The uses of argument in communicative contexts

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Abstract: This paper challenges the view that arguments are (by definition, as it were) attempts to persuade or convince an audience to accept (or reject) a point of view by presenting reasons for (or against) that point of view. I maintain, first, that an arguer need not intend *any* effect beyond that of making it manifest to readers or hearers that there is a reason for doing some particular thing (e.g. for believing a certain proposition, or alternatively for rejecting it), and second that when an arguer is in fact trying to induce an effect above and beyond rendering a reason manifest, the effect intended – the *use* to which his or her argument is put – *need not* be that hearers "do" what the stated reasons are reasons for "doing." Where the actual or intended effect of making a reason R for "doing X" manifest is something *other than* "doing X," I call it an *oblique* – as opposed to a *direct* – effect of making that reason manifest. The core of the paper presents an overview or map of the main categories of effect which arguments can have, and the main sub-types within each category, calling attention to the points at which such effects can be indirect or oblique effects. The purpose of that typology is to make it clear (i) how oblique effects can come about and (ii) how important a role they can play in the conduct of argumentation.

Key words: argumentation, reasons, persuasion, communicative context, making manifest

1. INTRODUCTION

There is, undoubtedly, an important connection between argument and argumentation, on the one hand, and persuasion, on the other. One of the meanings listed for 'argument' in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* is "discourse intended to persuade"; and the first sense of "persuade" in that same dictionary is rendered as "to move by argument, entreaty, or expostulation to a belief, position, or course of action." Indeed, the emphasis on persuasion in the rhetorical analysis of argumentation goes back at least to Aristotle's definition of rhetoric as "the faculty of observing in any case the available means of persuasion" (*Rhetoric* I, 2, 1355b 26-27), and in the Aristotelian rhetorical tradition arguments (or *logoi*) are treated almost as exclusively as instruments of persuasion. More to the point I want to address, within the literature on argumentation it is not uncommon to find that 'argument' – in the sense of the reasons put forward for accepting a conclusion, undertaking a course of action, etc. (see section 2.1 below) – is *defined* by reference to the concept of persuading or convincing[1] a hearer to accept a conclusion or standpoint put forward by the speaker. See, for example, van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1984: p. 43 and all of chapter 3; 1992, pp. 30-33),[2] Johnson and Blair (1977: 3), and even myself.[3]

This paper is an attempt to criticize and reject *one* way in which the relationship between argument and persuasion is commonly (or so I believe) understood. That common understanding goes something like this. To "make an argument" requires offering certain statements which express reasons for doing something – perhaps reasons for accepting some other statement

(called the conclusion of the argument) or for undertaking some course of action or for adopting a positive or negative attitude toward something or someone. However the mere fact that a speaker puts forward statements which simply *happen* to be reasons for doing X, though *necessary* for making an argument, is not *sufficient* for doing so. For speakers to have made an argument, they must put forward reasons *with the intention to persuade or convince their hearers to do what the reasons they've put forward are reasons for doing* – they must aim at convincing their hearers to accept the conclusion for which they've given reasons, or to undertake the course of action they've given reasons for undertaking, and so on. See for example the definitions for argumentation and argument described in notes 2 and 3 above.

In opposition to this picture I will maintain, first, that arguers need not intend *any* effect beyond that of making it manifest to their hearers that there is a reason for doing some particular thing, and second that when an arguer is in fact *trying* to induce an effect above and beyond rendering a reason manifest, the effect intended – the *use* to which his or her argument is put – *need not* be that hearers do what the stated reasons are reasons for doing. Roughly speaking, where the actual or intended effect of making *a reason R for doing X* manifest is something *other than doing X*, I shall call it an indirect or *oblique* effect of making that reason for doing X manifest.[4] A fuller account of this concept of an indirect or oblique effect is offered in section 3 below.

The purpose of this paper is

a) to call attention to the existence of such indirect or oblique effects,

b) to present an overview or map of the main categories of effect which arguments can have, and the main sub-types within each category, calling attention to the points at which such effects can be indirect or oblique effects

c) to make it clear that a full understanding of the uses of argument – of the purposes arguments are intended to achieve – is impossible without paying careful attention to oblique effects and their consequences.

2. PRELIMINARIES: ARGUMENT, PERSUASION AND COMMUNICATIVE CONTEXT

2.1 Argument and reasons

I follow 0'Keefe (1983, 14) is supposing that a *necessary* condition for making an argument is that a reason is overtly presented, and for purposes of this paper I will assume, with O'Keefe, that in paradigm cases of making an argument the reason is linguistically explicit.[5]

The account of argument on which I draw in this paper has its roots in a general account of *reasons*[6] whose broad outlines are anticipated in Pinto 2001 (esp. chapter 2) and Pinto 2003b and are more fully developed in Pinto 2006 and Pinto 2009 (especially pp. 270-72). Reasons may be *reasons for accepting or believing some proposition*, typically called the conclusion of the argument. But in addition to reasons for believing, there are reasons for *not believing* or *doubting* a proposition, reasons for taking action, reasons for being afraid that a certain thing will happen, reasons for *not* being afraid that that thing will happen, as well as reasons for liking someone, or for not trusting someone, and so on. In order to capture the broad sweep of things

for which there can be reasons, I say in Pinto 2009 that the reasons overtly expressed when arguments are made are always reasons for *doing* or for *not doing* something – in an extremely broad sense of 'doing' in which believing, doubting, presuming, desiring, hoping fearing, intending (and *not* just performing actions) can all be said to be things that we "do."

Presenting reasons – putting them into words (see 2009, section 5) – is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for making an argument. In Pinto 2009 (pp. 284-87) I maintain that making an argument for "doing" X requires (i) offering *other people* reasons for *them* to do X [7] when (ii) what a speaker has given a reason *for* is something *about which there is disagreement or doubt* in the transactional context in which such reason-giving occurs.

In the general account I offer, what makes something a reason is that it confers a certain *normative* status on what it is a reason for (paradigmatically it is a mental state or attitude which makes it *reasonable* to adopt some other mental attitude toward a propositional content). One can explain what a reason is without drawing on a prior concept of persuasion, and one can explain what an argument is by drawing on the concept of a reason.

However, though the reasons which make it "OK" for a person to do something need not cause him or her to do it, such reasons *can* be among the causes which explain why people do what they do. [8] Moreover, it should be clear from O'Keefe's account of the empirical literature that the effect, if any, that an argument has on hearers is mediated by how those hearers *assess* the argument they have been presented with (see note 21 below).

2.2 Persuasion

In English, we can speak of persuading a person *to do* (or not to do) something and we can also speak of persuading someone *that* something is (or is not) the case. A *necessary* condition of persuasion in both instances is that we *induce someone to do something*. A useful account of necessary conditions for "paradigm cases" of persuasion – with which I largely agree – can be found in O'Keefe (2002, pp. 1-6). In O'Keefe's account (p. 4),

> …paradigm cases of persuasion are those in which the effects are achieved through communication (and perhaps especially through the medium of language).[9]

2.3 Communicative contexts

An argument occurs in a communicative context when it occurs in a message that is made available – some would say "sent" or transmitted – to an intended "audience." An "audience" consists of one or more persons for whom a message is intended.[10]

In addition to their *immediate context* – roughly, the "messages" of which they are parts[11] – arguments occur in a broader *transactional* context consisting of the ongoing process of communication in which the "speaker" and her "audience" are participating and in which the message occurs.

