

Power and Force in Argumentation: A Dialogic Response

PART I: Power and Force in Argumentation:

There are many reasons why we argue, but we do not always share a similar appreciation for the many ways in which we argue and the corresponding differences in how arguing itself is conceived. Since the early work of scholars like Lakoff and Johnson (1980) drew attention to the aggressive nature of much argumentative language, others have come to see this as a consequence of the aggressive model of argument that dominated the tradition. That model is still there exerting its influence, and its vestiges still appear in the language and strategies used by argumentation theorists, whether it be the protagonists and antagonists of critical discussions (van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 2004, p. 120); or the courtroom advocacy reflected in the challengers and defenders of the Toulmin model (Toulmin, 2003, p. 12). But we also have a range of more constructive accounts of argumentation that stress community and cooperation, and debates about the relative merits and values of these approaches. It is into this discussion that I wish to introduce a further alternative, cooperative model, one drawn from the work of Mikhail Bakhtin. This work is characterized by its central idea of dialogism. What I intend to show is how that idea offers a model of argumentation richer and more dynamic than what we might otherwise associate with the dialogical. Central to this model of argumentation, and hence to this discussion, is its transformative power—of the argumentative situation, of the audience/participant, and, most importantly, of the arguer.

By way of entering the topic, I will examine ways in which power and authority are expressed and distributed in various models of argumentation, from the traditional to the modern. In the first half of the paper, I examine something of the traditional story and offer some examples that can be read as illustrating it. In the second half, I turn to the Bakhtinian material and then offer re-readings of the same examples to illustrate some of the points that have emerged.

1. The Appeal to Force:

In May of 2002, as Israeli forces massed on the Israeli side of the border with Gaza in response to another Palestinian suicide attack inside Israel, Mohammed Dahlan, the head of the main Palestinian security force in the Gaza Strip was reported as saying:

“Everyone is prepared, and our people know how to confront the occupation...We said this before, and we mean it now: If the occupation forces carry out aggression, they will face aggression” (*Globe and Mail*, May 10, 2002, A12).

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon’s earlier response to the same suicide bombing was reported as “He who rises up to kill us, we will pre-empt and kill him first” (*Globe and Mail*, May 8, 2002.)

These are harsh words, and both sets of utterances can be construed as examples of argumentation. Both can be structured to show the scheme and intent of the traditional *argumentum ad baculum*, or the ‘Appeal to Force’.

A clearer, and less volatile example, is that conveyed on buttons worn by students in Ontario recently: ‘I support a tuition freeze. And I vote’. Implicit in the second statement is a threat; implicit in the first is a demand. The argument scheme ‘Appeal to Force’ occurs when

force, or the threat of force, or a threat of some nature, is used in a confrontation. The name *argumentum ad baculum* alludes to the use of a stick, or club, to beat someone, and in the argument, the action threatened is the figurative club.

Most accounts treat instances of this argument as fallacious, since it adopts an illegitimate course of threats in place of legitimate rational persuasion. Fallacy theorists, however, debate whether all its instances should be judged fallacious. Its pervasiveness in our world, from the coercions of children to the maneuverings of nuclear deterrence, require that we take it seriously and suggest that it may, even if only in dilemmas, have acceptable instances. It is at least a phenomenon that has to be reckoned with and that exposes a kind of argumentative power.

Of course, beating someone with a stick is not exactly an argument (Woods, 1995) and, hence some are loath to call it even a fallacy (insofar as fallacies are seen as flawed arguments). However, expressed in words, a threat can have the structure of an argument (with premises in support of a claim), and it remains only to be clear about the nature of the claims involved and the intent of the argument. (Arguments can serve for inquiry, for justification, for persuasion, among other uses). A threat or warning can change behaviour in ways that show recognition of the arguer's position and a belief that he or she means what has been said.

Take the less volatile of the examples: 'I support a tuition freeze. And I vote'. On one level the expresser (or wearer) of this point of view is simply stating two things about themselves.¹ Yet in the context (and this is always crucial) of a belief that a government is considering removing a freeze on university tuitions and allowing institutions to set their own fees, or simply allowing a set annual increase to continue, then this discourse can be seen to challenge such proposals with a claim and reason for that claim. The aim of the discourse is to influence the government's behavior (if not its belief pattern – if governments can have beliefs).

¹ This simple utterance expresses an argument in the argument_i sense (O'Keefe, 1982).

Claim—Do not allow tuitions to increase (freeze them).

Reason—A tuition freeze is supported by people who vote.

Implicit in the reason is the threat that if the government acts otherwise than is suggested, they risk their current position. Implicit also is the assertion that the arguer has power – that of the vote: ‘You don’t want to anger voters’. If government officials take the threat seriously (and that would depend on the number of voters involved, relative support for the proposal, current patterns of popularity, etc.), then they will see the reason as one relevant for holding the claim. Simply put, as this *ad baculum* is reasoned out contextually, it may well be seen as a legitimate instance of the argument scheme. On this level, the argument works as a particular kind of interaction predicated on the power relation involved (O’Keefe, 1982, p. 3-4). Still, it is difficult to shed a sense of impending violence from the use of this argumentative strategy, particularly as we see it in the first examples, and this influences the way we view the *ad baculum* generally. If we are to propose alternative ways of conceiving argument, we must also suggest alternative ways for dealing with argument schemes like this. I will return to this prospect at the end of the paper.

2. Argument as War: A Problematic Metaphor:

Argumentation, then, can serve to express the particular types of social or relational power that individuals or groups hold. The argument scheme above is a vehicle specifically suited for conveying this. But more generally, argumentation *itself* as an activity can be seen to involve

force and aggression, which may in turn be perceived as power over situations and those involved.

Recent critiques of argumentation have drawn attention to how it seems saturated by what is called the ‘Argument as War’ metaphor (Berrill, 1996; Palczewski, 1996; Cohen, 1995)². This is illustrated both in the terminology by which arguing is described, and the aims that are professed for it. For example, positions are attacked and defended (and participants assume the appropriate postures); one’s argument can be ‘shot down’, ‘torn apart’, ‘destroyed’ by an ‘assault’ of reason, and we could go on. Robin Smith, in the introduction to his recent translation of Aristotle’s *Topics* (1997), while himself adopting the metaphor of sport (‘This is obviously a kind of sport, a form of dialectic reduced to a competitive game’—Smith, 1997, p. xx), goes so far as to compare this form of dialectical argumentation with fencing and sword-fighting. Just as the sport of fencing prepares an individual for the real thing (in a society in which real sword-fighting takes place), so ‘gymnastic’ argumentation prepares a person for good dialectical practice (Smith, 1997, p. xx-xxi). It stands out, though, that the correlate of good dialectical practice in the analogy is ‘real and deadly swordplay’. Of course, dialectical argumentation is but one variety, and Aristotle’s model in the *Topics* but one variety of that. Still, the point stands that the very language in which argumentation has traditionally been conducted is a language of force and power. Insofar as much of our understanding of argument structure and process will derive from the metaphors by which it is communicated (Fulkerson, 1996), then this tradition is a serious impediment to more cooperative ways of thinking about argumentation.

