model (NAFAM) primarily focuses on one demographic of women’s communicative styles—white women. Taking an intersectional approach, I examine practices within African American women’s speech communities to illustrate the ways in which the virtues and vices purported by the NAFAM fail to capture other ways of productive argumentation.


This essay explores the possibility of grounding an ethic of rhetoric in virtues suggested by the practice of rhetoric itself. For clues regarding rhetorical virtues, it examines the connection between rhetoric and virtues in a variety of rhetorical and literary critics. Finally, an initial effort to identify several rhetorical virtues is undertaken following suggestions by Alasdair MacIntyre. Rhetorical virtues, it is argued, are discovered by examining the goods inherent to rhetoric, as well as the sources of cooperation and the standards of excellence implied by the practice of rhetoric. The possibility of a virtues oriented pedagogy of communication is also considered.


Loci personarum, ‘topics for persons’ were used in Latin rhetoric for the description of persons, their external circumstances, physical attributes, or qualities of character. They stood in the way of fusing rhetoric and dialectic, the goal of sixteenth-century ‘humanistic’ logic: the project of a unified theory of invention depends on the exclusion of loci personarum from the domain of dialectic proper. But still they cannot easily be replaced in the classroom. Bartholomaeus Keckermann resolved these difficulties: he proposed to abandon the notion that loci personarum could play a role in finding new arguments concerning persons. So they pose no risks for a unified theory of invention, because they can only be used for the exposition of information that we already have. Since loci personarum are concerned with individuals, the knowledge about individuals that is available to us is inescapably circumstantial and contingent, defying the claim of generality or necessity of dialectic made by Keckermann’s sixteenth-century predecessors. However, our thinking about persons is primarily interested in those aspects that we do not share with other members of our species. For Keckermann, persons are therefore logically different from most individuals belonging to other species.


In this programmatic essay, I approach the question “What is open-mindedness?” through three more specific questions, each designed to foreground a distinct dimension along which the analysis of open-mindedness might proceed: When is open-mindedness?
What is not open-mindedness? and, Where is open-mindedness? The first question refers to the temporal dimension of open-mindedness, which I analyze in terms of Dewey’s distinction between recognition and perception and the psychoanalytic concept of disavowal. The second question refers to the dialectical dimension of open-mindedness, to what the many aspects of closed-mindedness reveal about open-mindedness. Here I recall Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean. The third question refers to the dimension of scale, asking what open- and closed-mindedness look like on the interpersonal and social levels. To bring out this third dimension, I draw on Jonathan Lear’s reading of the Republic and psychoanalytic group dynamics theory. Through these three related inquiries I show the range of this central intellectual virtue and bring out its connections to two central, related features of the moral life: the need for integration and the need for openness to newness and complexity.


This essay addresses the relationship between norms of reasoning and norms of humour: To what extent can one be funny and reasonable at the same time? For this purpose, a normative system of reasoning (i.e. the model of the pragma-dialectical critical discussion) is contrasted with three approaches to humour: ancient rhetorical humour, and the modern Script-based Semantic Theory of Humour (SSTH) and the Benign Violation Theory (BVT) respectively.


Young argues—successfully in my view—that we need not rely on unreflective intuitions to ground argument norms and that intellectual virtues can ground them instead. His suggestion is engaging, provocative, and has interesting implications for a variety of issues in argumentation. In response, I have suggested a few options for further exploration including relevant work in reliabilist and responsibilist virtue epistemologies, the problem of achieving epistemic value through intellectual vice, the relation of virtuous argument norms to ethical argument, and the role of intellectual community in the development of virtue epistemic argument norms.


At first glance, happiness and objectivity seem to have little in common. I claim, however, that subjective and eudaimonic happiness promotes arguer objectivity. To support my claim, I focus on connections between happiness, social intelligence, and intellectual virtue. After addressing objections concerning unhappy objective and happy unobjective arguers, I conclude that communities should value happiness in argumentative contexts and use happiness as an indicator of their capacity for objective argumentation.


In this paper I argue that the objectivity of persons is best understood in terms of intellectual virtue, the telos of which is an enduring commitment to salient and accurate information about reality. On this view, an objective reasoner is one we can trust to manage her perspectives, beliefs, emotions, biases, and responses to evidence in an intellectually virtuous manner. We can be confident that she will exercise intellectual carefulness, openmindedness, fairmindedness, curiosity, perseverance, and other intellectual virtues in her reasoning.


While anger can derail argumentation, it can also help arguers and audiences to reason together in argumentation. Anger can provide information about premises, biases, goals, discussants, and depth of disagreement that people might otherwise fail to recognize or prematurely dismiss. Anger can also enhance the salience of certain premises and underscore the importance of related inferences. For these reasons, we claim that anger can serve as an epistemic resource in argumentation.


There are at least three strategies we might take in approaching controversial issues: (i) we might accept the conclusions of experts on their authority, (ii) we might evaluate the relevant evidence and arguments for ourselves, or (iii) we might give up on finding the answers. Students of “critical thinking” are regularly advised to follow strategy (ii). But strategies (i) and (iii) are usually superior to (ii), from the standpoint of the goal of gaining true beliefs and avoiding false ones.


Trudy Govier argues in The Philosophy of Argument that adversariality in argumentation can be kept to a necessary minimum. On her account, politeness can limit the ancillary adversariality of hostile culture but a degree of logical opposition will remain part of argumentation, and perhaps all reasoning. Argumentation cannot be purified by politeness in the way she hopes, nor does reasoning even in the discursive context of argumentation demand opposition. Such hopes assume an idealized politeness free from gender, and reasoners with inhuman or at least highly privileged capabilities and no need to learn from others or share understanding.


In this essay, I want to argue that the lack of success enjoyed by critical thinking instruction arises at least in part from the significant conceptual and epistemological errors embedded in the discourse surrounding the term. These persistent errors follow from the fallacious
Cartesian metaphysics on which mental process terms are often predicated. Rather than attempting to rehabilitate critical thinking, then, I propose jettisoning the concept in favor of a potentially more fruitful pedagogical approach free of this Cartesian baggage. Although the idea of epistemic virtue has been largely ignored in mainstream educational discourse, it may provide a more effective strategy to enrich the intellectual development of students.


This understanding of the ad hominem and the sin it embodies—the sin of irrelevance—has recently come under examination by philosophers and scholars in the discipline of speech communication. The ad hominem and its presumed invalidity has also been an issue for feminist epistemological projects, either directly or indirectly. We will begin with a discussion of the relationship between feminist epistemological projects and the ad hominem, and then move to a discussion of the argument against understanding the ad hominem as a fallacy in all cases, presented by Douglas Walton in A Pragmatic Theory of Fallacy. We will then orchestrate a conversation between Lorraine Code and Douglas Walton to examine where Code’s feminist project overlaps with Walton’s project and where they part company, and conclude with some remarks on how these projects differ from other social epistemological projects.


Christopher Johnson has put forward in this journal the view that ad hominem reasoning may be more generally reasonable than is allowed by writers such as myself, basing his view on virtue epistemology. I review his account, as well as the standard account, of ad hominem reasoning, and show how the standard account would handle the cases he sketches in defense of his own view. I then give four criticisms of his view generally: the problems of virtue conflict, vagueness, conflation of speech acts, and self-defeating counsel. I then discuss four reasons why the standard account is superior: it better fits legal reality, the account of other fallacies, psychological science, and political reality.


Empathy can be terribly important when we talk to people who are different from ourselves. And it can be terribly important that we talk to people who are different precisely about those things that make us different. If we’re to have productive conversations across differences, then, it seems we must develop empathy with people who are deeply different. But, as Laurie Paul and others point out, it can be impossible to imagine oneself as someone who is deeply different than oneself—something that plausible definitions of empathy seem to require. How then, can these terribly important conversations take place? I argue that philosophical and psychological work on intellectual humility can show us a way to empathize and have these conversations even when we can’t imagine ourselves as the other.


Ad hominem arguments are generally dismissed on the grounds that they are not attempts to engage in rational discourse, but are rather aimed at undermining argument by diverting attention from claims made to assessments of character of persons making claims. The manner of this dismissal however is based upon an unlikely paradigm of rationality: it is based upon the presumption that our intellectual capacities are not as limited as in fact they are, and do not vary as much as they do between rational people. When we understand rationality in terms of intellectual virtues, however, which recognize these limitations and provide for the complexity of our thinking, ad hominem considerations can sometimes be relevant to assessing arguments.


Aristotle’s writings on the subjects of ethics, rhetoric, and politics advance a view in which these arts are fundamentally interrelated. Moreover, this view implies some striking and significant conclusions concerning the proper function of communication in humanity’s search for virtue and well-being. This essay explores and seeks to clarify the relationship in Aristotle’s thought among these arts, and argues finally for a unifying vision of moral virtue, suasive speech, and the deliberative activities of the polis. For Aristotle, the political life of the human community is the agency by which individual moral visions are tested, clarified, modified, and shared, giving rise to the particular moral truths that serve to ground individual conduct and social policy, and thus that serve to guide the development of individual character and community life.


This conclusion leads to relativism in the argumentation theory. The purpose of the study is to show that, in case of deep disagreement, one can theoretically determine which of parties in dispute has better epistemic status and, consequently, is argumentatively virtuous. To substantiate this thesis, we propose carrying out such thought experiment as an epistemic method game by M. Lynch and applying the virtue argumentation theory by D. Cohen and A. Aberdein. This research has a purely theoretical, philosophical aim to criticize relativism in argumentation theory and justify its regulatory status. The right moves in argumentation are such that an agent with the entire argumentative virtues would prefer, and wrong moves, or argumentative failacies, are such that an agent with argumentative vices would make.


An argument developed by Michael Huemer raises doubts about the epistemic responsibility of taking a ‘critical thinking’ approach to belief formation. This paper takes issue with Huemer’s depiction of critical thinking as an approach that rejects all reliance on the intellectual authority of others, and it offers a more realistic depiction. The paper ultimately contends that Huemer’s argument fails because it rests on an impoverished and unaccountably individualistic notion of epistemic responsibility.


I will argue that the ethic of expediency in Western culture which Aristotle first treated systematically in the Rhetoric, the Nicomachean Ethics, and especially the Politics, was rhetorically embraced by the Nazi regime and combined with science and technology to form the “moral basis” of the holocaust. While there is a concern for ethics in the field of technical communication, and while few in our society believe expediency is an adequate moral basis for making decisions, I will suggest that it is the ethic of expediency that enables deliberative rhetoric and gives impulse to most of our actions in technological capitalism as well, and I will explore some of the implications and dangers of a rhetoric grounded exclusively in an ethic of expediency.


This paper offers an analysis of the structure of epistemic vice-charging, the critical practice of charging other persons with epistemic vice. Several desiderata for a robust vice-charge are offered and two deep obstacles to the practice of epistemic vice-charging are then identified and discussed. The problem of responsibility is that few of us enjoy conditions that are required for effective socialisation as responsible epistemic agents. The problem of consensus is that the efficacy of a vice-charge is contingent upon a degree of consensus between critic and target that is unlikely or impossible where vice-charging is most likely to be provoked. It emerges that a robust critical practice of vice-charging is possible in principle, but very difficult in practice.


In this paper, I explore the relationship of virtue, argumentation, and philosophical conduct by considering the role of the specific virtue of intellectual humility in the practice of philosophical argumentation. I have three aims: first, to sketch an account of this virtue; second, to argue that it can be cultivated by engaging in argumentation with others; and third, to problematize this claim by drawing upon recent data from social psychology. My claim is that philosophical argumentation can be conducive to the cultivation of virtues, including humility, but only if it is conceived and practiced in appropriately ‘edifying’ ways.


I propose a virtue-based strategy for appraising metaphors for philosophical practice. Metaphors exploit structural associations between philosophising and other activities – like combat – and as implicitly specific character traits, whether virtues or vices. But good metaphors are rich enough to specify a range of traits, so attention should be directed at the ways that those metaphors are ‘unpacked’. I show that ARGUMENT IS WAR metaphors can specify a set of virtues, as well as the vices that critics usually point to. If so, criticism should be directed at the ways we unpack and interpret such metaphors, not at the metaphors themselves.


In this chapter, my concern is with a set of criticisms that, though quite familiar, are surprisingly neglected in the literature on the new atheists: that the new atheists typically evince negative character traits, or vices, such as arrogance, dogmatism, and closed-mindedness.


Against those who criticise martial metaphors for philosophical practice, I argue that the problem is really with academic cultures that encode masculinist prejudices which distort our ability to explore and deploy the richness of those metaphors. The effect is that those metaphors are corrupting – they promote the development and exercise of various argumentative vices. Crucial to this argument is work by Daniel Cohen and Phyllis Rooney.