A transactional context may permit only one-way communication or it may permit two-way communication, in which parties produce messages that are *responses* to the messages of other parties. Transactional contexts can be two-party or multi-party (i.e., involve more than two parties). As we shall see in what follows, the type of transactional context in which an argument

occurs – whether or not it is limited to one-way communication, and whether or not it involves more than just two parties – can make a difference to the sorts of effects that arguments can have on those to whom they are addressed.

A few additional observations about transactional context can be found in the Appendix.

3. THE EXISTENCE OF OBLIQUE EFFECTS

In order to bring out as clearly as I can what I think is wrong with what I'm calling a common understanding of the relationship between making an argument and persuasion, I distinguish between *direct and oblique effects of presenting an argument* – a distinction that comes into play with respect to the effects, if any, which presenting that argument has or is intended to have on those to whom it is addressed. I formulate two requirements that must be met for an argument to have a *direct effect*. *Oblique* effects will be said to occur if an argument induces certain specific sorts of conscious attitudes in hearers, but those conscious attitudes are *not* "direct" effects of that argument.

For an argument to have what I call a *direct* effect on a hearer, *the hearer must accept the argument offered to her* – by which I mean that the hearer must (i) *accept the premisses"* of that argument, (ii) must *adopt the conscious attitude toward some proposition which the argument gives her a reason for adopting*, and (ii) must do so on account of and in response to that very reason. For example, Tom induces Sarah to repay a debt within the week by offering Sarah reasons for doing so – saying, perhaps, "You gave me your word that you would repay me when I need the money, and I really have to have it this week" – and as a result Sarah forms the intention of repaying the debt immediately for those very reasons (i.e., she does so because of her promise coupled with Tom's need to have the money this week).

This is in line with an idea I've suggested in earlier papers – namely, that arguments can often be viewed as invitations to inference. Accepting such an invitation is a matter of drawing the "inference" which the argument invites.

Persuading another to do something by virtue of a *direct* effect has the following two features:

(a) what *S* is induced to do (or not to do) is *the very thing* which *S* has been given a reason for doing (or not doing) – i.e., *S* has (or has not) adopted the specific conscious attitude toward the very propositional content which the argument presented gave him a reason to adopt (or not to adopt)

(b) *S* does (or doesn't do) what he was invited to do (or not to do) *because he makes the inference he was invited to make*.

Oblique effects of presenting an argument occur when an argument induces hearers to modify their conscious attitudes even though the argument presented is not "accepted" in the sense just indicated.[12] Here are three examples of oblique effects.

Example #1

Smith induces Jones *not to believe* the proposition that it *will* rain tomorrow (i.e., to give up that belief) by offering Jones reasons for *believing* the proposition that it *will not* rain tomorrow – perhaps by calling attention to the fact that the CBC weather person says that the probability of

precipitation tomorrow is less than 10%. Notice that although Smith induces Jones *not to believe* the proposition that it will rain, the reason offered was a reason for *believing* a *different proposition* (the contradictory of the first proposition).

But perhaps *any* reason for believing a proposition to be false is *eo ipso* a reason for ceasing to believe it. If so, then by giving Jones a reason for *believing* it will *not* rain, Smith has by the very fact given him a reason *not to believe* the proposition that it *will* rain. In that event, the effect achieved in the example just cited would turn out to be a case of a direct effect after all.[13]

But now consider the possibility that Smith's argument had its effect even though Jones was *not* induced to believe the proposition that it won't rain. Perhaps in Jones' estimation the reason Smith offered for believing "It *won't* rain" *counterbalanced* reasons Jones already had for *believing* "It *will* rain" – for example, Jones may have known that an equally reputable weather forecaster had predicted heavy rains for tomorrow. In such instances, I submit, we don't have an instance of a direct effect of an argument because Jones does not make the inference which Smith's argument invited him to make – an inference that would require Jones to conclude that it won't rain tomorrow. Smith's argument has modified Jones' attitude toward the proposition "it will rain tomorrow" even though Jones didn't make the inference which Smith's argument invited him to make.

Example #2

Peter and Paul are debating whether Al Gore should have been declared winner of the US presidential election in 2000. Peter has mounted an argument based on the claim that Gore's plurality over Bush in Palm Beach was under-reported by 6000 votes. Paul then claims that Peter can't be right, because in the year following the election several newspapers examined the Palm Beach ballots and found that the Palm Beach plurality was under-reported by only a few dozen votes. Peter has never heard of such a review and moreover he is not willing to take Paul's word about it. In other word he doesn't accept Paul's argument or its conclusion – he is not even sure whether Paul's argument actually has *merit,* because Paul's account of the details seems pretty sketchy. (This differs from the previous example, in which Jones knew that Smith's argument had *merit*.[14]) Even though Peter doesn't accept Paul's reason for saying that he Peter can't be right, the mere *possibility* that Paul's argument might turn out to be a good one induces him to *suspend judgment* on his earlier claim about a 6000 vote undercount, and makes him hesitate to continue to base an argument on that claim. Peter's suspension of judgment is an oblique effect of Paul's argument, as a result of which Peter is unable (for the time being) to pursue the argument he had been attempting to mount.

Example #3

Larry, Curly and Moe are discussing the 2004 US presidential election. Larry has been holding that the Supreme Court never should have stopped the Florida recounts that were in progress. Curly steps in with an argument against Larry's position which Moe finds quite persuasive. Larry thinks Curly's argument is "a lot of nonsense" – he is quite convinced that its premisses are false (they consist of claims about the authority and the responsibility which the US constitution gives to the Supreme Court) and he's quite sure that they don't really support Curly's conclusion either. (This example differs from the preceding one, in which Peter simply *wasn't sure* about the merits of Paul's argument.) But Larry's mastery of the facts of constitutional law and his debating skills are limited, so has no idea how to *show* Curly's argument is defective, especially in the face of Moe's respect for Curly's supposed "expertise"

about matters of constitutional law. Larry thinks it would be counterproductive to challenge Curly's credibility in the face of Moe's respect for him. As a result, Curly's argument induces Larry to abandon his position on this particular point, even though Larry doesn't accept that argument, and is quite convinced that it is without merit.

This is an example of how an argument which does not induce a participant in a discussion to believe its conclusion can nevertheless induce that participant to modify what he is *willing to say* within that discussion – in other words, it's an example of change in Larry's *intentions* to engage in certain sorts of speech acts. This change in Larry's intentions is a modification of Larry's conscious attitudes; it is an *oblique* effect of Curly's argument , and one which can have a profound effect on subsequent developments within the discussion in which Larry is engaged.

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The presentation of arguments can, of course, influence hearers and readers in a myriad ways – boring them, causing them to daydream about some example mentioned in the argument, inducing Big Mac attacks, and so on. If the concept of oblique effect is to help us understand the use of arguments in communicative contexts, that concept needs to be spelled out in more detail and the scope of its application needs to be pinned down. I attempt to achieve those objectives with the mapping and analysis attempted in Part 4 of this paper.

4. PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EFFECTS

The uses of argument – the purposes *realizable* by argument– are limited to *what can actually be achieved by offering reasons for doing something*. This is so because a purpose is an intended effect. To understand the uses of argument, therefore, we must understand what arguments can actually achieve.

In what follows, I recognize three basic categories of effect that the presentation of an argument can bring about.

(a) a **primary effect,** which consists in making it *manifest*[15] to participants in a communicative context (i) that there is a reason for doing something and (ii) what one such reason is by putting that reason into words.

