

From the Editors

Articles

The articles joined by happenstance in this issue illustrate one of the defining properties of informal logic: it is about questions generated by the goal of understanding the operations of argument in the polis.

The *ad hominem* rejoinder, attack or argument has received considerable attention in the scholarly literature in recent years. Douglas Walton, one of the more active participants in those discussions, is here joined by dialogue logician Erik Krabbe, and their collaboration in "It's All Very Well for You to Talk" takes the analysis to its most advanced point thus far. Let there be no more talk of *the argumentum ad hominem*: Krabbe and Walton here identify seven varieties of just the circumstantial *ad hominem*; they also address the question whether such arguments are always fallacious.

Trudy Govier, author of numerous widely-cited informal logic papers (see Allen, below) and a well-known textbook, has been on a sabbatical from informal logic in recent years, working on a project on the nature and importance of trust. "When Logic Meets Politics," marks her return, and in it she addresses the intersection of issues—feminism, epistemology, and argumentation, among others—raised by the Hill-Thomas controversy.

Political philosopher and informal logician Derek Allen combines pedagogy with theory in the classic informal logic manner in "Relevance, Conduction and Canada's Rape-Shield Decision." He offers a case study for use in the classroom, and then exploits his analysis of it to raise theoretical issues about the nature of relevance in argument and the nature of "conductive" argument.

Deborah Orr's *Informal Logic* article (XI.1) on the significance of Carol Gilligan's work for the issue of sex-based differences of reasoning and logic continues to provoke controversy. In "Do Women and Men Use Different Logics?" feminist philosopher Sandra Menssen disagrees with Orr's thesis, and in the process of supporting her position, engages an interesting range of literature on the subject, including a reexamination of part of Gilligan's work.

Reviews

Critical thinking is a widely endorsed educational ideal; but does the critical thinking that's learned in application to one topic or issue in the classroom generalize? That is one formulation of the question posed by Stephen Norris to the authors, from a variety of disciplines, whose papers are collected in *The Generalizability of Critical Thinking*, here reviewed by Walter Okshevsky.

Best known for his theoretical work in epistemic logic and the logic of questions, Jaakko Hintikka is not uninterested in the teaching of good reasoning. He and James Bachman have combined that interest with a belief in the importance of interrogative logic to produce *What If...? Towards Excellence in Reasoning*, which is reviewed for us by Gerald Nosich.

Robert Fogelin's text, *Understanding Arguments*, was when it first appeared in the 1970s one of the major ground-breaking textbooks in the informal logic movement. It has enjoyed a healthy life, and the fourth edition, co-authored with Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, is now reviewed by Michael Levin.

Abstracts

Book Review Editor Jonathan Adler recommended this new feature: abstracts of texts in the field *written by their authors*. We thus get what the authors think is most important for readers of *Informal Logic* to know about their books, and self-promotion is controlled by a strict word limit. The texts need not be recently-published; in fact, here is an opportunity for readers to be informed of texts that are no longer heavily promoted. In this connection, we are honoured to be able to include, received in firm and steady typescript from 92-year-old W.H. Werkmeister, the abstract of his *Introduction to Critical Thinking*, first published in 1948.

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Informal Logic remains a subscriber-funded journal with constant cash-flow problems. Please (please!) remit your payment when billed.

INFORMAL LOGIC is published with the support and generous financial assistance of the Dean of Arts and the University of Windsor, Canada.