Among proponents of critical thinking, Harvey Siegel stands out in his attempt to address fundamental epistemological issues. Siegel argues that discursive inclusion of diverse groups should not be confused with rational justification of the outcome of inquiry. He maintains that epistemic virtues such as inclusion are neither necessary nor sufficient for rational judgment, and
that if we are to avoid falling prey to relativism, criteria are needed to distinguish which of these virtues are indeed rational. However, the author argues that at least some of Siegel’s own rational criteria cannot pass the “necessary or sufficient” standard by which he measures epistemic virtues. Moreover, reliance upon criteria fails to settle conflict in cases of disagreement over what constitutes authoritative evidence. Jürgen Habermas’s theory of communicative rationality can help us to overcome this impasse, because it provides a non-relativistic basis for justifying inclusion and giving it a place of priority in practical reasoning.


In this paper I argue that Confucius’ view of learning in the Analects entails critical thinking. Although he neither specified the logical rules of good reasoning nor theorised about the structure of argument, Confucius advocated and emphasised the importance of critical thinking. For Confucius reflective thinking of two sorts is essential to learning: (1) reflection on the materials of knowledge, in order to synthesise and systemise the raw materials into a whole, and to integrate them into oneself as wisdom; (2) reflection on oneself, (a) in order to ensure that such synthesis, systemisation, and integration proceed in an open-minded, fair and autonomous way, and (b) in order to integrate knowledge with the self, that is, to internalise it until it becomes oneself.


A dialogue-based analysis of informal fallacies does not provide a fully adequate explanation of our intuitions about what is wrong with *ad baculum* and of when it is admissible and when it is not. The dialogue-based analysis explains well why mild, benign threats can be legitimate in some situations, such as cooperative bargaining and negotiation, but does not satisfactorily account for what is objectionable about more malicious uses of threats to coerce and to intimidate. I propose an alternative deriving partly from virtue theory in ethics and epistemology and partly from Kantian principles of respect for persons as ends-in-themselves. I examine some specific kinds of social relations, e.g., parent-child and partner relationships, and ask what kinds of threats are permissible in these relationships and especially what is wrong with the objectionable threats. My explanation is framed in terms of the good character and contributing virtues of the ideal parent or partner on the one hand, and the bad character and contributing vices of the abusive parent or violent partner on the other. This analysis puts the discussion of threats in the context of virtue theory, of human flourishing, and of the kind of social relations it is best to have. In general, what’s wrong with *argumentum ad baculum* should be explained in terms of the intentions, purposes, and character of threateners, and the differences in intentions and purposes for which threats are made. The characters of those who make the threats will provide the criteria for distinguishing benign and malicious threats.


This book is for anyone interested in the subject of moral integrity in journalism, whether they are journalists, the subjects and sources of news stories, or consumers of news. Each chapter provides an analytical framework for examining fundamental concepts such as truth, bias, harm, trust, manipulation, and accountability. The principles developed in this framework are used throughout the book to analyze concrete cases.


This paper is part of an increasingly rich contribution to argument studies from disciplines studying human interaction in general. The paper is an invitation, rather than an argument, and my response is to accept the invitation. The paper offers current empirical data and theoretical considerations to ground our discussion of trust. It also invites us to consider some specific questions about how argumentation theory might incorporate this new information. I shall offer a preliminary exploration of where this might take us.


Is argument a game everyone should be able to play? If it is, current argument practices do not yet level the playing field enough for a fair game. We may build in subtle imbalances that work against people who cannot easily adapt to the most common patterns of argumentative interaction. We need better ways to build trust,
to create safety, and adapt goals in order to bring everyone into the game.

[286] Christian Kock. Virtue reversed: Principal argumentative vices in political debate. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 19th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. Contributing to an understanding of the true virtues of argumentation, this paper sketches and exemplifies a theoretically reasoned but simple typology of argumentative vices or ‘malpractices’ that are rampant in political debate in modern democracies. The typology reflects, in negative, a set of argumentative norms, thus making a bid for something that civic instruction might profitably teach students at all levels about deliberative democracy.

[287] Miklós Könczöl. Ad misericordiam revisited. Studies in Logic, Grammar and Rhetoric, 55(1):115–129, 2018. The paper discusses the nature and functioning of argumentum ad misericordiam, a well-known but less theorised type of argument. A monograph by D. Walton (1997) offers an overview of definitions of misericordia (which he eventually translates as ‘pity’), as well as the careful analysis of several cases. Appeals to pity, Walton concludes, are not necessarily fallacious. This view seems to be supported and further refined by the critical remarks of H. V. Hansen (2000), as well as the recent work of R. H. Kimball (2001, 2004) and A. Aberdein (2016) focusing on the virtue ethical aspects of such arguments. There is, on this account, a difference between ad misericordiam arguments and fallacies, even though the former may be fallacious in some cases. In this paper I argue for a narrower concept of ad misericordiam, as distinguished from the more generic class of appeals to pity, limiting it to cases in which someone asks for the non-application of a certain rule, clearly relevant to their case, with reference to some (unfavourable) circumstance, which is, however, irrelevant for the application of the rule.


[289] Ben Kotzee. Poisoning the well and epistemic privilege. Argumentation, 24(3):265–281, 2010. In this paper, a challenge is outlined for Walton’s recent analysis of the fallacy of poisoning the well. An example of the fallacy in action during a debate on affirmative action on a South African campus is taken to raise the question of how Walton’s analysis squares with the idea that disadvantaged parties in debates about race may be ‘epistemically privileged’. It is asked when the background of a participant is relevant to a debate and it is proposed that a proper analysis of the poisoning the well will outline conditions under which making one participant’s background an issue in a debate would be legitimate and illegitimate. Expanding Walton’s analysis to deal with the challenge, it is concluded that calling into question a participant’s suitability to take part in a debate is never legitimate when it is based simply on a broad fact about their background (like their race or gender).

[290] Ben Kotzee, J. Adam Carter, & Harvey Siegel. Educating for intellectual virtue: A critique from action guidance. Episteme, 2019. Forthcoming. Virtue epistemology is among the dominant influences in mainstream epistemology today. An important commitment of one strand of virtue epistemology – responsibility virtue epistemology (e.g., Montmarquet 1993; Zagzebski 1996; Battaly 2006; Baehr 2011) – is that it must provide regulative normative guidance for good thinking. Recently, a number of virtue epistemologists (most notably Baehr, 2013) have held that virtue epistemology not only can provide regulative normative guidance, but moreover that we should reconceive the primary epistemic aim of all education as the inculcation of the intellectual virtues. Baehr’s picture contrasts with another well-known position – that the primary aim of education is the promotion of critical thinking (Scheffler 1989; Siegel 1988; 1997; 2017). In this paper – that we hold makes a contribution to both philosophy of education and epistemology and, a fortiori, epistemology of education – we challenge this picture. We outline three criteria that any putative aim of education must meet and hold that it is the aim of critical thinking, rather than the aim of instilling intellectual virtue, that best meets these criteria. On this basis, we propose a new challenge for intellectual virtue epistemology, next to the well-known empirically-driven ‘situationist challenge’. What we call the ‘pedagogical challenge’ maintains that the intellectual virtues approach does not have available a suitably effective pedagogy to qualify the acquisition of intellectual virtue as the primary aim of education. This is because the pedagogic model of the intellectual virtues approach (borrowed largely from exemplarist thinking) is not properly action-guiding. Instead, we hold that, without much further development in virtue-based theory, logic and critical thinking must still play the primary role in the epistemology of education.


[292] Tone Kvensbekk Johnson, MacIntyre, and the practice of argumentation. Informal Logic, 28(3):262–278, 2008. This article is a discussion of Ralph Johnson’s concept of practice of argumentation. Such practice is characterized by three properties: (1) It is teleological, (2) it
is dialectical, and (3) it is manifestly rational. I argue that Johnson’s preferred definition of practice—which is Alasdair MacIntyre’s concept of practice as a human activity with internal goods accessible through participation in that same activity—does not fit these properties or features. I also suggest that this failure should not require Johnson to adjust the properties to make them fit the practice concept. While MacIntyre’s concept of practice clearly has some attractive features, it does not provide what Johnson wants from a concept of practice.

[293] Tone Kvernberk. Commentary on Daniel H. Cohen and Katharina Stevens, “Virtuous vices: On objectivity and bias in argumentation”. In Patrick Bondy & Laura Benacquista, eds., Argumentation, Objectivity and Bias: Proceedings of the 11th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 18–21, 2016. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2016. I have contented myself to comment on just a small bit of Cohen and Stevens’ paper. I have left out all the stuff about virtues and vices, and have concentrated on bias and objectivity. If I apply Mackenzie’s understanding of bias to my own commentary, I am forced to conclude that it is far from unbiased as I have left lots of possible considerations untreated. But then again I might be off the hook—I was after all allowed by the authors to adopt a bias.

[294] Jack M. C. Kwong. Epistemic injustice and open-mindedness. Hypatia, 30(2):337–351, 2015. In this paper, I argue that recent discussions of culprit-based epistemic injustices can be framed around the intellectual character virtue of open-mindedness. In particular, these injustices occur because the people who commit them are closed-minded in some respect; the injustices can therefore be remedied through the cultivation of the virtue of open-mindedness. Describing epistemic injustices this way has two explanatory benefits: it yields a more parsimonious account of the phenomenon of epistemic injustice and it provides the underpinning of a virtue-theoretical structure by which to explain what it is that perpetrators are culpable for and how virtues can have normative explanatory power.

[295] Jack M. C. Kwong. Open-mindedness as a critical virtue. Topoi, 35(2):403–411, 2016. This paper proposes to examine Daniel Cohen’s recent attempt to apply virtues to argumentation theory, with special attention given to his explication of how open-mindedness can be regarded as an argumentational or critical virtue. It is argued that his analysis involves a contentious claim about open-mindedness as an epistemic virtue, which generates a tension for agents who are simultaneously both an arguer and a knower (or who strive to be both). I contend that this tension can be eased or resolved by clarifying the nature of open-mindedness and by construing open-mindedness in terms of its function. Specifically, a willingness to take a novel viewpoint seriously is sufficient for making open-mindedness both an epistemic and a critical virtue.

[296] Jack M. C. Kwong. Open-mindedness as engagement. The Southern Journal of Philosophy, 54(1):70–86, 2016. Open-mindedness is an under-explored topic in virtue epistemology, despite its assumed importance for the field. Questions about it abound and need to be answered. For example, what sort of intellectual activities are central to it? Can one be open-minded about one’s firmly held beliefs? Why should we strive to be open-minded? This paper aims to shed light on these and other pertinent issues. In particular, it proposes a view that construes open-mindedness as engagement, that is, a willingness to entertain novel ideas in one’s cognitive space and to accord them serious consideration.

[297] Jack M. C. Kwong. Is open-mindedness conducive to truth? Synthese, 194(5):1613–1626, 2017. Open-mindedness is generally regarded as an intellectual virtue because its exercise reliably leads to truth. However, some theorists have argued that open-mindedness’s truth-conduciveness is highly contingent, pointing out that it is either not truth-conducive at all under certain scenarios or no better than dogmatism or credulity in others. Given such shaky ties to truth, it would appear that the status of open-mindedness as an intellectual virtue is in jeopardy. In this paper, I propose to defend open-mindedness against these challenges. In particular, I show that the challenges are ill-founded because they misconstrue the nature of open-mindedness and fail to consider the requisite conditions of its application. With a proper understanding of open-mindedness and of its requirements, it is clear that recourse to it is indeed truth-conducive.

[298] Michael Leff. Perelman, ad hominem argument, and rhetorical ethos. Argumentation, 23(3):301–311, 2009. Perelman’s view of the role of persons in argument is one of the most distinctive features of his break with Cartesian assumptions about reasoning. Whereas the rationalist paradigm sought to minimize or eliminate personal considerations by dismissing them as distracting and irrelevant, Perelman insists that argumentation inevitably does and ought to place stress on the specific persons engaged in an argument and that the relationship between speaker and what is spoken is always relevant and important. In taking this position, Perelman implicitly revives the classical conception of proof by character (ethos or “ethotic” argument), but despite an extended discussion of act and person in argument, The New Rhetoric does not give much consideration to the classical concept and confuses differing approaches to it within the tradition. The result is that Perelman treats the role of the speaker in argument only by reference to abstract techniques and does not recognize the importance of examining particular cases in order to thicken understanding of how ethotic argument works in the complex, situated context of its actual use. Consequently, Perelman’s account of the role of persons in argument should be supplement by reference to case studies, and to that end, I consider ethotic argument in W.E.B. Du Bois’ famous essay “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others”.