(b) **secondary effects,** which consist of holding (or not holding) certain *conscious attitudes* toward propositions (or sometimes toward non-propositional objects), when doing so is *the result of the fact that a reason contained in an argument has been made manifes* . For example, when a reason presented leads a hearer or reader to *believe* something or to *doubt* something or to *want* something to come about, then believing or doubting or wanting are conscious attitudes that will count as secondary effects of the argument containing that reason. Or again, when a reason presented leads a hearer or reader to fear that something is about to happen or to hope that it will happen or to like somebody, then fearing or hoping or liking are conscious attitudes that count as secondary effects of the argument containing that reason. Or finally, when a reason presented leads a hearer or reader to decide to do something, that is, to form an intention to do it, then intending to do it will be a conscious attitude that counts as the secondary effect of the argument containing that reason.

(c) **tertiary effects,** which consist of two sorts of consequences that may *flow from secondary effects*: (i) changes in what I call the *context availability* of propositions (explained in section 6.1 below) and (ii) the performance or non-performance of *overt actions* when it is a direct result of a secondary effect produced by argument.

For example, suppose I persuade you that it will rain tomorrow by putting into words a reason for you to believe that it will rain tomorrow. Then

(a) the *primary effect* of presenting that reason is to *put it "out there"* in such a way that (i) *if* you pay attention to what I've said then you can understand what that reason is and what it is a reason for and (ii) *if* you take account of what I've said, then that reason *might* have certain kinds of effect on you

(b) the *secondary effect* is inducing you to *believe* that it will rain tomorrow

(c) one *tertiary effect* flowing from that fact that you now believe it will rain is to make 'it will rain tomorrow' available as a premiss in an argument I intend to offer you later – perhaps an argument for canceling a tennis match we had planned for tomorrow.

Here's another example. I persuade you to mow my lawn by promising to pay you for doing so. Then

(a) the *primary effect* of my making that promise is to make it apparent to you that you have at least one reason to mow my lawn

(b) the *secondary* effect is your making up your mind (acquiring the intention) to mow my lawn

(c) the tertiary effect is your actually mowing my lawn as a consequence of your intention to mow it.

The use to which an argument is put – the *point* of making it – most frequently lies in its tertiary effects. And the secondary effects from which such tertiary effects flow will often, I shall maintain, be *oblique* effects.

Strictly speaking, the effects just mentioned are always effects of *presenting* an argument – typically by putting a reason into words. If I occasionally speak of the effects of an argument or a reason, I should always be taken to mean effects that depend on the fact that a reason has been rendered *manifest* through *presenting* that argument. Typically one presents an argument – and thereby renders a reason for doing something manifest –by means of assertives. The propositional content of those assertives may be called the *premisses* of one's argument, and the argument itself may be identified with the set of propositions by the assertion of which one advances a reason for doing something. Following Blair (2003: 2), I take it that a single reason may involve several premisses.

4.1 The primary effect

The primary effect of an argument is *to make a reason for doing something apparent or manifest* – and in such a way that it is apparent or manifest (a) what the reason *is*, (b) what the reason is a reason *for* and (c) that it is a *reason* (that it seems to call for doing what it is offered as a reason for doing).

Someone who presents an argument can fail to achieve that primary effect if the words in which he attempts to present a reason are unclear, muddled, cryptic, insufficiently articulated, and so on. In such cases, the reason he is attempting to float will not be *manifest* - i.e., "perceivable or inferable" by those he is addressing.

If the primary effect is achieved, *secondary effects* become possible – and it is these that may be either *direct* or *oblique* effects. Whether these secondary effects actually occur depends on whether and how those to whom the argument is addressed react or respond to the reasons that have been made apparent. Before looking at *how* such secondary effects occur, I will first give a more detailed account of what such effects are.

4.2 Secondary effects

Secondary effects are changes in conscious attitude induced by the presentation of an argument. The conscious attitudes which make up the possible secondary effects of an argument fall into three categories: *cognitive attitudes, conative attitudes* and *evaluative attitudes*.[16]

4.2.2 Cognitive attitudes

I recognize three types of ***cognitive*** attitude toward propositional contents

(a) *doxastic attitudes*, which consist of *full belief* that a proposition is true, and a series of attitudes which are incompatible with full belief but are *alternatives* to it– *presuming* a proposition to be true, having some incliounation to believe it, suspecting it is true, considering the matter of its truth a "live option," being agnostic toward it, rejecting it as false, and so on.

(b) *acceptance attitudes*, in a sense of 'accept' in which *to accept a proposition* is to be *prepared to use that proposition as a premiss* or starting point in our reasoning (see, for example, Cohen 1992, esp. chapter 1, and Bratman 1999, chapter 2) .[17]

(c) *degree of confidence in a proposition* – as measured, perhaps, by the odds at which we would be willing to bet that it is true.

Acceptance, in the sense in which I am using that word, is not a *doxastic* attitude. Acceptance is concerned with the *role* we are prepared to accord a proposition in our reasoning, whereas doxastic attitudes toward propositions are concerned with our attitudes concering the truth of those propositions.

Since people are usually prepared to use propositions which they believe true as starting points in their reasoning, arguments that induce belief typically induce acceptance as well. But although acceptance often follows in the wake of belief, sometimes it does not: it can be perfectly reasonable to refuse to use something which we believe as a premiss in a particular context, and it can be perfectly reasonable to use something we believe false as a premiss (as when we reason from simplifying assumptions that we know to be false). See Pinto 2003a and 2003b, as well as Bratman 1999 on these points.

4.2.2 Conative and evaluative attitudes

For purposes of this paper, *conative attitudes* consist of (i) aiming at specific outcomes and (ii) intentions to act in one or another way (usually to achieve some specific outcome we are aiming at). *Evaluative attitudes* consist of liking, disliking, prizing or disdaining specific objects

and situations (and/or *types* of objects and situations), as well as preferring one type of thing or situation to another. Whereas Davidson (1963/2001) lumped conative and evaluative attitudes together under the rubric of "pro-attitudes", I think it is important to distinguish between these two types of pro-attitude, since the reasons for adopting conative attitudes (for deciding to pursue a certain goal or forming an intention to act in one or another way) typically lie in more general preferences, "likings" and "disliking" which fall into the category of evaluative attitudes. See for example the accounts of practical reasoning in Bratman (1987 and 1999) and Pollock (1995, chapter 2 and chapters 5-7).

The bulk of the empirical research on persuasion appears to be concerned with changes in ***conative*** and ***evaluative*** *attitudes* – see for example O'Keefe 2002, chapters 1-6, in which 5 of the 6 research areas covered are concerned with persuasive effects on conative and evaluative attitudes.

Let me call attention to a few of the ways in which inducing conative and evaluative attitudes have obvious bearing on the use of arguments in communicative contexts.