² These more recent analyses supplement the seminal account given by Lakoff and Johnson (1980).

Likewise, if we consider the aims: Setting aside argumentation that is directed at inquiry, most conceptions are connected to the notions of winning (and hence losing).³ In such models, the arguer looks to impose an idea upon an audience or partner in dialogue, and that is seen by many to involve an imbalanced power relation. The beliefs of one are imposed upon another. More neutrally, a defender of the process might suggest that that other comes to see the merits of the argument. In fairness, though, this seems to ignore the agency of the arguer and the many devices or strategies that he or she has to bring about their desired outcome. The basic model of persuasion seems to suggest coercion. In many critiques, the adversarial model of argumentation becomes synonymous with the ‘conquest/conversion model of interaction’ (Gearhart, 1979, p. 202). Any attempt to persuade is judged an act of violence, and since argumentation is viewed as the means of persuasion, it in turn becomes a vehicle for violence.⁴

Beyond language and intent, Palczewski (1996) argues further that the metaphors used to describe arguments are built into the theoretical approaches by which argument is understood (p. 164). That is, not only is argumentation seen as aggressive in its language and effect but the ways we have developed of understanding it and developing theories about it are still framed within the constraints of that metaphor. Even a perspective as innovative as pragma-dialectics, for example, still sets a protagonist against an antagonist in the stages of a critical discussion (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1992, p. 35; 2004, p. 120). The metaphor, then, can pervade all aspects of our thinking about and working with argumentation.

³ As with Aristotle’s dialectical argumentation: ‘The contests Aristotle has in view were highly competitive, and the contestants were eager to win’ (Smith, 1997, p. xxi).

⁴ Several more recent alternatives to this way of conceiving argument have been proposed, like argumentation as invitational (Foss and Griffin, 1995), as cooperative (Makau, 1992; Makau and Marty, 2001), or as a cooperative partnership (Fulkerson, 1996). There is no space to develop any of these important proposals on this occasion (See Tindale (2004, p. 50ff.)), but I believe the account drawn from Bakhtin’s work below takes some of the essential insights of these perspectives to a deeper level.

3. The 'Arguer' as a position of power.

In the account so far given, in this traditional understanding of how much argumentation works (particularly interactive argumentation), it is not difficult to see a specific conception of what an 'arguer' is, although we may rarely reflect upon this role.

The role of the arguer as so conceived fits a basic notion of intentionality wherein the author of a discourse knows what he or she wants to say, organizes that discourse and communicates it to another, whether a single partner in dialogue or a larger audience. We can even imagine this working for monological texts, constructed without an explicitly imagined dialogical partner. Here, then, the arguer is quite simply the source of the argument, and therefore has full control over what is said, why it is said, and how it is said (perhaps not where it is said, though). This is a source, then, of a kind of power: The power over meaning and interpretation, for example. If a term or phrase is unclear, we expect that the arguer is the one who can clarify that meaning; who, knowing her or his own mind, can express it. The audience passively receives and, on a basic level, accepts (perhaps not the conclusion, but the argument as given). If an objector raises a potentially damaging point, if the arguer risks losing some control, then that arguer can shift things by saying, 'No, that's not what I intended', and has the authority to do so. He or she thereby regains control over the discourse.

In this sense, the arguer has a close parallel in the 'expert', the one who has authoritative knowledge. When we accede to someone whose authoritative knowledge we recognize, we invoke what John Locke called an *argumentum ad veracundiam*. Nowadays, this appears as the argument from authority. In Locke's original sense, the appeal was to a person's own modesty (*veracundiam*) in the face of one who owns respect. But in the arguer's case the authority is a fiction and the respect (at least on this ground) unfounded. The idea of an all-knowing arguer,

completely in control over the meanings involved is a fiction, one that fails to grasp the way arguments emerge in the ebb and flow of contexts that far exceed the control of any of the participants.

4. Illustrations of Traditional Analysis:

Two examples will help us to see this model at work. The first is dialogical, and by this I simply mean that we have a dialogue between two individuals (in contrast to the way I will develop this below); the second is monological, one voice speaking, and comes from one of George W. Bush's speeches. Neither example is overtly adversarial, but both reflect features and assumptions of the traditional model I have been considering.

4.1: Example #1: Socrates and Euthyphro:

The first example comes from the dialogue Plato presents between Socrates and Euthyphro. It will be familiar to many, although the details of the dialogue (what they are talking, and at times arguing, about) is not important; we are interested in the moves made by the two participants as power shifts between them.

Socrates and Euthyphro both have an interest in how the idea of piety or holiness is to be understood (since Socrates is being prosecuted for this, and Euthyphro, an alleged expert on the idea and on matters of the gods generally, is prosecuting his own father and thereby risks himself acting impiously if he is wrong in his prosecution). It is fortuitous that Socrates should have found an interlocutor who claims to know what Socrates himself needs to know, and so he is happy to have Euthyphro tell him what piety is. It should be a simple matter: the expert who is the source of wisdom on this matter simply needs to say what he knows: 'I should be of no use

Socrates, and Euthyphro would be no different from other men, if I did not have exact knowledge about such things' (4e-5a).

Having agreed with Socrates that piety, or holiness, will always be the same in every action, Euthyphro proceeds to explain what it is: 'I say that holiness is doing what I am doing now, prosecuting the wrong-doer who commits murder or steals from the temples or does any such thing, whether he be your father or your mother or anyone else, and not prosecuting him is unholy' (6d-e). As a 'sure proof' for this claim, that is, as a reason in support of it, he offers the example of Zeus, who put his father in bonds because he devoured his children.

Socrates, in turn, doubts both the reason and the claim. However, he can accept the reason—from stories about the gods—if Euthyphro says such things are the case. Euthyphro is the expert, after all. (This illustrates both Locke's original sense and our modern idea of the *argumentum ad veracundiam*—Socrates feels modesty in acknowledging Euthyphro's authority as a reason for believing something.) What Socrates cannot accept is the conclusion, because it is not what was asked for: Euthyphro has presented examples of holiness, when what was requested was the standard, or definition, by which he can recognize such things as being holy (6d).