[299] Uri D. Leibowitz. Moral deliberation and ad hominem fallacies. Journal of Moral Philosophy, 13(5):507–529, 2016. Many of us read Peter Singer’s work on our obligations to those in desperate need with our students. Famously, Singer argues that we have a moral obligation to give a significant portion of our assets to famine relief. If my own experience is not atypical, it is quite common
for students, upon grasping the implications of Singer’s argument, to ask whether Singer gives to famine relief. In response it might be tempting to remind students of the (so-called) ad hominem fallacy of attacking the person advancing an argument rather than the argument itself. In this paper I argue that the “ad hominem reply” to students’ request for information about Singer is misguided. First I show that biographical facts about the person advancing an argument can constitute indirect evidence for the soundness/unsoundness of the argument. Second, I argue that such facts are relevant because they may reveal that one can discard the argument without thereby incurring moral responsibility for failing to act on its conclusion even if the argument is sound.


Mark Warren may be right that it is worth considering relaxing the sincerity norm that underpins much theorizing in deliberative democracy in favor of a commitment to insincerity in the form of good manners. However, we should not yet commit ourselves to so doing until a few issues are clarified: (1) We must have a detailed account of the motivation individuals might have to take up the attitude of strategic good manners (given that the adoption of these manners implies a rejection of the view that the recipients of these good manners are deserving of equal consideration); (2) we must carefully distinguish situations in which insincerity is harmful from those in which it is beneficial from the perspective of achieving genuine resolution to sensitive issues; (3) we need to have a clear account of whether good manners apply to the content of speech or merely the demeanor with which speech is presented; and (4) we need an account of the nature of the transformative effect we can expect from insincerity, as well as an account of the conditions under which this transformative effect is possible and likely. I worried here that Warren ignores the possible impact that known insincerities—deployed as an element of strategic good manners—will have on the trust relations that necessarily underpin cooperative communication. Until these details are provided, we ought to be wary of turning away from our prima facie commitment to sincerity in deliberation.


A maxim is a proposition that tells people how to act. The use of a maxim is a maxim argument. Such arguments can show the character of the speaker and are mainly used in deliberative speech. The reasoning mode that practical wisdom makes people possess is the normative structure of maxim arguments. Thus, normative argument has “ends–means” schemes and “rule–case” schemes.


In this essay, I argue the value of integrating aspects of social identity theory with informal logic generally. Interpretation and judgment can break down in rhetorical contexts where social differences are significant. This is often the result of “residual prejudice” (Fricker, 2007) and unconscious bias. Using several examples from a study on classroom dialogue in an inner city Midwest-ern elementary school, I show how bias was the result of unreflective and unconscious social attitudes. I propose a 4 stage process of “intellectual empathy” as a route to more socially reflective thinking, drawing on the strengths of informal logic and social theory.


I argue that Kotzee’s (Argumentation 24:265–281, 2010) model of meta-debate succeeds in identifying illegitimate or fallacious charges of bias but has the unintended consequence of classifying some legitimate and non-fallacious charges as fallacious. This makes the model, in some important cases, counter-productive. In particular, cases where the call for a meta-debate is prompted by the participant with epistemic privilege and a charge of bias is denied by the participant with social advantage, the impasse will put the epistemically advantaged at far greater risk. Therefore, I propose treating epistemic privilege as a variety of expert opinion specifically in cases where meta-debate participants come to an impasse in deliberation. My proposal exposes the problem of interpreting debate contexts as both adversarial and free from social power differentials.


This article initially provides a brief overview of virtue epistemology; it thereafter considers some possible ramifications of this branch of the theory of knowledge for the philosophy of education. The main features of three different manifestations of virtue epistemology are first explained. Importantly, it is then maintained that developments in virtue epistemology may offer the resources to critique aspects of the debate between Hirst and Carr about how the philosophy of education ought to be carried out and by whom. Wilfred Carr’s position—that educational practitioners have privileged access to philosophical knowledge about teaching practice—will in particular be questioned. It will be argued that Carr’s view rests on a form of epistemology, internalism, which places unreasonably narrow restrictions upon the range of actors and ways, in which philosophical knowledge of and/or for education might be achieved. In declaring that practical wisdom regarding teaching is ‘entirely dependent’ on practitioner reflection, Carr not only radically deviates from Aristotle’s notion of practical wisdom, he also, in effect, renders redundant all philosophical research about education that is not initiated by teachers in this manner. It is concluded that Aristotle’s general approach to acquiring information and knowledge about the world might yet still offer a foundation for a more comprehensive philosophy of education; one that makes clear that the professional testimony and reflection of teachers, observation of teaching practice, and already
existing educational philosophy, theory and policy can all be perceived as potentially valuable sources of philosophical knowledge of and for education.


The incompleteness problem for virtue ethics is inherited by a virtue-based theory of argumentation as developed by Daniel Cohen (2007). A complete normative theory of argumentation should be able to provide reasons for why argumentative virtues such as open-mindedness are worthwhile, along with being able to resolve conflicts of such virtues. Admiring virtue-based argumentation theory with a pragmatic utilitarian approach constitutes a more complete theory that can account for why argumentative virtues are worthwhile.


What makes an intellectual virtue a virtue? A straightforward and influential answer to this question has been given by virtue-reliabilists: a trait is a virtue only insofar as it is truth-conducive. In this paper I shall contend that recent arguments advanced by Jack Kwong in defence of the reliabilist view are good as far as they go, in that they advance the debate by usefully clarifying ways in which best to understand the nature of open-mindedness. But I shall argue that these considerations do not establish the desired conclusions that open-mindedness is truth-conducive. To establish these much stronger conclusions we would need an adequate reply to what I shall call Montmarquet’s objection. I argue that Linda Zagzebski’s reply to Montmarquet’s objection, to which Kwong defers, is inadequate. I conclude that it is contingent if open-mindedness is truth-conducive, and if a necessary tie to truth is what makes an intellectual virtue a virtue, then the status of open-mindedness as an intellectual virtue is jeopardised. We either need an adequate reliabilist response to Montmarquet’s objection, or else seek alternative accounts of what it is that makes a virtue a virtue. I conclude by briefly outlining some alternatives.


Teaching critical thinking skill is a central pedagogical aim in many courses. These skills, it is hoped, will be both portable (applicable in a wide range of contexts) and durable (not forgotten quickly). Yet, both of these virtues are challenged by pervasive and potent cognitive biases, such as motivated reasoning, false consensus bias and hindsight bias. In this paper, I argue that a focus on the development of metacognitive skill shows promise as a means to inculcate debiasing habits in students. Such habits will help students become more critical thinkers. I close with suggestions for implementing this strategy.


While cognitive bias is often portrayed as a problem in need of a solution, some have argued that these biases arise from adaptive reasoning heuristics which can be rational modes of reasoning. This presents a challenge: if these heuristics are rational under the right conditions, does teaching critical thinking undermine students’ ability to reason effectively in real life reasoning scenarios? I argue that to solve this challenge, we should focus on how rational ideals are best approximated in human reasoners. Educators should focus on developing the metacognitive skill to recognize when different cognitive strategies (including the heuristics) should be used.


The paradoxical nature of globalization in between diversity and atomization seems to have a great impact on the way people communicate within a culture and across cultures, as well. Whether we speak about politics, science, religion or economy, individuals are encouraged to express their views showing tolerance and flexibility towards the other so as to minimize areas of disagreement. Nevertheless, the antagonist tendency is to promote individualism through excessive competitiveness and gradual loss of empathy towards the other which translates into narrow-mindedness, biases and unwillingness to revise opinions in interpersonal communication. Using insights from the extended version of the pragma-dialectical theory of argumentation (van Eemeren and Houtlosser 2006) and from other various scholars interested in the role of emotions in argumentation (Plantin 1997, 1998, 1999, 2004, Gilbert 1994, 1996, 1997, 2005, Walton 1992, 1995, 1997, 2000, Kwak 2007, Aberdein 2010 and Ciurria 2012) I intend to investigate the way these opposing tendencies manifest themselves in argumentative practice. In line with these scholars, I hold that the resolution of a difference of opinion does not solely depend on the arguers’ sound reasoning but also on how they interact with one another emotionally.


Since the triumph of a business culture a century and half ago the businessman has been scorned, and so the phrase “bourgeois virtue” sounds like an oxymoron. Economists since Bentham have believed that anyway virtue is beside the point: what matters for explanation is Prudence. But this is false in many circumstances, even strictly economic circumstances. An economic history that insists on Prudence Alone is misspecified, and will produce biased coefficients. And it will not face candidly the central task of economic history, an apology for or a criticism of a bourgeois society.

What is trust? How does it function as a primary virtue for persuasive arguments? How does its presumption contribute to the effectiveness of an argument’s persuasiveness? This presentation will explore these questions and the controversy among scholars regarding how trust is generated and under what conditions it is lost. We will also discuss whether inauthentic trustworthiness is a manipulation used for gaining a fallacious advantage in argumentation.


In this thesis I develop a virtue-theoretic conception of critical thinking. I argue that many conceptions of critical thinking have conflated “critical thinking” with “good thinking”. In contrast to other intellectual pursuits, I identify critical thinking as its own activity which aims at the achievement and maintenance of intellectual autonomy. I identify the constitutive virtues of critical thinking as conscientiousness, self-awareness, and prudent wariness. I argue that virtues require internal success, and intellectual autonomy is the achievement of the external success of the critical thinking virtues. It is a mistake to consider other virtues or character traits involving moral or cooperative behaviour as constitutive of critical thinking, though these may be ancillary virtues and useful to foster alongside the virtues of critical thinking. The conception I offer in this thesis suggests a solution to concerns regarding transfer of learning and offers a pedagogically-clear way of framing a critical thinking curriculum.


The argument of this paper is that we should think of the extension of cognitive abilities and cognitive character in integrationist terms. Cognitive abilities are extended by acquired practices of creating and manipulating information that is stored in a publicly accessible environment. I call these cognitive practices (2007). In contrast to Pritchard (2010) I argue that such processes are integrated into our cognitive characters rather than artefacts; such as notebooks. There are two routes to cognitive extension that I contrast in the paper, the first I call artefact extension which is the now classic position of the causal coupling of an agent with an artefact. This approach needs to overcome the objection from cognitive outsourcing: that we simply get an artefact or tool to do the cognitive processing for us without extending our cognitive abilities. Enculturated cognition, by contrast, does not claim that artefacts themselves extend our cognitive abilities, but rather that the acquired practices for manipulating artefacts and the information stored in them extend our cognitive abilities (by augmenting and transforming them). In the rest of the paper I provide a series of arguments and cases which demonstrate that an enculturated approach works better for both epistemic and cognitive cases of the extension of ability and character.


I claim that, in the Topics, Aristotle advises dialectical questioners to intentionally argue fallaciously in order to escape from some dialectically awkward positions, and I work through the consequences of that claim. It will turn out that, although there are important exceptions, the techniques for finding arguments described in Topics I–VII are, by and large, locations that Aristotle thought of as appropriate for use in philosophical inquiry. The text that grounds this claim, however, raises a further problem: it highlights the solitary nature of philosophical inquiry, which puts into question the philosophical relevance of Topics VIII. I find that the Topics provides inadequate grounds for thinking that Aristotle saw Topics VIII as describing standards or techniques of argument that were appropriate for philosophy, and so these texts cannot be used by contemporary commentators to shed light on Aristotle’s philosophical practice. Finally, although Aristotle saw philosophy as a solitary activity, he thought dialectic played an important part in a typical philosophical life, both as a means for defending one’s reputation, and as a way of participating in an intellectual community.


What is a moral argument? A straightforward answer is that a moral argument is an argument dealing with moral issues, such as the permissibility of killing in certain circumstances. I call this the thin sense of ‘moral argument’. Arguments that we find in normative and applied ethics are almost invariably moral in this sense. However, they often fail to be moral in other respects. In this article, I discuss four ways in which morality can be absent from moral arguments in the thin sense. If these arguments suffer from an absence of morality in at least one of these ways, they are not moral arguments in what I will call the thick sense of ‘moral argument’. Because only moral arguments in the thick sense could possibly qualify as proper responses to moral problems, the absence of morality in thin arguments means that these arguments will fail to give us a reason to do whatever they claim that we ought to do, even if we see no independent reason to question the truth of the premises or the logical validity of the argument.