- Attempts to induce or undermine *intentions* to act, or a willingness to act, in a given way, as well as attempts to induce or undermine someone's pursuit of a specific goal, are attempts to influence *conative* attitudes
    - a very large number of attempts at persuasion are attempts to induce people to perform, or not to perform, an overt action of some kind; such attempts work, if they do, by inducing or inhibiting *intentions* to perform actions of those kinds – such attempts can therefore be viewed as aiming to induce conative attitudes.
    - many arguments appear to aim at preventing or discouraging other participants from offering particular arguments or objections; again, arguments can have such effects only if they make other participants *unwilling* to offer those arguments or objections
- evaluative attitudes of *trust*, *respect* or *liking* for an arguer or for an authority appealed to are among the important evaluative attitudes at which arguers frequently aim
    - there is considerable empirical evidence that factors such as the *credibility* of an arguer (a function of trust and respect afforded him or her) and whether hearers *like* an arguer affect how messages containing arguments are processed (O'Keefe 2002, chapter 6) and have an impact on the persuasive effect of messages (O'Keefe 2002, 181-199)
    - participants who have credibility can often gain acceptance for the propositions they put forward *without* having to offer arguments for accepting those propositions, merely by giving assurance of the truth of those propositions.
    - attempts to get someone to buy one or another product often hinge on attempts to get potential buyers to prize or value more highly features which that product is believed to have but which competing products may be thought to lack (think of Michelin TV adds designed to remind viewers of the

importance of the impact of a tire's safety features on the well-being of their children)

4.2.3 A technical restriction on the secondary effects "of interest" in this paper

To make the concept of secondary effect more manageable, I restrict the secondary effects of interest – the conscious attitudes induced by arguments likely have an impact on the give and take of argumentation – to two categories. This restriction is somewhat technical, so a reader not concerned with such technicalities may want to skip the rest of this section.

1. In the *first category* is any cognitive, conative or evaluative attitude A which is induced by the presentation of an argument R, when R and A meet *one* of the following three conditions.

(a) R consists of a reason for holding attitude A towards *propositional* content *p* – note that if holding attitude A is induced by the presentation of a reason for holding attitude A, then holding attitude A is, of course, a *direct* secondary effect of the presentation of R.

(b) R consists of a reason for holding or not holding a cognitive, conative or evaluative attitude B toward a *propositional* content *p*, and A is a *related attitude* toward *p* or toward something incompatible with *p*[18]; for example, when reasons for believing that not-*p* lead me to become agnostic with respect to *p*, or when reasons for being committed to a course of action C lead me to withdraw my commitment to pursue a course of action D which is incompatible with pursuing C (in both these cases, the resulting attitudes mentioned are *oblique* effects of argument R).

or

(c) R consists of a reason for holding or not holding some conative or evaluative attitude B toward a *non-propositional* content *O*, and A and B are a *related* conative or evaluative attitudes towards *O* – for example, R is a reason for disliking a person O and has the effect of making me distrust O (which would, of course, be an *oblique* effect of presenting R)

For purposes of these restrictions, a pair of attitudes A and B will be considered to be *related attitudes* if and only if they are of the same general type (i.e., both are cognitive or both are conative or both are evaluative) and either (i) they are *competing* attitudes toward one and the same thing or (ii) adopting attitude B toward a given object is an obvious motivation or reason for adopting attitude A toward the same object (so that if reasons for *believing p* induce acceptance of *p* - i.e., willingness to use *p* as a premiss - acceptance of *p* will count as a secondary effect of those reasons).

2. Effects in the *second category* occur when an argument R, which provides a reason for adopting some cognitive or evaluative attitude A, induces either

(i) an *intention to perform (or not to perform) a speech act* concerned with argument R, its premisses or its conclusion or

(ii) an *intention to perform (or not to perform) a speech* act concerned with the contradictory of a premiss or conclusion of R.

For example, if your argument for believing *p* makes me unwilling to assert not-*p*, my unwillingness to assert not-*p* will count as a secondary effect of that argument. Or if your argument for *p* contains *q* as a premiss and your presentation of that argument induces me to

present an argument against *q*, my intention to present an argument against *q* will count as a secondary effect or your argument. Effects in this second category will typically be *oblique* effects of the argument R.

5. HOW ARGUMENTS ACHIEVE THEIR SECONDARY EFFECTS

5.1 What must happen for the effect of an argument to be a direct as opposed to an oblique effect

Think about what must happen if the result of presenting an argument is to be a *direct* effect of that argument.

(a) hearers must *not ignore* the argument, but must pay some degree of attention to it[19]

(b) they must *understand* the argument – i.e., they must understand *which* reasons are being presented and must understand what they are intended to be reasons *for*

(c) they must *accept* every premiss that is crucial to the reasons presented

(d) it must *seem to them* that the reasons offered "call for*"* doing what they are offered as reasons for doing

(e) they must *not decide* that the reasons presented are undermined, counterbalanced or overridden by other considerations

(f) they must *not "postpone a decision"* about whether to do what the reasons are reasons for doing – on the grounds, for example, that further investigation or reflection may well uncover reasons for not doing that thing which outweigh the reasons for doing it.

All but two of these are things *that lie within the power* of hearers to do or not to do - the exceptions being (b) and (d).[20]

Of course, an arguer can try to present an argument in a way that will increase or maximize the chances (i) that receivers will pay attention to the argument, (ii) that they will find it acceptable and/or (iii) that they will not postpone a decision about whether to do what the reasons presented are reasons for doing. As I see it, tailoring presentation of an argument to maximize such chances is part of what the "rhetoric" (as contrasted with the "logic") of argument is about. For purposes of this paper, I ignore that rhetorical dimension, despite the fact that it has enormous practical importance.

5.2 The verdicts that mediate secondary effects

Sometimes, of course,an argument will have *no* effect because hearers or readers simply ignore it – they are too busy with other things to pay attention to the argument, or are not interested in what the argument is about, or do not think that the speaker or writer is worth paying attention to on the topic at hand, or their minds are firmly made up on the topic under discussion and they are unwilling to consider contrary views. But where hearers do both to listen to an argument and assess its merits, the effect that it has on the hearer's cognitive, conative and evaluative attitudes typically depends on *what those hearers make of the argument after considering it*.[21]

I recognize four possible outcomes or verdicts such assessments can yield.

O1 *accepting the argument*: doing what the reasons presented are reasons for doing, and doing it both *for* those reasons and *in response* them

If an argument has been considered but not accepted, I say that it has been declined.[22] I recognize three "motivated" ways of declining an argument.

O2 *bracketing the argumen*t: failing to accept it because one is unsure about a crucial feature or dimension of the argument – perhaps because there is insufficient reason to accept one or more crucial premisses, or because one isn't sure how strongly those premisses support the conclusion or because one wants additional information before making up one's mind (and therefore postpones a decision about whether to accept it)

O3 *rejecting the argument as defective*: refusing to accept it because one is *convinced that the argument has a disqualifying defect* – perhaps because one or more crucial premisses is false or unwarranted, or because on reflection one concludes that the reasons presented don't really call for doing what they are supposed to be reasons for doing

O4 *refusing the argument in light of additional considerations*: declining to accept it because one is convinced that additional information *undermines,*[23] *overrides* or *counterbalances* the reasons provided in the argument

5.3 How arguments can produce oblique secondary effects

Let me call attention to seven possible ways in which assessment of an argument *can* issue in an oblique effect. I make no claim that the following list is exhaustive.

Consider *non-interactive contexts* first.

SE1) A *bracketed* argument for adopting a certain attitude A toward not-*p* can have a secondary effect on competing attitudes toward *p*. This is because a bracketed argument makes me aware that there *might* be a good reason for adopting that attitude A toward not-*p*. If I currently hold a competing attitude toward *p,* and I treat the possibility that the original argument *might* turn out to be a good one as a "live option," I may come to *hold my current attitude in abeyance*.