Now the dialogue has shifted to a different level. Euthyphro finds himself in a situation where he must defend his point of view, rather than simply dispensing wisdom. He is beginning to lose control over the direction of the discourse. He tries again: '[W]hat is dear to the gods is holy, and what is not dear to them is unholy' (6e-7a), and he agrees to show that what he says is true. Yet, this he cannot do, because they have agreed that the gods quarrel, and so what is dear to some may not be dear to others, particularly on an issue like this. When asked what proof he has that what he is doing is an act of which the gods will approve, he responds:

Euthyphro: 'But perhaps this is no small task, Socrates; although I could show you quite clearly'.

Socrates: 'I understand; it is because you think I am slower than the judges; since it is plain that you will show them that such acts [like the killing of which he has accused his father] are wrong and that all the gods hate them'.

Euthyphro: 'Quite clearly, Socrates; that is, if they listen to me'. (9b).

Euthyphro has retained his confidence, but is soon to lose it. Socrates points out that what amounts to their revised definition (what all the gods love is holy) still does not give them what they want. He shows this by raising a pivotal question (it is pivotal because it is about to shift the discussion out of Euthyphro's domain of expertise and so quite beyond his control). Socrates asks, 'Is that which is holy loved by the gods because it is holy, or is it holy because it is loved by the gods?' (10a). To which Euthyphro naturally responds: 'I don't know what you mean, Socrates'. To which the latter retorts: 'Then I will try to speak more clearly...' Essentially, the power has shifted to Socrates at this point. Euthyphro's failure to defend his claims, to know his own mind, has led him to lose control over the dialogue.

Socrates' answer to the question just posed, put succinctly, is that the gods love the holy because it is holy and not that it is holy because they love it. That is, the gods are not the source of the holy, but they recognize it for what it is and love it. Thus, in this respect they are on par with humans, and Euthyphro's expertise (restricted to knowledge of the gods) has been surpassed. He has lost his status within the dialogue.

Socrates, we might imagine, is well aware of this. Still, he persists: 'But tell me frankly, what is holiness, and what is unholiness?' (11b). To which Euthyphro famously responds:

‘But Socrates, I do not know how to say what I mean. For whatever statement we advance, somehow or other it moves about and won’t stay where we put it.’

Nothing could more suggest that Euthyphro has lost control over this discourse: his statements have run away from him. This is emphasized in the exploration of a final attempted definition, ostensibly conducted by Euthyphro but now directed by Socrates who has assumed control of the discussion, where the investigation leads them back to the (failed) definition that they have just left. Lost in this labyrinth of words, Euthyphro has nowhere left to turn, except away from the discussion.

This interpretation of the dialectical exchange between Socrates and Euthyphro makes very traditional assumptions⁵: that the source of a position is the best person to know and explain that position; that one ought to be able to provide reasons for one’s position; that there are, as it were, separate roles in a discourse of this type, quite distinct from each other; and that while the participants might change roles, they do so completely (moving from knowing to unknowing; from control to no control). While the dialogue presents a picture of two people cooperating on a venture, that cooperation is less than clear to both parties and, ostensibly, unsuccessful. They do not see themselves working together and the dialogue has more in common with the adversarial model.

4.2: Example #2: Bush Speaks to the Nation:

My second example appears to be of the more monological type and involves a speech of President George W. Bush regarding military strikes against Afghanistan, and presented to the nation on Sunday October 7, 2001⁶. It follows the commencement of those strikes.

⁵ And it is to further illustrate those assumptions that I am using it, rather than to suggest it is an example of the more aggressive argumentation in which these assumptions are often rooted.

⁶ The transcript of this speech is available at: <http://www.cnn.com/2001/US/10/07/ret.bush.transcript/>

The opening paragraphs of the speech give a simple what, who, and why. He starts with a statement of power and authority by explaining that, on his orders, the United States military had begun strikes against Al Qaeda terrorist training camps and military installations of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. The reason he gives for this action is to disrupt the use of Afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations and to attack the military capability of the Taliban regime.

The 'Who' consists of a number of 'friends', as cumulative support for the claim: 'We are supported by the collective will of the world'. And the 'Why' is effectively presented in the form of an 'Appeal to Force' that had failed to be effective: 'More than two weeks ago, I gave Taliban leaders a series of clear and specific demands: Close terrorist training camps. Hand over leaders of the Al Qaeda network. And return all foreign nationals, including American citizens, unjustly detained in their country. None of these demands was met. And now, the Taliban will pay a price'.

It seems a feature of such appeals that if the threat is not acknowledged and the required action is not taken, the arguer feels the obligation to follow through with the force. That is, the argument commits the arguer to certain actions. Another Appeal to Force is seen later, along with the argument scheme known as 'Guilt by Association': 'Every nation has a choice to make. In this conflict, there is no neutral ground. If any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocence, they have become outlaws and murderers themselves. And they will take that lonely path at their own peril'.

The charge that by sponsoring outlaws and killers one *becomes* such is a particularly forceful bit of construction. Descriptively, the claim would seem to be incorrect. So we must

understand this as stipulative: they will become outlaws and killers in the eyes of the arguer, and will be dealt with accordingly.

This demonstrates a power to control meanings, to decide who will qualify under different categories. We see it elsewhere in the speech in the general determinations of who will count as ‘friends’, who as ‘enemies’.

The remainder of the piece consists of various explanations and justifications, along with supporting information. He is aware of his audience, as we see through the rhetorical use of patriotic appeals and demonizing of the enemy, and the creation of himself as a figure of justice and peace (in contrast to those who oppose him). An emotional appeal is made near the end, when Bush relates a letter from young girl with a father in the military. The fourth-grader’s willingness to ‘give him’ to Bush adds to his overall case that the action is just and justified and supported.

Not only does his speech demonstrate control, but it is designed to do so manifestly: that is, he is seen in control of events. This, too, should reassure his audience.

Again, the argumentation appears to be cooperative: he is addressing people with whom he wishes to cooperate, or who he wishes to cooperate with him. Yet like those of Socrates and Euthyphro, these are, what we might call, ‘isolated co-operations’, they do not explicitly work together. To this end, Bush’s argumentation is still recognizably the adversarial argumentation of winners and losers. It is a very forceful piece, well-organized and –controlled, with the arguer clearly in control and arguing from a position of power.

Yet in both these pieces of text I think there is much more happening. At a deeper level, there are important types of cooperation taking place.⁷ And I want to discuss these now by turning to what I call the ‘dialogical’ level.