The virtue of objectivity starts with the recognition that there is a vantage point from which our capacity to acquire knowledge of the world, including us as parts of that world, is optimized. Gascón’s position, as I see it, invites an Aristotelian-style gloss: objectivity is state of character, concerned with choice, lying in a mean relative to us, a mean between extremes of bias blindness on the one hand, and total detachment on the other.
This article questions a view dominant among theoreticians of critical thinking; that the critical thinker has certain character traits, dispositions, or virtues. Versions of this theory (hereafter called the Character View) have been advanced without much analysis. The impression is that these traits or virtues are obvious accompaniments to critical thinking, yet such is not the case. Versions of the Character View are inconsistent; even within one version unlikely scenarios arise. Furthermore, historical evidence can be brought against this view. Most people assume that the greatest contributors to intellectual progress would be critical thinkers. Yet a number of intellectual giants, including Marx, Rousseau, Bacon, Freud, Russell, Newton, and Feynman lacked many of the traits which the Character View holds to be necessary for critical thinking. This discrepancy calls into question the connection between having certain dispositions or virtues and the ability to think critically. Rather than concluding that these and other great thinkers cannot have been critical thinkers, one can subscribe to an alternative view which makes no claims about character, namely that critical thinking is a skill or set of skills (hereafter, the Skill View). According to this view, a critical thinker is someone who practices the skills of critical thinking frequently, just as a mathematician is a person who does mathematics frequently. Critical thinking is here defined as the consideration of alternative theories in light of their evidence, a definition which I believe encompasses the skill criteria of Ennis and Paul. The Skill View has for the most part been disparaged, yet the evidence in its favor would appear to be stronger; it has the advantage of theoretical simplicity; and it does not smuggle in moral prescriptions, leaving ethics instead to the scrutiny of critical thought. Finally, it is arguable that an historical version of the Skill View can show critical thinking to be more exciting than any version which the Character View has offered thus far.

Two types of theories about critical thinking offer a choice. The Character View seems intuitively right to many theorists. But, at the moment, its proponents have offered no evidence beyond the obviousness of their many principles, and, in fact, I have shown evidence against several of Siegel’s traits claimed for the process of critical thinking. This evidence forces the anomaly of accepting Newton’s Theory of Motion as a great piece of critical thinking, while concluding that Newton was not (much of) a critical thinker. And similar results obtain for Darwin. Finally, the Character View is complicated. The Alternative Argument Theory (AAT) is by comparison quite clear because it is simple, it has supporting evidence, but it runs counter to some deep-seated beliefs. I would recommend for the time being against the Character View until it can build a better evidentiary case for itself, and recommend provisional acceptance of the Alternative Argument Theory. Whatever you decide, by the AAT you have done critical thinking; by the Character View, that’s anybody’s guess.

In this paper, I sketch an answer to the question “Why be an intellectually humble philosopher?” I argue that, as far as philosophical argumentation is concerned, the historical record of Western Philosophy provides a straightforward answer to this question. That is, the historical record of philosophical argumentation, which is a track record that is marked by an abundance of alternative theories and serious problems for those theories, can teach us important lessons about the limits of philosophical argumentation. These lessons, in turn, show why philosophers should argue with humility.

In this paper, I sketch an answer to the question “Why be an intellectually humble philosopher?” I argue that, as far as philosophical argumentation is concerned, the historical record of Western Philosophy provides a straightforward answer to this question. That is, the historical record of philosophical argumentation, which is a track record that is marked by an abundance of alternative theories and serious problems for those theories, can teach us important lessons about the limits of philosophical argumentation. These lessons, in turn, show why philosophers should argue with humility.

This paper describes and defends the “virtues of ingenuity”: detachment, lucidity, thoroughness. Philosophers traditionally praise these virtues for their role in the practice of using reasoning to solve problems and gather information. Yet, reasoning has other, no less important uses. Conviction is one of them. A recent revival of rhetoric and argumentative approaches to reasoning (in psychology, philosophy and science studies) has highlighted the virtues of persuasiveness and cast a new light on some of its apparent vices—bad faith, deluded confidence, confirmation and myside biases. Those traits, it is often argued, will no longer look so detrimental once we grasp their proper function: arguing in order to persuade, rather than thinking in order to solve problems. Some of these biases may even have a positive impact on intellectual life. Seen in this light, the virtues of ingenuity may well seem redundant. Defending them, I argue that the vices of conviction are not innocuous. If generalized, they would destabilize argumentative practices. Argumentation is a common good that is threatened when every arguer pursues conviction at the expense of ingenuity. Bad faith, myside biases and delusions of all sorts are neither called for nor explained by argumentative practices. To avoid a collapse of argumentation, mere civil virtues (respect, humility or honesty) do not suffice: we need virtues that specifically attach to the practice of making conscious inferences.

Traditionally, it has been held that critical thinking requires a set of cognitive skills and dispositions. The present work supports the opinion of some theorists who have proposed that these might not be the only
The execution of critical thinking depends on a set of skills and dispositions. It is unanimously accepted that skills represent the cognitive component, but consensus varies with regard to dispositions. Although most theoreticians admit that this is a complex construct integrated by motivations and mental habits, they don’t explain further. We have performed a study attempting to explore the internal structure of dispositions. We suggest a possible hypothesis of “Motivational Genesis of Dispositions,” according to which disposition would be formed by motivation and by mental habits, although the contribution of each of these factors would change depending on the practice gained in critical thinking. Thus, when a person is not practised in critical thinking, motivation makes a greater contribution than mental habits. Nevertheless, with practice and motivated exercise of the skills of critical thinking, the influence of these mental habits increases. The regression analyses carried out support such a hypothesis.

The main goal of this paper is to outline an agent-centered theory of argumentation. Our working hypothesis is that the aim of argumentation depends upon the agenda agents are disposed to close or advance. The novelty of this idea is that our theory, unlike the main accounts of argumentation (i.e., rhetorical, dialogical and epistemological theories of argumentation), does not establish an a priori function that agents are expected to achieve when arguing. Instead, we believe that the aims of argumentation depend upon the purposes agents are disposed to achieve (i.e., their agendas).

This paper outlines an agent-centered theory of argumentation. Our working hypothesis is that the aim of argumentation depends upon the agenda agents are disposed to close or advance. The novelty of this idea is that our theory, unlike the main accounts of argumentation, does not establish a fixed function that agents have to achieve when arguing. Instead, we believe that the aims of argumentation depend upon the purposes agents are disposed to achieve (agendas).
VIRTUES AND ARGUMENTS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY


The reasons behind the success of the type of practical exercise envisaged to overcome the power of biases remain underexplored in Zenker’s contribution. I will try to show here that the success of the type of practical proposal defended in this paper constitutes evidence of the social function of reasoning.


This paper opposes the view that studying argumentation from a decision theoretic perspective is a purely descriptive project. On the contrary, I argue that such approach is naturally suited to tackle normative issues, shedding new light on how strategic rationality interacts with other virtues of argumentation – namely, inferential validity and dialectical appropriateness. My views on this issue will be developed against the backdrop of virtue argumentation theory (Cohen 2009; Abduréin 2010; Battaly 2010).


Virtue argumentation theory (VAT) has been charged of being incomplete, given its alleged inability to account for argument validity in virtue-theoretical terms. Instead of defending VAT against that challenge, I suggest it is misplaced, since it is based on a premise VAT does not endorse, and raises an issue that most versions of VAT need not consider problematic. This in turn allows distinguishing several varieties of VAT, and clarifying what really matters for them.


Virtue argumentation theory (VAT) has been charged of being incomplete, given its alleged inability to account for argument validity in virtue-theoretical terms. Instead of defending VAT against that challenge, I suggest it is misplaced, since it is based on a premise VAT does not endorse, and raises an issue that most versions of VAT need not consider problematic. This in turn allows distinguishing several varieties of VAT, and clarifying what really matters for them.


This paper summarizes the basic assumptions of a decision theoretic approach to argumentation, as well as some preliminary empirical findings based on that view. The relative neglect for decision making in argumentation theory is discussed, and the approach is defended against the charge of being merely descriptive. In contrast, it is shown that considering arguments as the product of decisions brings into play various normative models of rational choice. This presents argumentation theory with a novel challenge: how to reconcile strategic rationality with other normative constraints, such as inferential validity and dialectical appropriateness? It is suggested that strategic considerations should be included, rather than excluded, from the evaluation of argument quality, and this position is put in contact with the growing interest for virtue theory in argumentation studies.


The role intellectual virtues play in scientific inquiry has raised significant discussions in the recent literature. A number of authors have recently explored the link between virtue epistemology and philosophy of science with the aim to show whether epistemic virtues can contribute to the resolution of the problem of theory choice. This paper analyses how intellectual virtues can be beneficial for successful resolution of theory choice. We explore the role of virtues as well as vices in scientific inquiry and their beneficial effects in the context of theory choice. We argue that vices can play a role in widening the set of potential candidate theories and support our claim with historical examples and normative arguments from formal social epistemology. We argue that even though virtues appear to be neither necessary nor sufficient for scientific success, they have a positive effect because they accelerate successful convergence amongst scientists in theory choice situations.


Do we have an obligation to argue? If so, where does that obligation come from and how does it bind us? Is the obligation to argue a moral obligation, or a prudential one, or is it perhaps an obligation of some other sort? These questions all fall within a more general sphere of concerns that I believe would be aptly labeled the sphere of normativity in argumentation. These questions are not the whole of this sphere of concerns, but they are important members of it—perhaps even essential starting points. In this paper I will address this sphere by arguing: 1) that we do have an obligation to argue, and 2) that the obligation to argue applies to us by virtue of our standing as co-participants in a convention of argumentation. My account has its basis in social philosophy, and so is somewhat unlike other contemporary views on offer regarding the obligation to argue. It will be worthwhile to begin with a brief review of these accounts before proceeding to my own.


Written for Thinking: The Second International Conference (1987), this paper explores a series of themes familiar to Richard Paul’s readers: that most school learning is irrational rather than rational, that there are two different modes of critical thinking and hence two different kinds of critical persons, that strong sense critical thinking is embedded in the ancient Socratic
ideal of living an examined life, and that social studies instruction today is, in the main, sociocentric. Paul illustrates this last point with items from a state department of education critical thinking test and illustrations from a popular university-level introductory political science text. Paul closes with an argument in favor of a new emphasis on developing the critical thinking abilities of teachers: “If, in our haste to bring critical thinking into the schools, we ignore the need to develop long-term strategies for nurturing the development of teachers’ own critical powers and passions, we shall surely make the new emphasis on critical thinking into nothing more than a passing fad, or worse, into a new, more sophisticated form of social indoctrination and scholastic closedmindedness.”


Educators and theorists tend to approach the affective and moral dimensions of education as they approach all other dimensions of learning, as compartmentalized domains, and as a collection of learnings more or less separate from other learnings. As a result, they view moral development as more or less independent of cognitive development. “And why not?” one might imagine the reply. “Clearly there are highly educated, very intelligent people who habitually do evil and very simple, poorly educated people who consistently do good. If moral development were so intimately connected to cognitive development, how could this be so?” In this paper, I provide the outlines of an answer to that objection by suggesting an intimate connection between critical thinking, moral integrity, and citizenship. Specifically, I distinguish a weak and a strong sense of each


Power in communication takes two main forms. As ‘external’ power, it consists in the ability to acknowledge or disregard a speaker or a discourse. As ‘internal’ power, it is the ability of an argument to eliminate other arguments by demonstrating its superiority. A positive or negative value may be ascribed to these forms of power. Four ideal-typical positions are discussed – strategy, technocracy, constructionism, and deliberation. Public deliberation has three virtues – civic virtue, governance virtue and cognitive virtue. Deliberation lowers the propensity to, and the benefit of, strategic behaviour. It also increases knowledge, enhancing the quality of decisions. For Habermas, the unity of reason is expressed in the possibility of agreement on the most convincing argument. However, sometimes conflicts are deep-lying, principles and factual descriptions are profoundly different, and uncertainty is radical. The best argument cannot be found. There is no universal reason. The question is whether non-strategic agreement may spring from the incommensurability of languages. In search of an answer, Rawls’s concept of overlapping consensus, the

feminist theory of the public sphere, and the idea of deliberation as co-operation are discussed. The argument developed is that the approach to deliberative democracy may be renewed by rethinking its motivational and cognitive elements. Public deliberation is grounded on a pre-political level of co-operation. Intractable controversies may be faced at the level of practices, looking for local, contextual answers.


Both the principle of charity and responsibility condition are thought to be central elements of argument reconstruction and productive discourse. These conditions are problematic in arguments that contain various forms of deception. In this paper, I will focus on multivocal appeals (popularly known as dog whistles), which are meant to be heard by only certain audience members. I will argue that arguments containing dog whistles require more nuanced tools to reconstruct the argument.