Thus a bracketed argument for believing not-*p* may induce me to withdraw assent from *p* – this is what happens in Example #2 of section 3 above. Or a bracketed argument consisting of reasons for me to return home may induce me to question the decision I made yesterday to stay put and lead me to hold that decision in abeyance. Or again, a bracketed argument for distrusting a person may induce me to hold my trust of him in abeyance. Whether or not such things happen will depend on the strength I think the bracketed argument *would* have, were it to prove sound, as compared to the strength I attribute to the reasons I have for my current attitude toward *p.*

SE2) Most arguments *refused as defective* or *refused in light of additional information* are unlikely to induce a change in attitudes and hence unlikely to have a secondary effect. However, when an argument is refused in light of additional information that the receiver thinks is *counterbalancing* (but not undermining or overriding), it may well have an oblique secondary effect – for example, prompting receivers to *withhold assent* from something they previously assented to. This is what happens in Example #1 of section 3 above.

Next consider *interactive contexts*. Both of points just made about non-interactive contexts apply here. In addition, additional oblique effects become possible because new elements are introduced in interactive contexts.

In two-party interactive contexts, the receiver of an argument now has the possibility of speaking, and arguments that are declined can create an intention to speak.

SE3) *bracketed* or *dismissed* arguments can induce a desire or intention to present my reasons for bracketing or dismissing it or induce a desire to request backing for a premiss which appears arbitrary

SE4) arguments *rejected as defective* can induce a *desire or intention* to show that crucial premisses are false or that the reasons presented are insufficient to warrant doing what they are offered as reasons for doing

SE5) arguments *refused in light of additional information* are in effect recognized as creating something like a presumption in favor of doing what they purport to offer reasons for doing, and under certain circumstances may well give rise to a need or obligation for rebuttal (see Pinto 2007) . Arguments declined for this sort of reason often induce a *desire or intention* to present a rejoinder consisting of the counter-evidence that undermines, overrides or counterbalances the reasons presented in the original argument.

In multi-party interactive contexts, beliefs about what *other* parties believe, accept and expect become factors which can affect what individual parties do or are willing to do.

SE6) Arguments which are bracketed, discounted, refused or dismissed by one party may nevertheless have persuaded others. Individuals who decline to accept a particular argument, yet think it has persuaded others, may not know how to counter its effect on others and may therefore become unwilling to defend positions they would otherwise defend – this is what happens in Example #3 of section 3.

SE7) In many transactional contexts, one or more parties who have been *semi*-persuaded by an argument presented for assenting to a proposition p may believe that p should not be used in subsequent arguments until the argument for assenting to it has been rebutted[24] – i.e., *shown* to be defective or else undermined or overridden by counter-evidence. Almost any argument that is not ignored or dismissed out of hand *may* by all parties may create such expectations of rebuttal. In the face of such expectations, those who continue to believe that not-p because they have bracketed, discounted or refused the argument for p, but don't know how to rebut it effectively, are likely to become unwilling to appeal to not-p in their own subsequent arguments.

6. THE NATURE OF TERTIARY EFFECTS

Tertiary effects consist of two sorts of consequences that flow from secondary effects:

a) making a proposition "available" or "unavailable" for subsequent use in the communicative context in which the argument occurs – I call this *context availability*

b) the performance or non-performance of overt actions arising from changes in intentions, when those changes are themselves secondary effects

6.1 Context availability

Speaking roughly, *context availability* is a matter of whether a proposition is available for use as a *premiss in arguments and objections*. The context availability of a proposition depends on two factors

a) whether participants in the transactional contents are prepared to use it as a premiss in their own *inferences*; that is to say, whether they *accept* it – this is a consequence of the fact that arguments are often invitations to inference

b) whether anything stands in the way of *asserting* (or appealing to) the proposition – since a proposition that can't be asserted or appealed to is unavailable for use as a premiss in an *argument*

Acceptance and assertability are individually necessary and jointly sufficient conditions of context availability.

6.1.1 Implications of the fact that acceptance is a necessary condition of context availability

Three points are worth noting in this regard.

a) Since participants may be prepared to use a proposition in inferences about one matter or for one purpose, but not prepared to use it for a different matter or for a different purpose, *availability will always be availability for one or another specific purpose*

b) In multi-party contexts, a minority of participants can fail to accept a proposition which the majority of participants accept. This raises a question about whether a proposition should be judged unavailable if the preponderance of participants accept it and only a few participants fail to accept it.

c) Arguments that deprive propositions of acceptance make them unavailable; arguments that induce acceptance of propositions make them available only if they are also assertable.

Though there can be belief without acceptance, and acceptance without belief, in general people are prepared to use propositions which they believe as premisses in their inferences. In fact, it is safe to assume that someone who believes a proposition will accept it for any given purpose in the absence of a specific reason not to use it for that purpose.[25]

In light of these considerations, it is easy to see that

TE1) when belief or acceptance are direct secondary effects of argument, a tertiary effect of those arguments will frequently be that propositions become context available

TE2) oblique effects which deprive propositions or belief or acceptance will typically deprive them of context availability as well (as for example do the oblique effects listed under SE1 and SE2 in section 5.3 above).

6.1.2 Assertability as a necessary condition of context availability

What people are prepared or permitted to *say* in one transactional context they may not be prepared or permitted to say in another transactional context. And what people are prepared to

use in their "private" thinking and reasoning is not limited to what they are prepared or permitted to *say* in a more or less open forum.

As a result, propositions which are *accepted* may not be available for use as premisses in arguments because no one is prepared or permitted to "put them in play" in open discourse.

The forces that filter out "epistemically acceptable" propositions are various.

a) Social disapproval of the expression of certain opinions, reticence about matters considered "personal" or "private," loyalty to friends, family or country, obligations to employers or clients, fear of reprisal – these and a host of similar factors can inhibit what discussants are prepared to *say* and thereby eliminate or reduce the chance that certain arguments get made. Such factors can, and in my experience sometimes do, have a profound effect on the course of argumentation in public debate and deliberation and therefore on its outcome.

b) Participants are sometimes limited in what they can say by rules and conventions which the participants mutually acknowledge as binding on their communicative interaction. For example, in criminal trials there are proscriptions which prevent evidence of certain sorts from being presented – thus under most circumstances evidence of prior bad acts is inadmissible, as in general is the presentation of any evidence which in the opinion of a judge would be unduly prejudicial. It is clear that precluding such evidence – and therefore eliminating the possibility of lines of argument which might be based on it – can have a decisive effect on the outcome of a trial.

c) Finally, an argument *against* a proposition *p* can create expectations and/or burdens of rejoinder, even when it hasn't in fact persuaded anyone not to accept *p*. (See Pinto 2004 for a discussion of some of the factors that give rise to such expectations and burdens.) When such expectations exist – or are even thought to exist – and participants are unable or unwilling to provide rejoinders, *p* may be rendered unassertable even though it remains widely accepted.

This gives rise to several important consequences:

TE3) an argument for not-*p* can sometimes render *p* at least *temporarily* unavailable, *even if that argument fails to induce anyone to withhold acceptance* of *p*, until effective rejoinder is made to it

TE4) if those who decline an argument for not-*p* and continue to accept *p* are unable or unwilling to mount a rejoinder to that argument (as in Example #3 of section 3), *p* may remain *permanently* unavailable

TE5) an argument that *prevents* a possible objection to *q* from being made – by rendering a premiss *p* of that possible objection unacceptable or unassertable – can be responsible for securing the context availability of *q* – even where the secondary effect of that argument is an oblique effect (as in SE7 of section 5.3).[26]

6.1.3 The effects of changes in evaluative attitude on context availability

Since testimony and the citation of competent authorities are crucial sources of data in communicative contexts, factors which affect the force of such testimony have a crucial impact on context availability. Evaluative attitudes of trust and respect toward those sources are required for their testimony to have force, and accordingly arguments which induce or inhibit trust and respect have an impact on context availability.