PART II: A Dialogic Response:

5. The Dialogic:

Earlier in the paper I referred to the ‘dialogic’ simply as a synonym for the dialectical, for argumentation that involves a dialogue, either explicitly or implicitly. I now want to revise that meaning considerably.⁸

The term ‘dialogic’ is widely used in the literature to capture a variety of quite distinct ideas, from a way to rethink how we read (Hunt, 1996) to the dialogues that take place, or “dialogic student exchanges,” in the classroom (Mitchell, 2000, p.142). In her empirical study of how well people use the skills of argument Deanna Kuhn describes her approach as dialogic, defining it as: ‘[A] dialogue between two people who hold opposing views. Each offers justification for his or her own view; in addition (at least in skilled argument), each rebuts the other’s view by means of counterargument’ (Kuhn, 1991, p. 12). This can certainly be taken as a minimal sense of the idea as it relates to argumentation, but it is still closer to a traditional model than what I wish to propose, and it fails to give us a clear way of dealing with the implicit dialogues of monological arguments (like Bush’s). Likewise, although there has been a recent

⁷ This is to suggest that while the discourses we have considered in this preliminary way appear to lack anything of the important senses of deliberative community (Makau and Marty, 2001) or cooperative partnership (Fulkerson, 1996, p.212) they can still be read in a positive cooperative manner.

⁸ J. Anthony Blair (1998) laments a proliferation of terms that appear to be used without discrimination or distinction: ‘dialogue’, ‘dialogical’, ‘dialectic’, ‘dialectics’, and ‘dialectical’. While he doubts it will occur, Blair proposes that ‘dialectical’ be reserved for ‘the properties of all arguments related to their involving doubts or disagreements with at least two sides, and the term ‘dialogical’...for those belonging exclusively to turn-taking verbal exchanges’. What Blair observes is a trend toward a certain type of thinking and terminology, but his proposal will not be adhered to, at least not in this paper.

interest by argumentation theorists in aspects of 'dialogue' or 'dialectics', with attention paid to the two-sidedness or turn-taking nature of argumentation, this still leaves something to be desired. Douglas Walton's (1996, pp. 40-1) centralizing of 'dialogue' in his pragmatic account means that the dialogue provides the context that will determine the argument by virtue of telling us how the set of inferences or propositions at its core is being used. And Ralph Johnson (1996, p. 264) has focused on a dialectical tier that exists in relation to an underlying illative tier, which is the premise-conclusion part of the argument's structure. But still with these senses it is possible for dialogue-focused or dialectical argumentation to involve no more than an exchange of distanced, monological positions (perhaps through turn-taking, perhaps in whole), where each side presents its argument for acceptance or rejection (Shotter, 1997). If such were to become the standard understanding, the chance for a more genuinely interactive or 'involved' perspective might be lost. My concern here is aptly anticipated by Mikhail Bakhtin (1986) in his own judgment on dialectics: "Take a dialogue and remove the voices (the partitioning of voices), remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts of judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness--and that's how you get dialectics" (Bakhtin, 1986, p.147). The sense here is that the value of dialogue has been lost; it has been depersonalized, replaced with artificial and static concepts, and robbed of its essential sense of 'otherness'.

These insights are instructive, and I want to use many of what might be called, Bakhtinian conceptions in reconsidering dialogical argumentation.⁹ To this end, I will adopt several of the ideas that come through in Bakhtin's philosophy of language and theory of communication. In spite of having no explicit theory of argument, there is much in Bakhtin's

⁹ For recent attempts to apply Bakhtin's idea of dialogism to argumentation see Mendelson (2002), Rühl (2002) and Tindale (1999). None of these gives the kind of developed account that I attempt here.

work to contribute to an innovative model. I need first to prepare the ground by discussing some of the basic ideas that are relevant to this enterprise.

6: Bakhtin's Terminology:

When we think of the argument as a product with premises and conclusion, we focus on the sentences or propositions involved. As we have seen earlier, the tradition that harbors this model conceives the logical proposition in the case of the well-formed sentence as the basic linguistic unit. For Bakhtin, however, these sentences are impersonal; they tell us nothing about the relations between speakers or arguers. As the tools of the logician, they communicate *their* own relations, the relations of statements themselves as they are set out on the page. In contrast to this Bakhtin advocates the utterance as the basic linguistic act, where spoken utterances acquire their meaning only in a dialogue.

Mention of 'utterance' evokes the familiar work of the philosopher Paul Grice (1989), whose investigations of utterances and implicatures have had an enormous influence on the development of pragmatics. Part of the richness of his writing has to do with the developed distinction between what is said in an utterance, and what is implicated by it. Thus, a speaker may 'intend' several, integrated things by an utterance, creating a layering of meanings, and the success of communication lies in the degree to which a hearer captures and correctly unpacks those layers. As influential as it has been, Grice's work has also received criticism for its reliance on suggestions rather than detailed analysis, and for the most part, his work on implicatures was left largely incomplete (Blakemore, 1992, pp. 57-8). Bakhtin's approach to the 'utterance' is essentially different.

For one thing, the utterance gives us the boundaries between different speakers. The sentence cannot do this: “The boundaries of the sentence as a unit of language are never determined by a change of speaking subjects.” (Bakhtin, 1986, p.73). Secondly, the sentence is not “correlated directly or personally with the extraverbal context of reality (situation, setting, pre-history) or with the utterances of other speakers” (Ibid.), and is quite unlike the utterance in this respect. Thirdly, and importantly, the sentence “has no capacity to determine directly the responsive position of the *other* speaker, that is, it cannot evoke a response” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 74). This last point captures a key feature of the utterance: it is marked by “its quality of being directed to someone, its *addressivity*” (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 95). Hence, it is directed toward a response, and accommodates it in its very structure. The arguer deliberates over what is said because he or she anticipates having to defend it. An utterance, then, has essentially both an author and an addressee, it cannot exist in isolation.

Moreover, the utterance arises within the context of a particular situation. Or, to put it in Bakhtinian terms, the situation is a constitutive element of the utterance. The extraverbal does not influence the utterance from the outside. “On the contrary, *the situation enters into the utterance as a necessary constitutive element* of its semantic structure” (Todorov, 1984, p. 41).