[343] Robert C. Pinto. Evaluating inferences: The nature and role of warrants. Informal Logic, 26(3):287–317, 2006. Following David Hitchcock and Stephen Toulmin, this paper takes warrants to be material inference rules. It offers an account of the form such rules should take that is designed (a) to implement the idea that an argument/inference is valid only if it is entitlement preserving and (b) to support a qualitative version of evidence proportionalism. It attempts to capture what gives warrants their normative force by elaborating a concept of reliability tailored to its account of the form such rules should take.

[344] Robert C. Pinto. Commentary on: Harvey Siegel’s “Argumentation and the epistemology of disagreement”. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. The long version of Siegel’s paper is an extremely useful overview of the literature on two aspects of the epistemology of disagreement, and I’m in complete agreement with what I take to be his main conclusions, namely (1) that because of ambiguities in the treatment of peer-hood and the variety of different cases which require different sorts of treatment, there do not seem to be any general epistemic principles concerning peer disagreement, other than what has come to be called the Total Evidence View, and (2) that Fogelin is wrong in supposing or concluding that that there are disagreements “which by their nature are not subject to rational resolution.” I would however call brief attention to two aspects of Siegel’s presentation about which I have reservations.

[345] Robert C. Pinto. Truth and the virtue of arguments. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. In a 2006 paper I claimed that the virtue arguments or inferences must have is not that they be truth-preserving, but that they be entitlement-preserving (in
Brandon’s sense of that phrase). I offered two reasons there why such a conception of argument virtue is needed for a satisfactory treatment of defeasible arguments and inferences. This paper revisits that claim, and assesses the prospects for a more thorough defense than was offered in that paper.

In recent years, increasing attention has been given to virtue ethics in business. Aristotle’s thought is often seen as the basis of the virtue ethics tradition. For Aristotle, the idea of phronesis, or ‘practical wisdom’, lies at the foundation of ethics. Confucian ethics has notable similarities to Aristotelian virtue ethics, and may embody some similar ideas of practical wisdom. This article considers how ideas of moral judgment in these traditions are consistent with modern ideas about intuition in management decision making. A hypothetical case is considered where the complexity of ethical decision making in a group context illustrates the importance of intuitive, phronesis-like judgment. It is then noted that both Aristotelian and Confucian virtue ethics include suggestions about support for moral decision making that are also consistent with modern theory.

Aspects of legal cases hinge on understanding the situation of the disputants. While categories such as feeling, empathy, law and politics have limited discriminating capacity here, I propose to draw upon the Aristotelian scheme of intellectual virtues. Specifically, I look at how the judge exercises discernment (gnômê) and the comprehension of what others say (synesis). In the context of practical wisdom, Hursthouse has argued that discernment requires experience of exceptions. I add that the judge exercises her discernment by suspending the application of principles to an individual, while listening. Furthermore, I add that the exceptions include experiences lived through, which Hursthouse’s technical view neglects. When using her comprehension to absorb the details of the situation based upon testimony, the judge will have to be open to different perspectives, able to move between them, and yet courageous enough to stand by what she deems right. I conclude with a hypothetical about the judge’s involvement in the process contributing to a better understanding of the other in a global environment.

Since its creation by Peirce, the nature of abductive inference has been construed in many ways. Three construings are analyzed, and some of their derivatives, to then examine the possibility for considering abduction as an argumentative virtue of cognitive character, in line with current theories on epistemological virtues resulting from E. Sosa’s works and argumentative virtues according to A. Aberdein. Based on the said construing, it is proposed that abduction could play the role of justification of natural deduction rules that introduce hypothetical clauses.

This article proposes a way of connecting two levels at which scholars have studied discursive practices from a normative perspective: on the one hand, local transactions—face-to-face arguments or dialogues—and broadly dispersed public debates on the other. To help focus my analysis, I select two representatives of work at these two levels: the pragma-dialectical model of critical discussion and Habermas’s discourse theory of political-legal deliberation. The two models confront complementary challenges that arise from gaps between their prescriptions and contexts of actual discourse. In response, I propose a theory of argument cogency that distinguishes three kinds of merit: content, transactional, and public. Normative links between the two levels arise through the ways argument contents spread across multiple transactions in a social space whose structure and composition favor collective reasonableness.

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In this essay Suzanne Rice examines Aristotle’s ideas about virtue, character, and education as elements in an Aristotelian conception of good listening. Rice begins by surveying of several different contexts in which listening typically occurs, using this information to introduce the argument that what should count as “good listening” must be determined in relation to the situation in which listening actually occurs. On this view, Rice concludes, there are no “essential” listening virtues, but rather ways of listening that may be regarded as virtuous in the context of particular concrete circumstances.

Open-mindedness is typically at the top of any list of the intellectual or ‘epistemic’ virtues. Yet, providing an account that simultaneously explains why openness is an epistemically valuable trait to have and how such a trait is compatible with full-blooded belief turns out to be a challenge. Building on the work of William Hare and Jonathan Adler, I defend a view of open-mindedness that meets this challenge. On this
view, open-mindedness is primarily an attitude toward oneself as a believer, rather than toward any particular belief. To be open-minded is to be aware of one’s fallibility as a believer, and to acknowledge the possibility that anytime one believes something, one could be wrong. In order to see that such an attitude is epistemically valuable even to an already virtuous agent, some details of the skills and habits of the open-minded agent are elucidated.


While significant work in argumentation theory (and philosophy of argument) has been devoted to the presentation of arguments, many now argue for renewed attention to responses to arguments, and, in particular, to the epistemic responsibilities of responders who clearly also play a central role in the successes or failures of argumentation. As Kathryn Norlock notes, this renewed attention is motivated, among other things, by concerns about the ancillary adversarial “blood sport” practices of argumentation that are not unknown in philosophy and in other contexts of debate. Since practices of argumentation are significantly communal and relational, Norlock adds, we need to assess these practices as also ethical ones. More particularly, she argues that we can usefully mine insights from an ethic of caring (as advanced by Nell Noddings especially), and she endorses Noddings’s account of receptivity (“the pre-condition for ethical interaction”) as a virtue that practitioners of argumentation might usefully exhibit. My comments will focus on two central topics: the amicable use of “caring” as central to the ethical picture Norlock sets out, and the relationship between the epistemic and the ethical in argumentation as suggested by her account.


While agreeing with Plato’s concerns about the skills of brilliant Persuaders, Aristotle proceeds to differentiate types of intellectual virtues or excellences, distinguishing those that are capable of successfully but uncritically achieving their aims from those whose exercise intrinsically incorporate good and admirable ends. He then analyzes the constituents of the virtues of practical wisdom, distinguishing those that—like wit, cleverness, and perspicuity—can be exercised independently of the moral virtues. A Persuader can successfully craft an astute and even insightful legal defense for an unjust cause, but he does not qualify as a person of practical wisdom unless his desires and ends are genuinely good. His audience can understand his argument and accept his judgment without being directed or committed to acting well. On the other hand, to qualify as a phronimos, a person of practical wisdom, a Persuader must not only be capable of shrewdly sizing up a jury or an Assembly, saying the right words at the right time and in the right way, he must also do so for the right reason, for the right aims, as an expression of the unity of his intellectual and character virtues. In short, a brilliant, successful Persuader need not be a phronimos, but a phronimos must—among other things—rightly as well as successfully exercise the skills of a talented Persuader.


If argument forms evolve then the possible existence of localized argument forms may create an interpretive impasse between locally distinct argument communities. Appeal to evolutionarily “deep” argument forms may help, but might be strained in cases where emergent argument forms are not reducible to their base conditions. Overcoming such limits presupposes the virtue of compromise, suggesting that compromise may stand as “deep virtue” within argumentative forms of life.


Zarefsky’s overall argument draws an important distinction about commentary on the debate, arguing that Obama won the second debate not only because of an aggressive style, but also because of his argumentative skill. Rather than comment on Zarefsky’s insightful description of crucial argument exchanges in the debate or his analysis of Romney’s use of ethotic argument or how both candidates relied on association and dissociation, I want to focus on underlying implications of his argument. My approach is to use Zarefsky’s analysis as a jumping off point to draw distinctions about what argumentative analysis reveals about American presidential debates.

[358] Robert C. Rowland & Deanna F. Womack. Aristotle’s view of ethical rhetoric. Rhetoric Society Quarterly, 15(1-2):13–31, 1985. We believe that a consistent Aristotelian view of the relation between rhetoric, ethics, and politics can be developed and that Aristotelian ethical theory places substantially different requirements on the rhetor than those imposed by competing theories of rhetoric. In addition, we shall argue that Aristotle’s ethical system is valuable because it commands attention to both the emotional and rational faculties and is well adapted to the needs of a democratic society. We shall develop this position by arguing that rhetoric is both an art of discovering all of the available means of persuasion, and an object which the rhetor produces. As an art, rhetoric is amoral; as a product, rhetoric is either moral or immoral. After clarifying the dual nature of rhetoric as art (techne) and product, we shall systematically analyze the assumptions of Aristotelian ethics. In the final section of this essay, we shall sketch the relevance of Aristotle’s rhetorical ethic for the rhetor in a democracy.


A responsible argument provides justification for believing its conclusion. Bondy and I may disagree on some of the details, but we are essentially in agreement about the nature of responsible argumentation and on the nature of a virtuous arguer, namely, someone disposed to give and to recognize responsible arguments.


In this paper we explore the literature on cognitive heuristics and biases in light of virtue epistemology, specifically highlighting the two major positions—agent-reliabilism and agent-responsibilism (or neo-Aristotelianism)—as they apply to dual systems theories of cognition and the role of motivation in biases. We investigate under which conditions heuristics and biases might be characterized as vicious and conclude that a certain kind of intellectual arrogance can be attributed to an over- or inappropriate reliance on System 1 cognition. By the same token, the proper employment of System 2 cognition results in the virtuous functioning of our cognitive systems (agent-reliabilism). Moreover, the role of motivation in attenuating cognitive biases and the cultivation of certain epistemic habits (a search for accuracy, being accountable for one’s judgments, the use of rules of analysis, and exposure to differing perspectives) points to the tenets of agent-responsibilism in epistemic virtue. We identify the proper use of System 2 cognition and the habits of mind that attenuate biases as demonstrations of the virtue of intellectual humility. We briefly explore the nature of these habits and the contribution of personality traits, situational pressures, and training in their cultivation.


In this study, we compare the overall level of disposition towards critical thinking among college freshmen in New Mexico with that of other undergraduates from around the world. We ascertain whether there are dominant dispositional attributes among students who prefer a certain discipline as their major, between genders and ethnicity.


This study focuses on fostering the motivation to think critically through teaching with exemplars. First, I argue that teachers and parents can be seen as exemplars who exhibit thought processes and attitudes relevant to critical thinking, as do fictional characters in media such as novels and films. Second, I demonstrate that, through learning from exemplars, children may begin to develop their own way of critical thinking. Third, I conclude that admiration for exemplars may motivate children to think critically, even small children who have not yet developed a sensitivity toward evidence and reasons.


Legal, and especially judicial, reasoning is a complex combination of practical wisdom (phronesis), craft (techne), and rhetoric (rhetorica). These three concepts have unique concerns, components, distinctive characteristics, and measures of success. Each of the concepts is also accompanied by risks, or what I have termed the dark sides of practical wisdom, craft, and rhetoric. While these concepts, when taken individually, provide an incomplete and even dangerous account of legal reasoning, these dangers are overcome when they are united to form the bedrock characteristics of the good lawyer and judge. The virtues of intellect and character inherent to practical wisdom temper the risks associated with craft and rhetoric. Practical wisdom imbues craft with a moral dimension that it otherwise lacks and elevates rhetoric above mere sophistry. Craft’s connection with the past tempers the troubling tendencies associated with practical wisdom and rhetoric. Craft balances the elitist and arrogant tendencies of practical wisdom by adding an aspect of humility and grounds rhetoric in a tradition that helps limit rhetorical excesses. Rhetoric’s commitment to giving reasons makes practical wisdom more articulate and craft less secretive, cunning, and tricky. Only in combination do practical wisdom, craft, and rhetoric create a balanced, complete, and compelling account of legal reasoning.


In saying of someone that he or she is a good thinker we may mean one of two things: that the person is intelligent or that the person is thoughtful. A person may be clever without being thoughtful and vice versa. In the first sense, we commend something skill-like. In the second we commend something more like a virtue or trait of character. The educator’s focus, I shall argue in this book, ought to be on the development of the virtue or character trait of thoughtfulness.