TE6) alterations in attitudes of trust and respect can render the content of testimony available or unavailable as data in a communicative context

Trust or loss of trust in a source can be a direct effect of argument. But, as we saw, under certain conditions loss of trust or respect can also be an oblique effect of argument (see the comment following SE1 in section 5.3 above).

6.2 Performance or non-performance of overt actions as tertiary effects

Where the secondary effect of an argument has been to create or inhibit intentions to perform overt actions, and as a consequence of such a secondary effect an overt action is performed or not performed, the performance or non-performance of the action is a tertiary effect of the argument.

It is worth distinguishing between two types of effect that fall within this category:

a) the overt action is a *speech act* and its performance or non-performance is an event that transpires within the communicative context in which the argument occurs

b) either the action is not a speech act, or its performance or non-performance occurs outside the communicative context in which the argument occurs.

Of particular interest are cases of the first type. Here is a partial list of such effects:

TE7) inducing someone to point out the defects in an argument that has been presented (SE3 and SE4)

TE8) inducing someone to present a rejoinder to an argument that is thought to "shift the burden of proof" (SE5)

TE9) preventing someone from advancing a position by making that person unwilling to assert the propositions necessary to express or articulate that position (SE7 of section 5.3)

TE10) forestalling an argument or an objection by making participants unwilling to assert crucial premisses (SE7 of section5.3).

Typically, arguments that induce rebuttal – as in TE7 and TE8 – are arguments that have *not* had a direct secondary effect on the rebutter. And, as we saw above (SE6 and SE7 in section 5.3), an unwillingness to continue maintaining a proposition can be an oblique secondary effect of both bracketed and discounted arguments. In short, all four of the tertiary effects just listed can be the consequences of oblique secondary effects.

6.3 The import of tertiary effects

Consider first the import of changes in context availability.

a) *Creating or securing the context availability* of propositions for various purposes enables argument and counter-argument to more forward by supplying the premisses on which arguments, objections and counter-arguments will hinge. For the most part, context availability is made possible by direct secondary effects. But we have seen (TE5 above) that context availability can be secured by oblique effects that forestall objections.

b) *Rendering propositions unavailable* has equally crucial impact on the ebb and flow of argumentation. It can undermine the force of an argument or objection that has been presented, forestall arguments and objections that might be presented in the future (closing off entire courses of development that might otherwise be possible), or reduce the likelihood that certain possible arguments and objections will be seen as sound. As well, it can deprive participants of reasons for trusting and respecting sources of testimony, with the result that the content of that testimony is no longer accepted and therefore unavailable (T6). Quite often propositions are rendered unavailable as a result of arguments that persuade participants to accept or believe their contradictories. But, as we saw in section 5.3 above, withdrawing assent from a proposition, or ceasing to trust a source of testimony, can just as easily be an oblique secondary effect.

Consider next the import of arguments whose tertiary effect is the performance or non-performance of speech acts in the communicative context in which those arguments occur.

c) Arguments that induce rebuttal (TE7 and TE8) carry the flow of argumentation forward by bringing new considerations to light; arguments that discourage the open adoption of positions (TE9) or inhibit the presentation of arguments and rebuttals (TE10) can profoundly affect the direction in which argumentation unfolds. And as we've seen, all four of these effects can be consequences of oblique secondary effects.

There can be little doubt, I think, that the tertiary effects I've just catalogued have a profound impact on the ebb and flow of argumentation in communicative contexts, and that very frequently they are achieved as a result of oblique effects.

7. THE USES OF ARGUMENT

The *point*, *purpose* or *use* of an argument is the effect which an arguer *intends* to achieve by presenting it. Most often, the point lies in one or more specific tertiary effects that are achieved as a result of some secondary effect – sometimes as the result of a direct secondary effect, sometimes of an oblique secondary effect. But there is no reason to suppose that the arguers who aim at those tertiary effects suppose, in every case, that they will achieve their objectives by means of *direct* secondary effects of the arguments they present. That is to say, there's no reason to suppose that in every case arguers intend to achieve their objectives by inducing others to make the inferences which their arguments invite.

Moreover, arguments are frequently offered simply to call attention to a reason for doing something – for example, a reason that has yet to be canvassed in the context at hand. In such cases there may be no intention or expectation of convincing anyone to do what the reasons presented are reasons for doing. The point of such argument is simply to make a reason for doing

something *clear or manifest– not* to show that there is conclusive reason for doing that thing or to show that it would be unreasonable not to do it. In such cases, the arguer does not aim at anything beyond the *primary* effect of argument.

In light of these considerations, it should be apparent that inducing direct persuasive effects is just one among many possible purposes that making an argument may have.

Of course, the salience and the importance of oblique effects and objectives will vary from one transactional context to another. Their frequency in and importance to the context in which they occur will depend on the *purposes* that shape what happens in that context, on the *sophistication* of participants and on the *complexity and richness* of the argumentation which ensues.

In a thirty-second television ad promoting a candidate during an election, many arguments presented are likely to be aimed at inducing a belief or attitude that might result in a vote for the candidate. Those who craft such ads have considerable sophistication, but probably don't presuppose much sophistication on the part of their audience, are unlikely to have any objective other than persuasion in mind, and will probably avoid persuasive techniques that involve complex argumentation or argumentation that is rich in texture. But even here, "negative ads" are sometimes crafted simply to *raise doubts* about, say, the integrity of a candidate. For example, in the 2004 US presidential election, widely circulated ads accused Kerry of having fabricated his wartime accomplishments; their aim *may* in fact only have been to raise questions in people's minds about those accomplishments (thereby putting Kerry's war record "out of play" as a factor in the election campaign).

In other contexts – criminal trials, for example, where the principal goals of prosecution and defense are to induce judge or jury to render a particular verdict – persuasion is an overall goal, but the argumentation used often exhibits complexity and richness, and there is scope for tertiary effects achieved by means of oblique secondary effects.[27]

Finally, the argumentation which transpires in many deliberative bodies, in debates among researchers, or in the published literature of an academic discipline typically serves more complex purposes, involves participants who are capable of a great deal of sophistication in their reasoning and frequently exhibits considerable complexity and richness.

What transpires in well-conducted communicative interchange of the latter sort is, I think, ill-served by the idea that inducing direct persuasive effects is the heart and soul of argument and argumentation. What those interchanges exhibit is the gradual emergence or manifestation of a complex interplay of reasons which grows and changes along three dimensions:

a) first, the number of propositions, or the amount of data, *manifestly* relevant to the issues at hand grows over time;

b) second, the "quality" of data improves - imprecision, ambiguity, oversimplification in the summarizing of results are all decreased, and questionable data is eliminated from further consideration;

c) finally, the reasonableness of adopting various positions on the issues at hand shifts over time as the costs and benefits of holding those positions comes more clearly into view through the exchange of argument and counter-argument.

The upshot of this process is seldom a meeting of minds, and where a meeting of minds does occur it is frequently the case that what parties come to agree on is not something that *any* of them had in mind at the start.

APPENDIX: FEATURES OF TRANSACTIONAL CONTEXTS

As indicated in section 2.3 above, some transactional contexts make possible interactions in which parties produce messages that are *responses* to the messages of other parties. I call contexts that provide little or no scope for responses *non-interactive*;[28] and call contexts that provide scope for response *interactive*. Since transactional contexts can be either two-party or multi-party (i.e., involve more than two parties, we can capture four "basic types" of transactional context in the following table.

	Non-interactive	*Interactive*
Two party	Private communication	Dialogue
Multi-party	Broadcast	Forum

Additional features of transactional contexts can be important to understanding the give and take of argumentation in those contexts.