So understood, ‘utterance’ can help us to appreciate how Bakhtin employs the term ‘dialogism’ and its related sense of the ‘word’. Michael Holquist (1990) indicates that normally ‘dialogue’ suggests two people in conversation (as with Kuhn’s usage, above), “[b]ut what gives dialogue its central place in dialogism is precisely the kind of *relation* conversations manifest, the conditions that must be met if any exchange between different speakers is to occur” (Holquist, 1990, p. 40). Bakhtin himself marveled at the way that linguistics and the philosophy of discourse had valued an artificial, preconditioned notion of the word, which was lifted out of

context and taken as the norm. By contrast, “[t]he word is born in a dialogue as a living rejoinder within it; the word is shaped in dialogic interaction with an alien word that is already in the object” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 279). In this dynamic conception the word finds its meaning.

Bakhtin continues:

But this does not exhaust the internal dialogism of the word. It encounters an alien word not only in the object itself: every word is directed toward an *answer* and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates.

The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction...

Responsive understanding is a fundamental force, one that participates in the formulation of discourse, and it is moreover an *active* understanding, one that discourse senses as resistance or support enriching the discourse.

Linguistics and the philosophy of language acknowledge only a passive understanding of discourse, and moreover this takes place by and large on the level of the common language, that is, it is an understanding of an utterance's *neutral signification* and not its *actual meaning*. (Bakhtin, 1981, pp. 280-1)

This clarifies, or furthers, the essential notion of addressivity mentioned earlier. The word is directed towards a reply; it “anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction.”

In contrast to this rich and vibrant model, Bakhtin places monologism. From the point of view of traditional rhetorical argument (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 150), we can appreciate this in the attempt to determine in advance an audience's response by closing debate and ending further discussion. Bakhtin thus opposes victory (seen in monologic rhetoric) against mutual

understanding (dialogism). As described above, the traditional concept of argument certainly fits the monological mold.

7: Dialogic Argument:

The statements of the traditional model of argument are impersonal. As they are presented for evaluation in the typical logical analysis, arguments on this understanding might better be thought of as simply argument-*products*, rather than arguments. They appear here as residues of arguments, as visible remnants. Yet even this way of talking makes it sound as if the argument is finished, decided. From the point of view we are considering here, such an 'argument' appears torn from the flow of arguing itself, incomplete and inadequate for learning anything about the actual process involved.

A dialogic model of argument, as we are now starting to conceive of it, will not pull discourse from reality and treat it as a series of statements (premises and conclusions) disconnected from arguer and audience/respondent.

Furthermore, in this model the notion of the 'arguer' itself is reconceived. Instead, the arguer appears as co-agent and an essential component of the 'argument'. Traditionally, as we have seen, the arguer is distinct from the argument, able to distance her or himself from any integral involvement. This perspective "denies the existence outside itself of another consciousness with equal rights and equal responsibilities," and is one that is "deaf to the other's response, does not expect it and does not acknowledge in it any *decisive* force" (Bakhtin, 1984, pp. 292-3). This is consistent with that aim of persuasion that desires the "complete victory and destruction of the opponent" (Bakhtin, 1986, p. 150). But from a perspective that stresses the addressivity of dialogue, such separation is neither accurate nor possible. The arguer as the

‘author’ of a position in argument, or discourse, depends on the interlocutor for the direction and details of the utterances involved. In fact, the arguer as arguer exists only in relation to the other involved, and hence only in relation to the argument.

Beyond this, in the traditional model of argument that we have considered we find talk about the way the arguer/argument aims to persuade the audience. The movement of expected change is centrifugal (from arguer to audience). Where change does take place, it is in the audience. Overlooked is the way in which the act of engaging in argument can change the arguer herself or himself. One of the assumptions left behind with the monological model is that of the all-knowing author of a discourse, who fully forms ideas before they are communicated, and possesses authoritative control over their meanings. This, as I suggested earlier, is a fiction. No single participant has control over meanings and interpretations here, since the argument with its constituent features arises from a depth of background and context that extends beyond the control of the participants.

Instead, there is an opportunity for self-knowing. As an arguer, I must consider my audience in order to orient my speech towards them. This is a standard expectation that most of us have regarding argumentation. But when I consider my audience, I consider how ‘I’ appear to them. I look at myself through their eyes. I search for beliefs and attitudes that are implicated by the utterance between us, which is the product of our discourse, and of which we are a product. In turn, those beliefs and attitudes come to be understood and changed *in light of* the argumentative exchange. Argument is the occasion of change not just in the audience but also, and perhaps foremost, in the arguer. In articulating my position for my audience, I also articulate it for myself. Accordingly, we find suggested here a model of argument that eschews the metaphors of war discussed earlier, and adopts the virtues of understanding and agreement.

We should also consider the way in which the addressee (second party or audience) is a constituent of the utterance involved. In this sense, again recalling the essential ‘addressivity’ of the utterance, there seems no distinction between the audience and the ‘counter-opinions’ which a discourse must answer. Like the arguer, the addressee/audience is personalized in the argument and contributes specific actual and anticipated responses to a unique situation. Here there is more than the simple accommodation of a reply, the anticipation of objections to one's position (Johnson, 1996). Because, again, ‘addressivity’ captures the way an argument is always *addressed to* someone, and thus needs to include an understanding of that other (audience/respondent) in its structures or organization. Hence, the argument while having the arguer as a principal source can be said on this level to be co-authored by the addressee. For Bakhtin, we recall, “every word is directed toward an *answer* and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates. The word in a living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it, and structures itself in the answer's direction” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 280). We can imagine here two people in a dialogue, anticipating and responding in a way that makes their argument a common discourse, and in a way that precludes the isolation of positions, speaking back and forth across a gulf.¹⁰

¹⁰ Bakhtin (1986) adds to the speaker and respondent (first and second parties) a third consideration: ‘Each dialogue takes place as if against the background of the responsive understanding of an invisibly present third party who stands above all the participants in the dialogue (partners)’ (Bakhtin, 1986, p.126). This third party has a special dialogic position (because, of course, there can be an unlimited number of participants in a dialogue, so this is not simply a third member). As Bakhtin further explains this role:

in addition to this addressee (the second party), the author of the utterance, with a greater or lesser awareness, presupposes a higher *superaddressee* (third), whose absolutely just responsive understanding is presumed, either in some metaphysical distance or in distant historical time (the loophole addressee). In various ages and with various understandings of the world, this superaddressee and his ideally true responsive understanding assume various ideological expressions (God, absolute truth, the court of dispassionate human conscience, the people, the court of history, science, and so forth) (Bakhtin, 1986, p.126).