An exploratory study is aimed at systematically developing ethical criteria for evaluating contributions to argumentative discussions by bringing together strategies from popular rhetoric with the normative theoretical concept of argumentational integrity. Argumentational integrity constitutes the focus of research in a project of the same name which aims at reconstructing the ethical criteria participants use in evaluating contributions to argumentative discussions. The study rests on the assumption that the diversity of strategy lists in popular theoretical texts can be reduced by asking competent subjects to sort the strategies according to similarity. The similarities themselves can be taken to constitute ways of acting to be avoided in a fair discussion; as a consequence, they can be used to formulate ethical rules or standards of fair argumentation. The construct
of argumentational integrity services as a theoretical framework for this systematization.


The article introduces the concept of 'argumentational integrity' as an ethics of argumentative communication. The article focuses on the development of ethical criteria by which contributions to argumentative discussions can be evaluated; the focus is on the derivation, definition, and specification of the concept. The derivation of the concept starts out from a prescriptive use of 'argumentation', entailing in particular the goal of a rational as well as a cooperative solution. In order to make this goal attainable, contributions to argumentative discussions must meet certain conditions. It is assumed that participants are not only intuitively aware of these conditions, but in fact expect of themselves and others that they will not consciously violate the conditions. This assumption leads to the most general definition of the norm of argumentational integrity: Speakers must not knowingly violate the argumentative conditions. On the basis of an empirical study drawing upon classifications of unethical strategies in popular rhetorical texts, the general norm is then specified in the form of 11 'standards of fair argumentation'.


This article takes up the issue of deliberation and the importance of internal constraints for the proper functioning of a deliberative environment. Those who seek to engage in deliberation must possess certain characteristics, or virtues, that will facilitate deliberation. This article discusses humility within this context. Humility serves as a principle deliberative virtue. Theorists should focus on the characteristics of individuals who make deliberation possible before looking for the proper institutional arrangements. I provide a definition and illustration of humility through a reading of Fyodor Dostoevsky's 'Dream of a Ridiculous Man' and 'Legend of the Grand Inquisitor'.


For a long time, there has been a disparity between social studies as it is conceived by theorists at universities and as it is practiced by teachers. The fundamental difference between these two groups is that the theorists focus on developing critical thinking abilities, while teachers have focused on content acquisition as central. Many reasons for this dichotomy have been advanced. These reasons mainly focus on problems with the educational system itself. This paper proposes an alternative view of the fundamental reason for the lack of consistency between theory and practice. Our view is that, while teachers have been exposed to critical thinking as a teaching strategy, they have not, by and large, adopted it as an ethic. When faced with the difficulties of implementing a critical thinking based program in their classrooms, teachers who have no ethical commitment to the process choose alternative teaching strategies. These strategies are "safer" and usually involve more traditional content. Critical thinking as an ethic is built on several fundamental principles that cannot be learned, but must be experienced. It is incumbent then for university professors to embody the ethic of critical thinking in their own teaching if they hope to influence prospective teachers to adopt and teach a critical social studies.


This essay seeks to establish the claim that there is an “association of persuasion and virtue” in Aristotle’s theory of rhetoric which derives from the nature of the art of rhetoric itself; more specifically, that the ideal practitioner of Aristotle’s Rhetoric employs the skills and qualities of Aristotle’s model of human virtue, the Phronimos or “man of practical wisdom,” who is described in the Nicomachean Ethics. Three arguments support this contention. First, Aristotle’s view of rhetoric should be understood in relation to the concept of practical wisdom since the definitions and provinces of concern assigned by Aristotle to the two concepts are strikingly similar. Secondly, excellent performance of the art of rhetoric Aristotle describes requires the characteristics associated with practical wisdom (phronesis). Finally, the desirable relationship of the man of practical wisdom to the public closely parallels the relationship Aristotle posits between the rhetor and the audience in the Rhetoric.


Connie Missimer (1990) challenges what she calls the Character View, according to which critical thinking involves both skill and character, and argues for a rival conception—the Skill View—according to which critical thinking is a matter of skill alone. In this paper I criticize the Skill View and defend the Character View from Missimer’s critical arguments.


Genuine thinking dispositions are real tendencies, propensities, or inclinations people have to think in particular ways in particular contexts. As such, they are not the same as, or reducible to, either formal rules of good thinking or specific behaviors or patterns of behavior. They can, moreover, contribute to genuine explanations of episodes of thinking, and of long-term patterns of thinking. If this is so, my title questions are answered. The preceding paragraph summarizes what thinking dispositions are. To the question “What good are they?” at least one answer is clear: Thinking dispositions are good to the extent that they cause or bring about good thinking. They do their job when they constitute the “animating force” that causes thinkers to think well.


William Hare has made fundamental contributions to philosophy of education. Among the most important of these contributions is his hugely important work on open-mindedness. In this paper I explore the several relationships that exist between Hare’s favored educational ideal (open-mindedness) and my own (critical thinking). I argue that while both are of central importance, it is the latter that is the more fundamental of the two.
[374] Harvey Siegel. Argumentation and the epistemology of disagreement. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. When epistemic peers disagree, what should a virtuous arguer do? Several options have been defended in the recent literature on the epistemology of disagreement, which connects interestingly to the controversy launched by Fogelin's famous paper on 'deep disagreement.' I will argue that Fogelin's case is transformed by the new work on disagreement, and that when seen in that broader epistemological context 'deep' disagreement is much less problematic for argumentation theory than it once seemed.

[375] Harvey Siegel. Critical thinking and the intellectual virtues. In Jason Baehr, ed., Intellectual Virtues and Education: Essays in Applied Virtue Epistemology, pp. 95–112. Routledge, New York, NY, 2016. What is the relation between critical thinking (henceforth CT) and intellectual virtue? Is CT an intellectual virtue or a cluster of such virtues? Is there anything more to CT than the intellectual virtues it involves? In what follows I hope to answer these questions by addressing three clusters of issues: (1) Are the dispositions, habits of mind and character traits constitutive of the "critical spirit" rightly considered as intellectual virtues? What is gained or lost by so conceiving them? (2) Do the intellectual virtues include abilities as well as dispositions, or are abilities something separate? (3) Should we be "reliabilists" or "responsibilists" with respect to the intellectual virtues? That is, must the intellectual virtues, in order to be virtues, reliably secure the truth? Or might they rather be "excellences" or "perfections" that needn't secure the truth, or be reliable generators of it, in order rightly to be considered virtues? Finally, I will address a more specific question: (4) What is the connection between virtue and reason? More specifically still: Is a virtuous intellect eo ipso a rational one?

[376] Harvey Siegel. Education’s Epistemology: Rationality, Diversity, and Critical Thinking. Oxford University Press, New York, NY, 2017. Education’s Epistemology extends and further defends Harvey Siegel’s “reasons conception” of critical thinking. It analyzes and emphasizes both the epistemic quality, and the dispositions and character traits that constitute the “critical spirit,” that are central to a proper account of critical thinking; argues that that epistemic quality must be understood ultimately in terms of epistemic rationality; defends a conception of rationality that involves both rules and judgment; and argues that critical thinking has normative value over and above its instrumental tie to truth. Siegel also argues, contrary to currently popular multiculturalist thought, for both transcultural and universal philosophical ideals, including those of multiculturality and critical thinking themselves.

[377] Lawrence B. Solum. Virtue jurisprudence: A virtue-centered theory of judging. Metaphilosophy, 34(1–2):178–213, 2003. “Virtue jurisprudence” is a normative and explanatory theory of law that utilizes the resources of virtue ethics to answer the central questions of legal theory. The main focus of this essay is the development of a virtue-centered theory of judging. The exposition of the theory begins with exploration of defects in judicial character, such as corruption and incompetence. Next, an account of judicial virtue is introduced. This includes judicial wisdom, a form of phronesis, or sound practical judgment. A virtue-centered account of justice is defended against the argument that theories of fairness are prior to theories of justice. The centrality of virtue as a character trait can be drawn out by analyzing the virtue of justice into constituent elements. These include judicial impartiality (even-handed sympathy for those affected by adjudication) and judicial integrity (respect for the law and concern for its coherence). The essay argues that a virtue-centered theory accounts for the role that virtuous practical judgment plays in the application of rules to particular fact situations. Moreover, it contends that a virtue-centered theory of judging can best account for the phenomenon of lawful judicial disagreement. Finally, a virtue-centered approach best accounts for the practice of equity, departure from the rules based on the judge’s appreciation of the particular characteristics of individual fact situations.

[378] Yura Song. The moral virtue of open-mindedness. Canadian Journal of Philosophy, 48(1):65–84, 2018. This paper gives a new and richer account of open-mindedness as a moral virtue. I argue that the main problem with existing accounts is that they derive the moral value of open-mindedness entirely from the epistemic role it plays in moral thought. This view is overly intellectualist. I argue that open-mindedness as a moral virtue promotes our flourishing alongside others in ways that are quite independent of its role in correcting our beliefs. I close my discussion by distinguishing open-mindedness from what some might consider its equivalent: empathy and tolerance.

[379] James S. Spiegel. Open-mindedness and intellectual humility. Theory and Research in Education, 10(1):27–38, 2012. Among those who regard open-mindedness as a virtue, there is dispute over whether the trait is essentially an attitude toward particular beliefs or toward oneself as a believer. I defend William Hare’s account of open-mindedness as a first-order attitude toward one’s beliefs and critique Peter Gardner’s view of open-mindedness as a non-committal posture and Jonathan Adler’s claim that open-mindedness is a second-order recognition of one’s fallibility as a knower. While I reject Adler’s account of open-mindedness as a meta-attitude, I affirm his intuition that there is a closely related second-order intellectual virtue pertaining to the attitude we take toward ourselves as knowers. However, this trait is intellectual humility not open-mindedness. I explain why both of these traits are intellectual virtues and how they properly build off one another in the virtuous mind.

[380] James S. Spiegel. Contest and indifference: Two models of open-minded inquiry. Philosophia, 45:789–810, 2017. While open-mindedness as an intellectual trait has been recognized for centuries, Western philosophers have not explicitly endorsed it as a virtue until recently. This acknowledgment has been roughly coincident with the rise of virtue epistemology. As with any virtue, it is
important to inform contemporary discussion of open-mindedness with reflection on sources from the history of philosophy. Here I do just this. After reviewing two major accounts of open-mindedness, which I dub “Contest” and “Indifference,” I explore some ideas pertinent to the subject in four philosophers spanning eighteen centuries: Sextus Empiricus, John Locke, John Stuart Mill, and Paul Feyerabend. Despite their varying concerns and terminology, their contributions may valuably inform current reflection on the virtue of open-mindedness, whether construed in terms of the Contest or Indifference account.

The current debate about disagreement has as rivals those who take the steadfast view and those who affirm conciliationism. Those on the steadfast side maintain that resolute commitment to a belief is reasonable despite peer disagreement. Conciliationists say that peer disagreement necessarily undermines warrant for one’s belief. This article discusses the relevance of open-mindedness to the matter of peer disagreement. It shows how both the steadfast and the conciliatory perspective are consistent with a robust and substantive display of open-mindedness. However, it also turns out that there are more ways to display open-mindedness on the steadfast view than on the conciliatory view.

Intellectual virtues like open-mindedness, clarity, intellectual honesty and the willingness to participate in rational discussions, are conceived as important aims of education. In this paper an attempt is made to clarify the specific nature of intellectual virtues. Firstly, the intellectual virtues are systematically compared with moral virtues. The upshot is that considering a trait of character to be an intellectual virtue implies assuming that such a trait can be derived from, or is a specification of, the cardinal virtue of concern and respect for truth. Secondly, several (possible) misconceptions of intellectual virtues are avoided by making the required distinctions. For example, it is argued that our concept of an intellectual virtue should not be confused with a normative conception of intellectual virtuousness.

When evaluating the arguer instead of the argument, we soon find ourselves confronted with a puzzling situation: what seems to be a virtue in one argumentative situation could very well be called a vice in another. This paper will present the idea that there are in fact two sets of virtues an arguer has to master—and with them four sometimes very different roles.

