

CRRAR

Centre for Research in Reasoning, Argumentation and Rhetoric

presents

BUILDING ON SCRIVEN'S VIEWS ON EXPLANATION

Dr. Douglas Walton

CRRAR Distinguished Research Fellow

Abstract

In 1962 Michael Scriven argued that satisfactory explanations can be given of everyday events without appealing to covering laws. He also put forward in 2002 the view that explanation is filling in gaps in understanding, part of a process in which we start out with some understanding of something. Building on these views and recent work in AI, this paper models explanation in a dialogue in which one party asks a question requesting understanding of something and the other offers a response that claims to convey the requested understanding. The speech acts of requesting and providing an explanation are represented as rule-governed dialogue moves with distinctive pre and post conditions.

**Thursday, January 14th, 2010
4:00 p.m.**

**Parker House Lounge
105 Sunset Ave.**

All are welcome