This turn in the discussion may give some of us pause as we wonder what consequences this has for our ideas of accountability in argument.¹¹ Who is responsible for the claims put forward if not the arguer? The proposal now is clearly that this is a shared responsibility. As co-authors of the claims advanced and agreed to in the ongoing argument, the participants share in a common venture and produce a common ‘product’. This underlines, but in a more dramatic way, the very seriousness of much of the arguing in which we engage. For we are committed at a deep level to the statements we endorse and infuse with our meanings. We will see something of this urgency when we return to the discussion between Socrates and Euthyphro. Of course, as long as argumentation is conceived as an activity that can have only one successful participant, then traditional expectations like the concern expressed continue to be warranted.¹² But if we see it aiming for agreement, common resolution or shared understanding, then responsibility for what is said and decided must be redistributed.

This dialogic model would seem to be a model of argument that aims for such agreement, although on this point there is some debate among commentators that needs to be addressed here. According to Todorov (1998, p. 7), for Bakhtin “[t]he goal of a human community should be neither silent submission nor chaotic cacophony, but the striving for the infinitely more difficult state: “agreement.”” The word used here means, at root, ‘co-voicing’, reminiscent of the ‘double-voiced discourse’ of which Bakhtin also writes (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 324). There is an intuitive appropriateness about this suggestion given the unifying nature of the utterance and the

These ‘just’ or ‘true’ responses suggest that we have here an objective standard; it is an active participant and conceived with various degrees of awareness by the author of the utterance. Like the first and second parties (and other features discussed earlier) the third party is a constitutive aspect of the utterance. As presupposed by the author, this party must be understood in some essential relation to the second party who is being addressed and who is, as we have seen, co-authoring the utterance itself.

¹¹ I am grateful to an anonymous referee for bringing this concern to my attention.

¹² And, of course, what is being presented here is one alternative understanding to the model of aggression among other valuable alternatives, many which have been mentioned earlier.

allowances that must be made by arguer and respondent. Yet, at the same time, not all commentators interpret Bakhtin this way. Some stress the sense of social struggle rather than agreement (Hirschkop, 1986:, pp. 73-9). Others, like Shotter (1992), stress the way that speakers in a discourse always occupy different 'positions' and "can never completely understand each other; they remain only partially satisfied with each other's replies" (Shotter, 1992, p. 12). Again, we might insist, Bakhtin's central project is a rejection of the sameness of mind that affects monological discourse and sameness is too clearly associated with agreement.

Of course, a close consideration of these points of view will indicate that they do not have to preclude each other, and while an agreement wrought from sameness of mind and outlook is antithetical to Bakhtin's project, the kind of agreement considered by Todorov is not. An agreement, where achieved through dialogical argumentation, does not mean an identity of two positions; it does not involve a winner and a loser, one of whom gives up her or his position. Nor is this necessarily agreement in the sense of shaking hands and following a common path. After all, Bush's audience will include components that will never be satisfied with his solutions to problems or ways of proceeding. But components of his audience can be drawn into an understanding of his position and his manner of holding it; just as he can develop similar appreciations. Rather than the holding of the same position, agreement here stresses such an understanding of the positions involved. As Todorov (1984, p. 22) recognizes, understanding is a type of reply, it is that to which both arguer and respondent move through the utterance. In this sense, understanding is dialogical, and serves as a goal of argumentation within the perspective being considered here.

To pull the foregoing considerations together, the essential ideas of dialogic argumentation, as I am using it here, are (i) involvement, (ii) anticipation, and (iii) response.

- (i) Involvement stresses the interweaving of the participants' perspectives, or the growth of a shared view, rather than the traditional product of their encounter. Reading the argumentation from this view requires resisting the temptation to see the participants as separate and looking more for the commonalities of view that grows between them. This should hold for both the dialectical and monological arguments that were illustrated earlier.
- (ii) Facilitating the process in (i) is the sense of anticipation at work in the model. At its deepest level, there is the 'addressivity' of which Bakhtin speaks. For our purposes, we would look at the ways in which the speech of participants anticipates the other's perspective in the very structure of its makeup and meaning of the words within the discourse that exists between them.
- (iii) On the same terms, but worth keeping here as a separate thought, is the way a speech *already* responds to its objections. The ways in which the participants think ahead of themselves, project themselves into the minds of the other and draw that counter position into the construction of their own.

8. A Balance of Power:

Naturally, this has consequences for the ideas of power and force, and the associated idea of control. One principal change that we find in this model is that the author/arguer is no longer the source of the argumentation. Recognized or not, it has become a joint venture. Through anticipation and response, the audience or 'other' of the dialogue has been as instrumental in deciding the structure of the argumentation as the one who initiates and organizes it. Hence, there is loss of control here, seen in one sense in that we no longer turn to the 'arguer' to

determine meanings of what is said. We look as well to the audience with whom the argumentation is conducted – at their beliefs, interests and understandings.

Nor does the ‘arguer’ have full reign in deciding what to say or how to say it. He or she is constrained by the audience and must work with the ideas and meanings found there.

While we might not yet see an equality of roles (although we can imagine cases where this arises), there is a redistribution of power as much has shifted to the audience. In fact, the two roles ‘arguer’ and ‘audience’ have lost a lot of their previous distinctness.

They have also lost their stability. Dialogical argumentation as conceived here is interactive in such ways that we should expect change in the participants as the interaction proceeds. Participants reform their points and meanings, co-authoring them as they think together; they adopt and discard perspectives, shift allegiances, and generally become modified by the activity in which they are engaged. More traditional models of argumentation are ill-equipped to recognize this. The arguer there retains a stable position to which an audience passively responds and then later, somehow, miraculously, comes to believe what has been argued (that is, is modified after the fact).

To consider some of what is involved in this new perspective, we can turn back to our two working examples and review them as dialogical argumentation along the lines of what has just elaborated. They are by no means perfect illustrations of all aspects of the model; but they serve to provide alternative readings that can highlight features of the new alongside the old.

9. Illustrations of Dialogical Analysis:

9.1. Socrates and Euthyphro:

Approached in this way, different aspects of the dialogue between Socrates and Euthyphro come to light. The goal first and foremost is no longer to seek a definition of piety or holiness but to reach an agreement of understanding – to reach a common point of insight into the nature of what they are investigating and the enterprise of that investigation itself. Yet the question of piety or holiness is still important because it frames the context or situation out of which the utterances arise. As the model suggests, the context is a constitutive element of the utterance. The meaning of piety is crucial to the very self-understanding Socrates and Euthyphro each has of himself. It haunts their discourse at every turn. Each exchange is textured by the urgency of knowing what they seek: Socrates will die for lack of this; and Euthyphro's father may die. This context cannot be shed from their utterances.

Still, the example I have chosen here does not fit my interests in every sense, because it is clear that differences of inequality exist between the two participants. Now, however, those differences are not simply as they appeared in the other reading. They are differences that force Socrates to work at the dialogical level I have suggested.