Feminist argumentation theorists have criticized the Dominant Adversarial Model in argumentation, according to which arguers should take proponent and opponent roles and argue against one another. The model is deficient because it creates disadvantages for nine gendered persons in a way that causes significant epistemic and practical harms. In this paper, I argue that the problem that these critics have pointed out can be generalized: whenever an arguer is given a role in the argument the associated tasks and norms of which she cannot fulfill, she is liable to suffer morally significant harms. One way to react to this problem is by requiring arguers to set up argument structures and allocate roles so that the argument will be reasons-reflective as balanced a way as possible. However, I argue that this would create to heavy a burden. Arguers would then habitually have to take on roles that require them to divert time and energy away from the goals that they started arguing for and instead serve the goal of ideal reasons-reflectiveness. At least prima facie arguers should be able to legitimately devote their time and energy towards their own goals. This creates a problem: On the one hand, structures that create morally significant harms for some arguers should be avoided—on the other hand, arguers should be able to take argument-roles that allow them to devote themselves to their own argumentative goals. Filling the second requirement for some arguers will often create the morally significant harms for their interlocutors. There are two possible solutions for this problem: first, arguers might be required to reach free, consensual agreements on the structure they will adopt for their argument and the way they will distribute argumentative roles. I reject this option as both fundamentally unfeasible and practically unrealistic, based on arguments developed by theorists like Krabbe and Jacobs. I argue that instead, we should take a liberal view on argument ethics. Arguers should abide by moral side constraints to their role taking. They should feel free to take roles that will allow them to concentrate on their argumentative goals, but only if this does not create a situation in which their interlocutors are pushed into a role that they cannot effectively play.

If circumstances were always simple and all arguers were always exclusively concerned with cognitive improvement, arguments would probably always be cooperative. However, we have other goals and there are other arguers, so in practice the default seems to be adversarial argumentation. We naturally inhabit the heuristically helpful but cooperation-inhibiting roles of proponents and opponents. We can, however, opt for more cooperative roles. The resources of virtue argumentation theory are used to explain when proactive cooperation is permissible, advisable, and even mandatory—and also when it is not.

If arguers were exclusively concerned with cognitive improvement, arguments would be cooperative. However, we have other goals and there are other arguers, so the default is adversarial argumentation. We naturally inhabit the heuristically helpful but cooperation-inhibiting roles of proponents and opponents. We can,
however, opt for more cooperative roles. The resources of virtue argumentation theory are used to explain when proactive cooperation is permissible, advisable, even mandatory – and also when it is not.

[387] L. Paul Strait & Brett Wallace. Academic debate as a decision-making game: Inculcating the virtue of practical wisdom. *Contemporary Argumentation and Debate*, 29:1–37, 2008. This essay argues for a pedagogical renewal in the academic debate community, which currently lacks a clear telos. Practical wisdom, as defined by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is proposed as the final cause of academic debating. Practical wisdom is identified with the process of good decision-making. Controversies in the theory of disadvantages, counterplans, and critiques are evaluated. In order to realize the final cause of practical wisdom, debate theory needs to be restructured according to a common-sense understanding of decision-making. The authors advocate a more rigorous and systematic approach for debating and evaluating theoretical arguments.

[388] Wan Shahrazad Wan Sulaiman, Wan Rafaee Abdul Rahman, & Mariam Adawiah Dzulkifli. Examining the construct validity of the adapted California Critical Thinking Dispositions (CCTDI) among university students in Malaysia. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 7(3):282–288, 2010. This research aims at evaluating the psychometric properties of the adapted California Critical Thinking Dispositions (CCTDI) particularly the construct validity. CCTDI consists of 75 Likert-type items measuring seven dispositions, namely truth-seeking, open-mindedness, analyticity, systematicity, inquisitiveness, self-confidence and maturity. The participants of this study involved 425 undergraduate and graduate students. Results showed that the CCTDI has satisfactory construct validity with seven subscales extracted and confirmed by exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. These evidences of construct validity were further supported with the results of high Cronbach alpha indicating that it is a valid and reliable instrument to measure critical thinking dispositions.

[389] Alessandra Tanesini. Arrogance, anger and debate. *Sympoision*, 5(2):213–227, 2018. Arrogance has widespread negative consequences for epistemic practices. Arrogant people tend to intimidate and humiliate other agents, and to ignore or dismiss their views. They have a propensity to mansplain. They are also angry. In this paper I explain why anger is a common manifestation of arrogance in order to understand the effects of arrogance on debate. I argue that *superbia* (which is the kind of arrogance that is my concern here) is a vice of superiority characterised by an overwhelming desire to diminish other people in order to excel and by a tendency to arrogate special entitlements for oneself, including the privilege of not having to justify one’s claims.

[390] Alessandra Tanesini. Reducing arrogance in public debate. In J. Arthurs, ed., *Virtues in the Public Sphere: Citizenship, Civic Friendship, and Duty*. Routledge, London, 2018. Self-affirmation techniques can help reduce arrogant behaviour in public debates. This chapter consists of three sections. The first offers an account of what speakers owe to their audiences, and of what hearers owe to speakers. It also illustrates some of the ways in which arrogance leads to violations of conversational norms. The second argues that arrogance can be understood as an attitude toward the self which is positive but defensive. The final section offers empirical evidence why we should expect self-affirmation to reduce defensiveness and thus the manifestation of arrogance in debate.

[391] Barbara J. Thayer-Bacon. Caring reasoning. *Inquiry: Critical Thinking Across the Disciplines*, 19(4):22–34, 2000. I want to examine here the ontological and epistemological assumptions of caring as a form of moral orientation. By doing so, I will be able to make the case that caring is as vital for epistemological theories as it is for moral theories. Caring does not just inform ethics, it informs reasoning as well. I will argue that caring reasoning helps ensure we understand each other’s different, shifting views fairly and generously while at the same time avoiding too narrowly defining caring and risking essentializing it. Caring reasoning can help answer concerns feminists have expressed about caring, as a moral orientation, in terms of supplying justification and drawing awareness to historical context and social systems.

[392] Juli K. Thorsen. Thick, thin, and becoming a virtuous arguer. *Topoi*, 35(2):359–366, 2016. A virtue account is focused on the character of those who argue. It is frequently assumed, however, that virtues are not action guiding, since they describe how to be and so fail to give us specific actions to take in a sticky situation. In terms of argumentation, we might say that being a charitable arguer is virtuous, but knowing so provides no details about how to argue successfully. To close this gap, I develop a parallel with the thick-thin distinction from ethics and use Hursthouse’s notion of “v-rules.” I also draw heavily from the work in argumentation by Daniel Cohen to develop Wayne Brockriede’s notion of arguing lovingly. But “argue lovingly” has a delicious ambiguity. For Brockriede it describes how we engage with others arguers. It can also mean, however, a loving attachment to knowledge, understanding, and truth. Applying the thick-thin distinction to argumentation in general and loving argumentation in particular shows that a virtue theoretic approach to argumentation is valuable for two reasons: it can provide one articulation of what it means to be a virtuous arguer and provide some insights into how to become one.

[393] Valerie Tiberius. Virtue and practical deliberation. *Philosophical Studies*, 111:147–172, 2002. The question of how to reason well is an important normative question, one which ultimately motivates some of our interest in the more abstract topic of the principles of practical reason. It is this normative question that I propose to address by arguing that given the goal of an important kind of deliberation, we will deliberate better if we develop certain virtues. I give an account of the virtue of stability and I argue that stability makes reasoners (of a certain sort) reason better. Further, I suggest at the end of the paper that an account of virtues that conduce to good reasoning might go a long way toward answering some of the traditional questions about the principles of practical reason.

Open-mindedness seems to be a virtue because an open mind is more receptive to the truth. But if value judgments are best understood as a human projection, expression, or construction, then it is unclear why open-mindedness is a virtue when it comes to normative judgments. If moral truths are not “out there”, what is the point of an open mind? What are we being open to? Further, if oughts and values are, in some way, contingent on us, open-mindedness may put us at greater risk of losing important convictions than in the case of belief about the world. In this paper I defend open-mindedness for normative judgment in the context of meta-ethical theories that makes values mind-dependent.


Implicit in Confucius’ emphasis on self-cultivation is the need not only to cultivate our jen (benevolence, humanity, kindheartedness), but also to develop and apply our reasoning mind—as an enlightened and disciplined way of bringing about and maintaining social order. In this paper, I would like to investigate how this is understood and pursued from the Confucian perspective. The ideas I express are developed from those of Confucius and his influential followers—Mencius, Chu Hsi, and Wang Yang-ming.


Much of the literature addressing environmental virtue tends to focus on what might be called “personal virtue”—individual actions, characteristics, or dispositions that benefit the individual actor. There has, in contrast, been relatively little interest in either “virtue politics”—collective actions, characteristics, or dispositions—or in what might be called “public virtues,” actions, characteristics, or dispositions that benefit the community rather than the individual. This focus, however, is problematic, especially in a society that valorizes individuality. This paper examines public virtue and its role in environmental virtue ethics. First, I outline different types of virtue in order to frame the discussion of public virtues and, in particular, a subclass of virtues I will refer to as political virtue. Second, I focus on practical problems and address the inadequacy of personal virtue for effecting social change and, therefore, for addressing most environmental crises. Finally, I argue that public and political virtues are necessary, if under emphasized, conditions for the flourishing of the individual, and that they are important complements to more traditional environmental virtues.


In this paper, I propose a virtue-theoretic approach to semantics, according to which the study of linguistic competence in particular, and the study of meaning and language in general, should focus on a speaker’s interpretative virtues, such as charity and interpretability, rather than the speaker’s knowledge of rules. The first part of the paper proffers an argument for shifting to virtue semantics, and the second part outlines the nature of such virtue semantics.


Rational persuasion is paternalistic, I argue, when it is motivated by distrust in the other’s capacity to adequately recognize or weigh reasons that bear on her good, when it conveys that she is insufficiently capable of engaging with those reasons, as a competent person is expected to be able to do, and when it occludes an opportunity for her to engage independently with those reasons herself.


In this paper, I argue for a Confucian moral emotivism. I do this by exploring the meaning of Confucian virtues and in particular the role of jen (benevolence). Jen is understood as the highest virtue in Confucian moral theory, and in particular, as a virtue that is central to the Confucian conception of the good life. I argue that jen is essentially a moral emotion, and that it is this emotion that is central to the Confucian conception of the good life.


Anne-Maren Andersen starts her contribution developing the term pistis into an analytical tool that she summarizes in table 1. She then applies the tool on Danish parliamentary debate. Forced to make a choice I limit myself to some sketchy remarks about the first part, the way Andersen develops the term pistis. In my opinion it is useful to elaborate on the history of this term pistis to decide whether we should adopt this term to denote the analytical tool presented in table 1. My
In preparing an argument, there are always strategic and tactical decisions that will influence your ethos with the listener. Think about those decisions—and their potential effect on your ethos—the next time you try a case or argue a motion or an appeal. Consider how a certain argument might affect the listener’s perception of your integrity, of your knowledge, of your sincerity. Ponder whether your clever allusions will make the jury like you or identify with you. What Aristotle observed long ago, contemporary research has confirmed: Ethos could make the difference between whether your argument succeeds or fails.


Argumentation is a mechanism to support different forms of reasoning such as decision making and persuasion and always cast under the light of critical thinking. In the latest years, several computational approaches to argumentation have been proposed to detect conflicting information, take the best decision with respect to the available knowledge, and update our own beliefs when new information arrives. The common point of all these approaches is that they assume a purely rational behavior of the involved actors, be them humans or artificial agents. However, this is not the case as humans are proved to behave differently, mixing rational and emotional attitudes to guide their actions. Some works have claimed that there exists a strong connection between the argumentation process and the emotions felt by people involved in such process. We advocate a complementary, descriptive and experimental method, based on the collection of emotional data about the way human reasoners handle emotions during debate interactions. Across different debates, people’s argumentation in plain English is correlated with the emotions automatically detected from the participants, their engagement in the debate, and the mental workload required to debate. Results show several correlations among emotions, engagement and mental workload with respect to the argumentation elements. For instance, when two opposite opinions are conflicting, this is reflected in a negative way on the debaters’ emotions. Beside their theoretical value for validating and inspiring computational argumentation theory, these results have applied value for developing artificial agents meant to argue with human users or to assist users in the management of debates.


When evaluating the arguer instead of the argument, we soon find ourselves confronted with a puzzling situation: What seems to be a virtue in one argumentative situation could very well be called a vice in another. This talk will present the idea that there are in fact four roles an arguer has to master—and with them four sometimes very different sets of virtues.


In conclusion will be not to adopt it this way. However, that does not mean that the analytical tool pretended by Andersen is not useful to analyze parliamentary debate. The theoretical foundation however can be found in existing theories about the principle of charity and cooperation principle.