Jointly acknowledged purposes. Occasionally – but clearly not always – there will be one or more *purposes* which the participants *jointly* understand their communicative interaction to have. When they exist, such purposes should be considered key features of a transactional context. Such purposes can have their roots in an institutional context (as legal proceedings, or annual general meetings called for by the bylaws of an organization, typically do), or in an explicit agreement among several individuals to meet for some specific purpose (e.g., to work out arrangements for a wedding reception). Of course, though individual participants will typically communicate with others with some purpose in mind, probably the great majority of communicative interactions have no *jointly* acknowledged purpose.

Participant roles. The participants in a transactional context frequently have differing *roles* within that context – the roles sometimes being a function of acknowledged purposes which structure communicative interaction (as in a criminal or civil trial, for example, or the communications that take place during a class offered at a university). Such roles may impose certain obligations on participants, and may structure which sort of messages are appropriate for communicators who have a speaking role. Examples of roles that occur in different contexts are: doctor and patient; teacher and student; confessor and penitent; judge, jury, defense counsel, prosecutor; labor, management and mediator (in contract negotiations), and so on.

Rules and conventions. Typically, the participants recognize, at least implicitly, formal or informal rules or conventions governing some aspects of their interaction. There are almost always either rules or informal practices governing who may speak and when, and there are sometimes rules that filter the content of messages (for example, rules against hearsay evidence in judicial proceedings, or rules that prohibit accusing another member of parliament of lying,

etc.). Any such rules or conventions which are *jointly* recognized by the participants should be considered key features of the communicative context, especially in those special cases in which there are mutually acknowledged purposes of the transactional context that are furthered by such rules.

Of course, additional features of transactional contexts – such as the medium in which communication takes place (face-to-face oral interchange, telephone, print, electronic, hand-crafted letter, etc.), the genre to which the messages belong (letter, books, conversational turns, formal speeches, etc.), the immediacy of message transmission (from face-to-face dialogue to the production of the books that comprise the literature on a topic) – are also important to understanding and appraising what is transpiring in a communicative context.

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In addition, I should acknowledge the fact that this paper grew out of an idea that was planted in my mind by Goodwin several years ago – the idea that arguments are often used for purposes other than achieving what I have called direct effects. Goodwin herself has presented something very much like that idea in Goodwin 1999.

NOTES

[1] Several dictionaries list "convince" or "convincing somebody of something" as one of the meanings of 'persuade' – see the entries for 'persuade' in *Encarta* and in *Random House*.

However, there is a view, sometimes attributed to Campbell and to Whately, according which persuading should contrasted with convincing on the grounds that the former is based on an appeal to emotion or will and the latter on an appeal to reason. That view will play no part in what I say.

See also the discussion of persuading and convincing in van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1984:. 48), which contains a faint echo of the idea that persuading, but not convincing, involves an appeal to "the will." However, these authors say that for their purposes "[the] difference between persuading and convincing is not important."

It is tempting to suspect that the attempt to make a sharp distinction between persuading and convincing may be connected with a point about usage that is no longer in favor. Some have held that while *persuade* can be followed by 'that,' 'of,' and 'to,' *convince* can only be followed by 'that' or 'of.' See the usage notes on 'convince' in *Random House* and in *Encarta*, both of which reject this grammatical point.

[2] On p. 43, the *essential condition* for the illocutionary act complex of pro-argumentation requires that advancing a constellation of statements "counts as an attempt by S to justify O to L's satisfaction, i.e., to convince L of the acceptability of O," and the essential condition of contra-argumentation requires that advancing a constellation of statements "counts as an attempt by S to refute O to L's satisfaction, i.e., to convince L of the unacceptability of O." The same claims about the essential conditions or pro- and contra-argumentation are found in van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992, p. 31. The account of Pragma-Dialectics and critical discussion in Chapter 10 of van Eemeren,

Grootendorst et al. (1996, p. 290, note 29) references precisely these two passages for an account of "the speech act definition of argumentation." See also of van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jackson and Jacobs (1993, pp. 4-5) where an identical account is given of the essential condition of the speech act of pro-argumentation, as well as van Eemeren and Grootendorst (2004, p.2)

[3] In Pinto 1995 (reprinted in Pinto 2001) I defined *argument* as "a set of statements or propositions that one person offers to another in the attempt to induce that other person to accept some conclusion" (Pinto 2001: 32).

[4] My interest here is *not* in the relationship between persuasion and either (i) the *practice* of argumentation (see for example Johnson [2000, esp .pp. 154-156 and the definition of that practice on p. 168], or (ii) the various sorts of *dialogue or discussion* within which such "units of argument" occur (see for instance Walton's work, especially Walton and Krabbe 1995). Though I am very sympathetic to Goodwin's (2007) view that "argument has no function", I am not here addressing the broader issues that she addresses in that paper.

[5] O'Keefe's view is "that a paradigm case of making an argument-1 involves the communication of both (1) a linguistically explicable claim [he's thinking of the conclusion of the argument-1] and (2) one or more overtly expressed reasons which are linguistically explicit."

[6] By a general account of reasons I mean an account which (i) explains what it is for one thing to be a reason for something else, (ii) recognizes the vast array of different sorts of things for which there can be reasons, (iii) explains how reasons can be put into words, and (iv) clarifies the various conditions under which putting reasons into words gives rise to *explaining*, to *justifying* and to *arguing*.

[7] Offering reasons can be a matter of giving an explanation as contrasted with presenting an argument. In general, when I offer reasons for doing something as part of an *argument*, the reasons that I offer are reasons for *the person whom I am addressing* to do what those reasons are reasons for doing. In explanations, that is usually not the case. For example, very often when I give you reasons for *me* to do something, I am *explaining* to you, or in other cases *attempting to justify*, what I did or why I am about to do that thing. But if I give you reasons for *you* to do something, I am typically *presenting you with an argument* for doing it. In what follows, I will confine myself to cases in which reasons offered are reasons for the *addressee* to do something.

It is perhaps worth noting that even *explanatory* reasons can play a crucial role in carrying a discursive interchange forward to a successful conclusion. Consider what happens in negotiations, when A states her reasons for rejecting an offer that B has made. A is offering an *explanation* rather than an argument, but presenting the reasons for rejection is crucial to the process of negotiation (and in some jurisdictions failure to provide them will be considered evidence of bad faith bargaining), since they make it possible for negotiators to move toward an agreement. Only by knowing A's *reasons for* rejecting earlier offers can B know how to make subsequent offers which are more likely to be accepted. (Moreover, if even A's explanation is false – doesn't give the "real" reason why the offer was rejected – it has an impact on the future course of negotiations, since it tends to limit the reasons A can give in response to future offers that B makes.)

[8] In my account of reasons (see especially Pinto 2009, sections 2 & 3), the force of reasons is essentially a *normative* force. Having a reason all things considered for doing X makes it *reasonable* for a person to do X, but is no guarantee that a person who has such a reason will in fact do X. In other words, reasons *need not* be causes. And therefore presenting Sarah with an argument which gives her a reason all things considered to do X need not have the result that she does X, even if that argument makes it clear to her that she has a good reason all things considered for doing X.