At the start, he and not Euthyphro is in control, insofar as it is Socrates and not Euthyphro who sets the conditions for the agreement that will govern their inquiry:

Socrates: '[T]ell me what you just now asserted that you knew so well. What do you say is the nature of piety and impiety, both in relation to murder and to other things? Is not holiness always the same with itself in every action, and, on the other hand, is not unholiness the opposite of all holiness, always the same with itself and whatever is to be unholy possessing some one characteristic quality?'

Euthyphro: 'Certainly, Socrates' (5d).

This is a point on which Euthyphro will quickly founder, since his attempts at definitions do not reveal the standard that they agree they need. Euthyphro will be reminded of this agreement as the dialogue proceeds. It is a commitment that he may have cause to regret, but within the parameters of which he agrees to stay.

Beyond this, as the dialogue proceeds, the two participants become as one. Or rather, Socrates, who has established control over the discussion, loses himself in Euthyphro. Because what they argue about are Euthyphro's statements: his beliefs expressed in words. If power is source, then Euthyphro, who is the source of each definition, never gives it up completely. Instead, he shares it in a common venture, since for most of the discussion Socrates has no words of his own, but works with those of Euthyphro.¹³ Socrates becomes Euthyphro in this sense: he thinks his thoughts with him, and lives his statements to see where they will lead them. And he does this well, often thinking ahead, anticipating what will come next and adjusting to accommodate it, while allowing Euthyphro still to 'lead' the dialogue through to its terminal points, from which it needs to restart.

Most explicitly, this comes after that earlier point of perplexity in Euthyphro (11d) where they have picked up a further definition, which leads them back to their previous (inadequate) point, that holiness is what all the gods love:

Socrates: '[Y]ou remember, I suppose, that awhile ago we found that holiness and what is dear to the gods were not the same, but different from each other; or do you not remember?'

Euthyphro: 'Yes, I remember'.

¹³ Even when he makes contributions, after the point seen earlier at which Euthyphro becomes completely perplexed, he does so only insofar as he can solicit the agreement of Euthyphro. They work together in this way throughout.

Socrates: 'Then don't you see that now you say that what is precious to the gods is holy? And is this not what is dear to the gods?'

Euthyphro: 'Certainly'.

Socrates: 'Then either our agreement a while ago was wrong, or if that was right, we are wrong now'.

Euthyphro: 'So it seems'. (15c).

Euthyphro has come to see what Socrates had already grasped through his understanding of Euthyphro's statements, but as earlier, it is an insight they must share before they can move on. They think together, through the terms that they will use, through their understanding of the gods and the kinds of things they would dispute about among themselves, and arrive in each case at a common way of seeing that allows them to advance further.

After this last failed definition, the dialogue breaks up. Socrates proposes that they start again, but Euthyphro confesses to being in a hurry and rushes off. The dialogue is identified by commentators as one that ends in *aporia*. That is, it is unsuccessful, since it fails to discover what it sets out to discover—a definition of piety.

Yet much else has happened: the participants have been transformed. Socrates has become Euthyphro, has lived through his words and experienced the failure of those words to deliver the knowledge claimed. Euthyphro, who claimed he knew, has discovered himself to be the one who does not know—the position Socrates always claimed for himself. He has become Socrates. This is not a simple shift of power from one to the other. Rather, it is the reaching of a commonality between them. They both come to understand what it is they do not know, and thus need still to learn. One likes to believe that this is a successful dialogue, that such an

agreement of understanding has been achieved through this dialogical exchange, and that when Euthyphro rushes off at the end, it is to withdraw the charges he had laid against his father.

In these general ways the dialogue expresses features of the dialogical model. We see the flow of the conversation towards understanding. Each utterance expects a response and, as we have seen, anticipates that response and is so framed to express that anticipation:

Socrates: 'For surely, my friend, no one, either of gods or men, has the face to say that he who does wrong ought not to pay the penalty'.

Euthyphro: 'Yes, you are right about this, Socrates, in the main' (8e).

Each statement is forward looking, moving the discussion along, as they think together through language, developing common understandings. As this flow proceeds, the participants change their views and perspectives. Or, at least, Euthyphro does, but in this dialogue his is the only perspective that is revealed—the one being investigated. He shifts, revises, recants and repeats. And at the end he is not the same as the discussant who began. He has, at the least, understood something important about himself.¹⁴ On the earlier model, Socrates knew what he believed and manipulated his interlocutor along the same path. This is indeed one way in which he can be understood. But viewing the exchanges as we just have reveals a more positive, constructive and cooperative Socrates; one genuinely interested in his interlocutor's ideas and willingly to invest in a joint venture of argumentative inquiry.

9.2. Bush Speaks to the Nation:

The speech of President Bush reveals still more of the dialogical encounter. Here we have, of course, a monological text. But this is only superficially so. The model we have been

¹⁴ It must be conceded that the lessons here are limited because the dialogue is artificial. It has one author—Plato, and is not a piece of live discourse between two participants, speaking naturally and without forethought.

developing invites us to think about ways in which such texts work as dialogues in the deeper senses discussed. One key to this lies in what Bakhtin calls ‘hidden dialogicality’:

Imagine a dialogue of two persons in which the statements of the second speaker are omitted, but in such a way that the general sense is not at all violated. The second speaker is present invisibly, his words are not there, but deep traces left by these words have a determining influence on all the present and visible words of the first speaker. We sense that this is a conversation, although only one person is speaking, and it is a conversation of the most intense kind, for each present, uttered word responds and reacts with its every fiber to the invisible speaker, points to something outside of itself, beyond its own limits, to the unspoken words of another person. (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 197)

This is profoundly suggestive because it implicates the way we read what we might have taken to be non-dialogical texts: argumentative texts produced by one author that do not contain the explicit responses of an audience. The suggestion is that these responses are there, but hidden. This is how we in fact read an argumentative text when we read it from a dialogical perspective—looking for the presence of the audience, for the way it is recognized, accommodated, and anticipated by what the arguer says.

Bush has another participant with whom he is reasoning, a real and very important one—the American people. Read dialogically, his speech is a response to the points contributed by that participant, the concerns and fears that the people share. His text is filled with anticipation and response. Those he is addressing are as much authors of the speech as he is. Some examples will illustrate this.

After providing the What, Who and Why of our earlier analysis, obvious points that the audience will require be first addressed, Bush goes on in the following three paragraphs:

By destroying camps and disrupting communications, we will make it more difficult for the terror network to train new recruits and coordinate their evil plans.