In this paper, it is shown how formal dialectic can be extended to model multi-agent argumentation in which each participant is an agent. An agent is viewed as a participant in a dialogue who not only has goals, and the capability for actions, but who also has stable characteristics of types that can be relevant to an assessment of some of her arguments used in that dialogue. When agents engage in argumentation in dialogues, each agent has a credibility function that can be adjusted upwards or downwards by certain types of arguments brought forward by the other agent in the dialogue. One type is the argument against the person or argumentum ad hominem, in which personal attack on one party’s character is used to attack his argument. Another is the appeal to expert opinion, traditionally associated with the informal fallacy called the argumentum ad verecundiam. In any particular case, an agent will begin a dialogue with a given degree of credibility, and what is here called the credibility function will affect the plausibility of the arguments put forward by that agent. In this paper, an agent is shown to have specific character traits that are vital to properly judging how this credibility function should affect the plausibility of her arguments, including veracity, prudence, sincerity and openness to opposed arguments. When one of these traits is a relevant basis for an adjustment in a credibility function, there is a shift to a subdialogue in which the argumentation in the case is re-evaluated. In such a case, it is shown how the outcome can legitimately be a reduction in the credibility rating of the arguer who was attacked. Then it is shown how the credibility function should be brought into an argument evaluation in the case, yielding the outcome that the argument is assigned a lower plausibility value.


Robert Kimball, in “What’s Wrong with Argumentum Ad Baculum?” (Argumentation, 2006) argues that dialogue-based models of rational argumentation do not satisfactorily account for what is objectionable about more malicious uses of threats encountered in some ad baculum arguments. We review the dialogue-based approach to argumentum ad baculum, and show how it can offer more than Kimball thinks for analyzing such threat arguments and ad baculum fallacies.


I conclude that sensitive issues pose strategic challenges for deliberative democrats: the criteria that govern the validity of assertions—in particular, truthfulness and sometimes even truth—often trade off against those
features of communication that endow individuals with the status of participants. Deliberative diplomacy—which may require expressive insincerities—is to be preferred when issues are at their most sensitive and conditions of discourse less than ideal.


Good manners “interfere with expression for the sake of responsiveness to others, and such interferences are both more noticeable and more important under conditions of conflict”. Insincerity of this kind, and within the context of sensitive issues, may sometimes have a role to play in enabling deliberation—a position I call “deliberative diplomacy.” It is this claim to which Lenard and Adler take exception, since they view my position as endangering the ethic of truthfulness upon which reasoned discourse depends. I respond by developing eleven interrelated elements of the argument which, although stated in the article, were either not sufficiently developed or remained implicit.


There is something fundamentally wrong with the “critical thinking” (CT) movement that has gained so much momentum in American education over the last decade. In this essay I shall argue (1) that the general content of CT pedagogy is not truly centered on human thinking at all, but on some other vital, but radically different, mental faculty that might better be called “reasoning”; and (2) that the development of the capacity for true thinking, and not merely reasoning, is profoundly important and may even be the crucial condition for the development of individual moral consciousness. Thus, the so-called CT movement, while intending in part to develop moral insight or knowledge, may actually be self-restricting in this regard. In distinguishing thinking from reasoning, this essay endeavors to restore virtue to the activity of thinking, virtue in the sense of essential nature, as well as in the sense of moral worth.


Despite some recent extensive work on the characterisation of the character-based virtues (e.g. Roberts and Wood, 2007; Baehr 2011) no detailed treatment of the intellectual virtue of inquisitiveness has yet been forthcoming. Inquisitiveness, however, is often cited as an example of intellectual virtue in the contemporary literature (e.g. Baehr 2011; Zagzebski 1996). An in-depth examination of the virtue of inquisitiveness is therefore apt in the context of this emerging discourse. Part I of this paper will review three approaches to characterising the intellectual virtues taken by Zagzebski (1996), Roberts and Wood (2007) and Baehr (2011) and subsequently develop a characterisation of inquisitiveness. Part II will extend this examination by investigating the unique role that inquisitiveness plays in the intellectually virtuous life thus highlighting its place at the heart of the autonomous virtue epistemological framework.


Questioning is a familiar, everyday practice which we use, often unreflectively, in order to gather information, communicate with each other, and advance our inquiries. Yet, not all questions are equally effective and not all questioners are equally adept. Being a good questioner requires a degree of proficiency and judgment, both in determining what to ask and in deciding who, where, when, and how to ask. Good questioning is an intellectual skill. Given its ubiquity and significance, it is an intellectual skill that, I believe, we should educate for. In this paper, I present a central line of argument in support of educating for good questioning, namely, that it plays an important role in the formation of an individual's intellectual character and can thereby serve as a valuable pedagogical tool for intellectual character education. I argue that good questioning plays two important roles in the cultivation of intellectual character: good questioning (1) stimulates intellectually virtuous inquiry and (2) contributes to the development of several of the individual intellectual virtues. Insofar as the cultivation of intellectually virtuous character is a desirable educational objective, we should educate for good questioning.


Interpreting the concept of “rationality” as referring to a kind of virtue helps us to solve some of the problems that arise when we theorize with this concept. For example, this interpretation helps us to understand the relations between “rationality” and “rational requirements”, and the distinction that epistemologists often signal by the terms “propositional” and “doxastic justification”. Finally, interpreting rationality in this way will help us to answer some of the objections that have been raised against the thesis that the term ‘rational’, as it is used in these contexts in epistemology and decision theory, expresses a normative concept of any kind. In particular, I shall argue that this interpretation helps us to answer the following objection. It has seemed plausible to many formal epistemologists and decision theorists that rationality involves having mental states with certain formal features—such as consistency or probabilistic coherence—in one’s beliefs, or preferences that meet certain so-called “axioms” like transitivity, monotonicity, stochastic dominance, and the like. However, it is not obviously even possible for ordinary agents to have mental states with these formal features. If “rationality” is a normative concept, would not the claim that rationality requires these formal features conflict with the principle that ‘ought’ implies ‘can’? As I shall argue, understanding rationality as a kind of virtue will help us to find a solution to this problem.


Brian MacPherson has, it seems to me, offered us an excellent account showing that and why virtue-based argumentation theories need supplementation, and he
has, in my view, directed us to the right sort of supplementation to overcome this problem. But some may see problems with the supplementation he offers, and so his next task should be to clarify the nature and role of the pragmatic-utilitarian supplementation he gestures towards.


The Dominant Adversarial Model (DAM) has arguers in a metaphorical battle, each arguer seeking to destroy the other’s argument. In this commentary on “DAMmed If You Do, DAMmed If You Don’t” by Sharon Bailin and Mark Battersby (which is itself a commentary on a paper by Dan Cohen on the Dominant Adversarial Model) I raise one issue about the metaphor and suggest an alternative metaphor. Cohen thinks we should reject or replace or supplement the DAM. Bailin and Battersby agree but think Cohen does not go far enough.


Agreement among professionals is often considered as evidence that a decision is correct. The reasoning behind this principle is that it is unlikely that independent experts would all choose a wrong alternative. Concurring opinions in medicine, consensus on faculty committees, and unanimous appeals court decisions exemplify how the principle makes us confident. The expertise of someone who disagrees with the consensus answer is deemed questionable. We challenge this view, arguing that agreement with other experts is neither necessary nor sufficient for expertise.


Never having been trained in rhetorical theory or, to any appreciable extent, classical philosophy, and not having done nearly enough reading in either, I’m more than a little afraid to be doing what I’m doing here, presuming to be able to write a professional paper on my topic, ethos and argument. But being of good character (or ethos), and, in particular, being truthful, I’d like you all to blame Alan Brinton if this paper is the dismal failure that it may well be. It was Brinton who first introduced me to rhetorical theory and encouraged me to write on the topic.


The purpose of this study was to investigate (1) the relationship between critical thinking skills (CTS) and critical thinking dispositions (CTD), and (2) the effectiveness of different levels of instructional strategy (asynchronous online discussions (AODs), CTS instruction via AODs, and CTS instruction with CTD cultivation via AODs) in improving students’ CTS and CTD. A pretest and posttest quasi-experimental design was employed to achieve this purpose. The participants in this study were 220 students enrolled in a general education course at a large university in Taiwan. The findings of this study were as follows: (1) the overall relationship between CTS and CTD was positive. However, further analysis of the relationship between the different levels of CTS and CTD showed that only the students with high CTS and medium CTD showed a significant correlation; (2) the enhancement in CTS reinforced CTD, but the improvement in CTD did not increase the level of CTS. In addition, it is recommended that to improve the CTS and CTD of all students (including the students with a high level of CTS), the instructional strategy, CTS instruction with CTD cultivation, be employed.


An ad hominem fallacy is committed when an individual employs an irrelevant personal attack against an opponent instead of addressing that opponent’s argument. Many discussions of such fallacies discuss judgments of relevance about such personal attacks, and consider how we might distinguish those that are relevant from those that are not. This paper will argue that the literature on bias and testimony can helpfully contribute to that analysis. This will highlight ways in which biases, particularly unconscious biases, can make ad hominem fallacies seem effective, even when the irrelevance is recognized.


An ad hominem fallacy is an error in logical reasoning in which an interlocutor attacks the person making the argument rather than the argument itself. There are many different ways in which this can take place, and many different effects this can have on the direction of the argument itself. This paper will consider ways in which an ad hominem fallacy can lead to an interlocutor acquiring less status as a knower, even if the fallacy itself is recognized. The decrease in status can occur in the eyes of the interlocutor herself, as seen in cases of stereotype threat, or in the eyes of others in the epistemic community, as in the case of implicit bias. Both of these will be discussed as ways in which an ad hominem fallacy can constitute an epistemic injustice.


Stephen Stich has criticized the possibility of providing a legitimate set of norms for reasoning, since such norms are justified via reference to pretheoretical intuitions. I argue that through a process of perspicuously mapping the belief sphere one can generate a list of intellectual virtues that instrumentally lead to
true beliefs. Hence, one does not have to rely on intuitions since the norms of reason are derived from factual claims about the intellectually virtuous agent.


By consensus, President Barack Obama’s performance in the first 2012 Presidential debate was weak. Anticipating the second debate, commentators asserted that he must make a strong comeback to revive his candidacy. He is widely judged to have done so. I will examine the major argumentative exchanges in the debate to determine to what degree it exhibited virtues of argumentation and whether Obama’s perceived comeback was a matter of argumentative superiority as well as performance.

[422] David Zarefsky. Commentary on: Christian Kock’s “Virtue reversed: Principal argumentative vices in political debate”. In Dima Mohammed & Marcin Lewiński, eds., Virtues of Argumentation: Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA), May 22–25, 2013. OSSA, Windsor, ON, 2014. There is little to criticize in Christian Kock’s presentation. Contemporary political argumentation often falls far short of displaying the virtues we ideally would like to see. Sometimes, as Kock asserts, the absence of these virtues actually counts as vice. Claims put forward as arguments, or for which arguments are required, often stand as unsupported assertions. Debaters present as deductive entailments what really are inductive, probabilistic arguments, for which Kock’s stipulated standards of accuracy, relevance, and weight are inappropriate. And advocates often ignore counterarguments.


The basic premise driving this work is fairly straightforward: that contextualized argumentation in science education may be understood as an instance of education for citizenship. If one accepts this premise, then it becomes essential to present to students the humanistic face of scientific decisions that entail moral and ethical issues, arguments and the evidence used to arrive at those decisions. Separating learning of the content of science from consideration of its application and its implications (i.e., context) is an artificial divorce.


We present empirical evidence that methods employed to teach critical thinking are likelier to facilitate the discernment and correction of biases in others’ reasoning than to have a similar effect in the self-monitoring case. Therefore, standard CT instruction likely fails to foster one of the virtues of argumentation: to know one’s biases. Exemplified by false polarization, we suggest that instruction may be improved by fostering student’s abilities at counterfactual meta-cognition (a.k.a. “seriously considering the other side”).


Despite its long tradition the research of classical rhetoric can provide many interesting perspectives even today, since through renewed readings of ancient works possible reinterpretations of certain concepts that belong to the ancient system of classical rhetoric are enabled. At the same time a detailed research of the classical rhetorical system offers one of the most useful starting points to refine our perception of its concepts and recognize the value of their application to the contemporary models of rhetorical and argumentative analysis. In this sense, one of the most interesting classical concepts appears to be rhetorical ethos, a strategy of (favorable) character presentation. Known and studied mostly either solely from Aristotle’s conceptualizations of pisteis entekhos or from the perspective of a moral character that comes from Isocrates and Plato, ancient rhetorical ethos in fact reveals a multifaceted nature that comes from different conception of the role of the speaker in Greek and Roman society. Based on this hypothesis, we present examples of different ancient conceptions of character presentation and propose two main interpretative directions that, only when joined together, fully constitute a complex concept of classical rhetorical ethos. Considering some contemporary notions of ethos that can be identified within modern rhetorical and argumentative theoretical models, we also demonstrate how such elaborated understanding of rhetorical ethos can contribute to modern rhetorical or/and argumentative analysis.