But I am prepared to admit that, as Davidson (1963/2001) has rightly insisted, under the right circumstances reasons *can* be causes. Discussing the account of "intentional explanation" in Dennett (1978), Brandom (1994) first points out (p. 56) that

> [a]ttributing a normative status or propriety such as having beliefs and desires that amount to a reason for opening one's umbrella supports prescriptive conclusions about how the subject of those attributions *ought* (rationally) to behave

but does not by itself license any prediction about how that subject *will* behave. But Brandom is quick to add (pp.56-57) that Dennett

> supplies the additional premise, in the form of a *substantive rationtionity assumption*, to the effect that agents generally do what one ought (rationally) to do, what one is committed by one's intentional states to do. To be rational in Dennett's sense is to act as one rationally ought, to act as one's intentional states commit or oblige one to act. In order to derive predictions of actual behavior from attributions of intentional states, it is necessary to add the assumption that the subject to which those states are attributed is rational in this sense.

I myself have suggested (Pinto 2009, p. 281)

> …to say it is OK [e.g., reasonable] for a person to do something is to make a *normative* claim. There is no guarantee that the person in question will do what he or she has a good reason all things considered to do. However, we might want to borrow a phrase from Siegel (1988, p. 2) and say that a person who is "appropriately moved by reasons" is likely to do what he or she has a good reason all things considered to do.

[9]It is worth noting that the first feature O'Keefe (p.3) identifies as paradigmatic for persuasion is that "when we say that one person persuaded another, we ordinarily identify a successful attempt to influence." However, O'Keefe recognizes that

> it is entirely understandable that someone might say, "I accidentally persuaded Mary to vote for Brown" precisely in the circumstance in which the speaker does not want the hearer to draw the usual inference of intent; absent such mention of accident, the ordinary inference will be that the persuasion was purposeful.

For purposes of this paper, my remarks about persuasion will emphasize the fact that through persuasion we induce others to do, or not to do, various things. I will treat it as an open question whether and to what extent persuasion requires an intention on the part of a speaker to bring about such effects

Note also what O'Keefe (2002, p.5) says about the possibility of constructing a "definition" from the 5 features of paradigm cases of persuasion that he has identified: "These shared features of exemplary cases of persuasion can be strung together into something that looks like a definition of persuasion: a successful intentional effort at influencing another's mental state through communication in a circumstance in which the persuadee has some measure of freedom. But it should be apparent that constructing such a definition would not eliminate the fuzzy edges of the concept of persuasion. Such a definition leaves open to dispute just how much success is required, just how intentional the effort must be, and so on."

[10] I will consider a context communicative only if the "sender" is not identical with the "audience" – something I jot down to remind myself to do something, a "note to self", or a diary intended for the writer's eyes only will not count here as *communicative* contexts.

[11] Which may be may be a "remark" that someone makes in a conversation, or a speech, or a written communication such as a letter, book, article or academic paper, and so on.

[12] This is intended as a first pass at explaining what an oblique effect is. Later on I will severely restrict the class of "secondary effects of interest" to which the labels 'direct and 'oblique' can apply. See section 4.2.3 below.

[13] On this reading, Smith has given Jones a reason not to accept that it's raining, and the result is that Jones does not accept that it's raining for, and in response to, that very reason.

[14] I am assuming that an argument has merit if its premisses are acceptable and the premisses call for acceptance of the conclusion in the absence of countervailing evidence. Jones can concede that Smith's premisses are acceptable and call for his conclusion, but refuse to draw the conclusion on the basis of countervailing evidence.

[15] I use the word 'manifest' here in a sense that is close to the sense in which Sperber and Wilson (1995, p. 39) introduce for that term when they say, "To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable. An individual's total cognitive environment is the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him…. It consists of not only all the facts that he is aware of, but also all the facts that he is capable of becoming aware of, in his physical environment." Where an argument is presented clearly and audibly to an audience in a language they understand, the reason central to that argument has been rendered manifest to that audience, whether or not they take the trouble to attend to it.

[16] This classification of the propositional attitudes that may be induced by the presentation of an argument has its roots in Rescher's (1988) account of rationality. See Pinto (2009, pp. 271 and 272) for the motivation that lies behind adopting this classification.

[17] It is perhaps worth pointing out that acceptance is not a doxastic attitude since it is neither full belief nor an *alternative* to full belief. One can both believe a proposition and also accept it, whereas doxastic attitudes other than belief are defined as attitudes toward a proposition that we hold when we do *not* fully believe the proposition to be true.

[18] As, for example, when an argument for accepting *p* leads me to withdraw my acceptance of not-*p*

[19] It was Jean Goodwin who pointed out to me the crucial importance of getting a receiver to pay attention to an argument that one puts forward. See Kauffeld 1998 (especially the section on "proposing") and Goodwin 2002 for a remarks about some of the ways in which speakers provide hearers with incentives to listen to what speakers have to say.

[20] I'm indebted to Peter Loptson for calling my attention an error I made in an earlier version of this paper on this point – I had overlooked that fact that understanding an argument is not something that lies directly within my power to do or not to do.

[21] In the empirical literature on persuasion, there has been extensive discussion of *how* hearers "process" messages that contain arguments, and of the factors that influence how they process them – see O'Keefe 1996 and O'Keefe 2002, Chapter 6, for a summary and discussion of some of that literature, in particular dual process accounts of persuasion. Despite controversy over how such processing is best understood, it is apparent that hearers accept or decline to accept arguments on the basis of some kind of assessment of the argument and the issues surrounding it.

[22] An argument that is completely ignored is neither accepted nor declined.

[23] Considerations that undermine aren't, as such, reasons for *not* doing X. Suppose, for example, that someone has offered the fact that Mary is a Canadian citizen as a reason for believing that Mary is able to speak either French or English. The additional information that Mary is only 13 months old undermines that reason (since quite a few 13-month-olds don't speak *any* language yet). But it isn't a reason for *refusing* to believe that Mary speaks French or English, since (a) quite a few 13-month-olds have begun to speak and (b) the fact that *this* reason doesn't "float" does not preclude the possibility that the addressee has *other* reasons for believing the proposition in question. For more on the distinction between undermining and overriding, see Pinto 2001: 14, 28 and 102-103.

[24] There are several varieties of rebuttal or rejoinder: showing (i) that an argument is defective or (ii) that it should be bracketed or (iii) that it is undermined or overridden by additional information. See the discussion of rejoinders in Pinto 2007. See also the distinction between "Type I" and "Type II" criticisms in Pinto 2001: 103.

[25] Reasons for *not* using propositions that we believe are easy enough to understand (see Pinto 2003b for some examples.) So are reasons for accepting propositions we *don't* believe (see Pinto 2003a and 2003b for examples).

[26] For example, A offers an argument for accepting a proposition *q*, several other participants (B, C and D) who are *not* persuaded by that argument to accept *q* nevertheless don't know how to rebut the argument and consequently forego any attempt to object to *q*. A's argument prevents B, C and D from objecting to *q* even though that argument hasn't persuaded them of anything.

[27] For example, a defense attorney who rests his case on "reasonable doubt" may be able to raise reasonable doubt by means of arguments whose conclusions are not accepted by the jury, but are effective because the reasons they embody counterbalance the reasons available to support a guilty verdict.

[28] The possibility of non-linguistic responses – applause, booing, throwing tomatoes – does not, in my view, render a transactional context truly or fully interactive. Moreover, it is wise to suppose that only *permitted* linguistic responses will render a context interactive. For example, in some contexts (e.g., a university lecture) heckling is "against the rules" and its occurrence doesn't render the transactional context interactive. In other cases, heckling is tolerated or encouraged, and its occurrence would render a context interactive in such cases. The distinction between interactive and non-interactive transactional contexts is not terribly sharp, but it is no less useful on account of that.

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