Initially the terrorists may burrow deeper into caves and other entrenched hiding places. Our military action is also designed to clear the way for sustained, comprehensive and relentless operations to drive them out and bring them to justice.

At the same time, the oppressed people of Afghanistan will know the generosity of America and our allies. As we strike military targets, we will also drop food, medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of Afghanistan.

From the first to the second paragraph here there is a shift, a hesitation, even. What the second does is address the effectiveness of the operation, allowing that it will not be straightforward. In this Bush anticipates a response from his participant, who would want to know the prospects for quick success. Again, we can imagine the question: Will this be a war on the people of Afghanistan? A question that the third paragraph promptly answers.

The speech proceeds like this in subsequent paragraphs, taking up the question of whether this is a war on Islam, and responding in the negative; Taking up the question of whether war was necessary and the US the aggressor, and responding 'We're a peaceful nation'. And, importantly, taking up the question of whether there will be reprisals with points about security and the measures he has enacted.

These are matters he has to address; to ignore the concern about reprisals would be to fail in his dialogical obligations. The participant in dialogue requires that he address these points. In

this sense they are not his alone; he shares them with his co-contributors who through their expectations and known values influence the construction of what has been said. As Socrates becomes Euthyphro, so Bush, to be effective, must become the American people, as he understands such a complex audience,¹⁵ and think through them. The power and control that we saw in our earlier reading is thoroughly diluted here because we have a different picture of the intentionality involved. The value here that it points the way forward; it gives an alternative reading from which to derive, and on which to build, understandings.

This audience is also instrumental in the way things are said. He responds to their emotions and character. He assesses them to be angry and indignant, and responds with harsh words and indignation that the US has been attacked and forced into this position. He senses their fear and answers with reassurances tempered with realism. He judges them compassionate in character and speaks early on to the ways in which the people of Afghanistan will receive aid. He judges them peaceful and responds accordingly. He knows them to be deliberative and logical, and so does not simply speak to incite emotions (this also comes through in his tone of delivery, absent from the transcript), but answers the need for deliberation with remarks on risks and costs. He understands their own sense of their role in the world and brings that out in his remarks on freedom and Americans' responsibility to protect it at home and abroad. These are beliefs already held by his audience. He is recalling them and focusing them so as to reach a common understanding on what is happening, what is at stake and why it must be done.

¹⁵ One reviewer for this journal stresses the concern we should have here that Bush is simply defining his audience and controlling meanings on this level. This is a real concern and one that I would attach to any reading of a monological text such as this where an arguer has to be interacting with a complex audience that is not present as in the case of a strict dialogue. Even here, though, I would insist that such an interaction compels the arguer to make allowances for the expected responses; that once others' ideas have been brought into one's language and thinking, there is the prospect for that language and thinking to be modified over time.

10. Conclusions:

One of the values of argumentation is that it brings people to see the dialectical obligations that they assume by interacting with others in this way. In order to fully understand one's own position, one needs to have thought carefully about the alternatives to it. To understand how strong a case we have for a position we hold, we need to be able to conceive what would count as evidence against our position. That leads us to enter a dialogical sphere of thought, where we imagine what our position looks like to others, particularly those who do not hold it. What objections will they raise? What clarifications will they require? The ability to imagine counter-arguments is synonymous with the ability to evaluate one's own arguments. All the better, if the dialogical encounter is real (as in the case of actual dialogues) and not simply monological.

Through such exercises, participants can come to discover their beliefs and preferences. Even where we are aware of our responses to certain issues in a general way, it is through the specific challenges of dialogical argumentation that those responses become fully realized beliefs with accompanying reasons, and the choices and decisions made become identified preferences that may be applied to other contexts. Arguers come to discover themselves through the exercise of arguing, and develop themselves through what builds power of thinking and character. And obviously, through such argumentation we come to discover the thought patterns of others and appreciate the positions they hold and their reasons for holding them.

This, then, can allow for the kind of agreement of understanding that I have discussed here. While there are still other positive features of the process in general, the achievement of such shared understanding (or in the monological cases, the prospect of it) must count as an important measure of success of any such argumentation. That agreement will be seen through how people respond, what choices they make in light of argumentation. This is, arguably, a

better measure than the correctness of arguments gauged through the instruments of validity and soundness, and a constructive complement to such tools.

It might be objected that this is simply persuasion delivered under a different guise: the arguer never completely loses sight of her or his desire to convince the audience of some position or claim, and immersing themselves in this dialogical process just allows them to achieve it more efficiently and, perhaps, ethically. The empirical measure of adherence to an idea seems the same in either case.

This loses sight, however, of the transformative powers of argumentation with respect to both (or all) participants. The process allows for the modifications of all perspectives, including the arguer's, and this makes possible reaching a result not first anticipated by the arguer, but agreeable to all parties. Besides, persuasion on the traditional model is marred by the passive role of an audience subject to the aggression of the arguer. In what we have considered here, the audience is an active participant, and if conclusions are persuasive it will be because the parties involved come to persuade themselves of their merits. And this will result if the arguer has appropriately accommodated the audience by anticipating and responding to its contributions so as to achieve a joint understanding.¹⁶

What, finally, do we say to the *ad baculum*? Can we discard it as an archaic form of argumentation thoroughly non-conducive to constructive outcomes? Such a response will not, of course, make it go away. While people may have been trained to think and argue in such ways, it too, like the traditional model we considered earlier, might be a candidate for transformation. If it fails to persuade and appears fallacious this is because it represents, even encapsulates, a position of isolation. As such it seems antithetical to dialogical thinking. But if we see it not as

¹⁶ Clearly, there is more to be said about the transformative power of dialogical argumentation, particularly as this involves the arguer. This is something I see developing in future research.

a finished argument, but the first move in an exchange, then it can open the door for that exchange to develop further. Looked at closer, it anticipates a response that does not have to be a matched threat. 'I support a tuition freeze. And I vote' speaks directly to the other participant's interests. The position of a voter is important to those who rely on votes for their success. As such, it can be seen as an invitation designed to arrest the other on a level that they care about and engender discussion. The measure of its success will be the degree to which that discussion follows and its results. What the arguers must first be prepared to give up is their alleged position of power, which is after all, quite illusory.¹⁷

¹⁷ This paper was first delivered to a colloquium of the research group on 'Procedural Approaches to Conflict Resolution', Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, Bielefeld, Germany, in June of 2002. I am grateful to Matthias Raith, Christoph Fehige, Olaf Gaus and Andreas Wenzel for their comments. I have also benefited from the insights and objections of several anonymous referees for this journal. While none of them will be persuaded by everything I have to say; their contributions have led to a number of improvements.

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