

## *Introduction*

In the following pages are to be found sixteen of the forty papers delivered at the Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation (OSSA) conference held at Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario in May of 1995. Most of the papers have been revised in light of comments raised at the conference and by referees for these "Proceedings".

The theme of the conference was 'Argumentation and Education', and each paper here addresses questions connected with one or the other of this pair, or the relationship between them.

As the study of arguments, reasons, and reasoning generally, argumentation has close connections to the goals and interests of education. Models of education that look to encourage competent, autonomous reasoners, and to create environments in which their development is fostered, can learn much from recent and ongoing studies in argumentation theory. And those scholars working in the disparate fields that connect within argumentation studies understand the importance of education as giving context and meaning to their endeavours. At the same time, the impetus for many of the innovations within argumentation theory have come from education's promoting of critical thinking.

Thus, the spheres of Argumentation and Education interact at important junctions. It was in part the desire to explore these junctures that occasioned the conference, some of the fruits of which are apparent in these papers. The interdisciplinary conference attracted scholars from eleven disciplines, from philosophy and communication studies to politics and cognitive science. We are fortunate to have six of these areas represented in the 'Proceedings'.

We begin with the three keynote addresses. Robert Binkley looks first to distinguish Argumentation and Logic. The former, he insists, provides rules for arguing, aiming at persuasion or dispute resolution; the latter provides standards of correctness, aiming at truth and decision making. While keeping the two disciplines distinct, Binkley offers an account of reasoning as "constructing a reckoning" to act as a bridge between reasoning and arguing. Then, he proceeds to apply the model to education.

Frans H. van Eemeren is concerned with the wider question of democracy and the related roles of education and argumentative discourse in promoting it. His approach is to clarify the major developments in Argumentation Studies in the decades since Toulmin's and Perelman's early work. Each of these developments, from Formal Analyses of Fallacies to Pragma-Dialectics, is illustrated by its application to a central case. Van Eemeren proposes that the various contributions need to be brought together to create a sound basis for developing educational methods that can improve the quality of democracy.

The paper by Harvey Siegel makes specific attempts to relate the goals of education and argumentation. Writing as a philosopher of education as well as an argumentation theorist, Siegel identifies rationality as the key idea linking the two

concerns. He promotes a model of education which fosters the development of students' rationality, one which gives them a broad appreciation of 'reasons.' As a discipline intimately concerned with the nature of reasons, argumentation is particularly suited to facilitate the aims of education. Siegel's paper proceeds to defend the idea of rationality against recent postmodern criticisms.

The other papers may be divided into those that develop theoretical points which are then applied to educational concerns; those that restrict themselves to questions in the domain of education; and those which develop theoretical points in argumentation theory.

In the first category, Daniel H. Cohen analyzes the 'arguments are war' metaphor which has caused others so much concern, and argues that we need better metaphors in order to facilitate the role of argumentation in education. Aaron Ben-Ze'ev argues that the emotions are more efficient than intellectual thinking for presenting arguments. Accordingly, he looks at the educational implications of this idea. Connie Missimer connects argumentation to education through a concept of critical thinking viewed as *the* phenomenon which drives the growth of knowledge. This 'alternative argumentation' is illustrated with examples of major breakthroughs in knowledge from the works of Newton, Darwin, and Mill. Finally, in this category, Joseph A. Novak uses the development of atomic theory to illustrate how the method of hypothesis is used in logic and philosophy of science. Novak provides insight into theory formation and the relation between theory and evidence.

Specific educational questions motivate the contributions of Christina Slade and Ronald R. Irwin. Slade contrasts the conception of reflection and higher order thinking provided by Philosophy for Children with the model of reflective reasoning informed by the Cartesian view of the self. In promoting the former model, she shows it to be one in which reflective dialogue stands as the fundamental context in which reflection is possible and higher order thinking engendered. Irwin examines the use of a computer-based writing tool ('Hermes') in discussing the importance of students' developmental readiness for the effectiveness of teaching methods (such as argumentation skills). Finally here, we find Alan Brinton's contribution to how argumentation itself should be taught. Reflecting on the value of common stock cases repeated in the textbooks, he advocates the formalization of arguments in order to facilitate identification and reconstruction. At the same time, Brinton observes that not all argument types can be formalized.

Papers which promote and develop theoretical points with respect to the conference theme comprise the remaining pieces. Ralph H. Johnson's model of manifest rationality stands behind his paper on the Principle of Vulnerability, which states that arguers must not attempt to render their arguments immune to legitimate criticism. Johnson explains the details of this principle and defends it against known and anticipated objections. James Freeman adds to his recent work on premise acceptability with an examination of the dual character of acceptability in terms of epistemic normativity and warrant. He argues that the

concept of acceptability is philosophically coherent, in spite of the tension between what seem to be internalist and externalist notions. In a further paper, Robert C. Pinto explores inconsistency in the holding of beliefs. He argues that while inconsistency is a fault, it need not be a serious fault, and so there are cases where the most rational course is to subscribe to beliefs which form an inconsistent set. Another contribution to theory, this one from Mark Vorobej, explores ways in which premises provide logical support for a conclusion even when, in isolation, they are irrelevant to that conclusion. He further marks the distinction between convergent and linked arguments and introduces the class of hybrid arguments.

The final two papers collected here make theoretical contributions to the literature on fallacies. David Hitchcock explores the difficulties involved in attributing fallacies, like denying the antecedent, to others. He argues that such claims can only be made after extensive analysis of the argument in question. Larry Powers explores the one fallacy theory which understands equivocation to be the only fallacy. In challenging psychological criteria of fallacies, he insists that an argument can be a fallacy even if no one is taken in by it.

The richness and diversity of these papers attest to the high calibre of interaction which characterized the OSSA '95 conference. Regrettably, space restrictions prevented the inclusion of all the fine papers that were made available for these "Proceedings", and difficult decisions have had to be made in compiling a selection at once representative and of high quality. We hope that all concerned will be as impressed as we have been by the papers it has been possible to include, and that readers will be stimulated to reflect further on the questions raised.

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