Media Argumentation

_Dialectic, Persuasion, and Rhetoric_

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The three fields of logic, rhetoric, and dialectic are all about arguments, as Aristotle showed, but each takes a different viewpoint on them. Logic is the science of reasoning that studies formal inferential links between sets of propositions designated as premises and conclusion of an argument. Dialectic, usually taken to be a branch of logic, analyzes arguments given in a text of discourse, including fallacious arguments, evaluating them as weak or strong by examining criticisms of them (Kapp 1942; Walton 1998b; Finocchiaro 2005, ch. 13). Rhetoric studies persuasive arguments based on the beliefs, commitments, or values of the target audience to be persuaded (Kennedy 1963; Tindale 1999, 2004; Jacobs 2000). However, the long history of the relationship between logic and rhetoric has been an antagonistic one, characterized by strife and sniping on both sides, beginning with Plato’s attack on the Sophists on the basis that they took fees to teach argumentation skills. This attack on rhetoric is visible in many places in Plato’s dialogues (Krabbe 2000, p. 206). Aristotle took a balanced view of what he saw as a close relationship between rhetoric and dialectic, but an opposition between the two subjects remained (Hohmann 2000, p. 223). Aristotle thought of dialectic

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1 The first sentence of the Rhetoric (1354a1) is: “Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic.” Aristotle saw both arts as about persuasion (Rhetoric, 1354a13–1354a14). See Kennedy 1991, 1994.

2 The ancient history of dialectic as a branch of logic is well described by Kapp (1942), while that of rhetoric as a subject designed for persuasion is equally well described by Kennedy (1963).

3 In the Georgias (463a–463d), Socrates denounced rhetoric as nothing more than “flattery” (kolakeia).
as “a rather pure and theoretically sound method aimed at a cooperative search for cognitive truth” (Hohmann 2000, p. 223), and hence by comparison, rhetoric still had negative implications that are still present.

The aim of rhetorical argumentation seems to make it subjective, because it needs to persuade by picking premises that represent the values of the specific audience (Johnstone 1981; Tindale 2004), values that can vary from one group to another. To do this successfully, the proponent has to understand “where the audience is coming from.” Using a fictional example from Star Trek, featuring Klingons, Ferengi, and Vulcans, this chapter shows how dialectic also needs to base arguments on premises that represent the values of the specific audience or respondent to whom the argument is addressed. Another goal of this chapter is to introduce the reader to some new tools of argumentation theory, such as argument diagramming and argumentation schemes, forms of argument representing stereotypical types of reasoning used in everyday conversational interactions. Thus this chapter will show how dialectical argumentation, especially as it is being refashioned by recent developments of argumentation technology in AI, has become a much better developed branch of logic, which has moved more into a rapprochement with rhetoric. This chapter will take the first steps toward achieving the ultimate goal of displaying the key structural components of rhetorical argumentation, and will show how they fit together with logical and dialectical approaches to argumentation. What used to be called dialectic, and is coming to be so called again, has often been called informal logic in recent years. Informal logic has a special viewpoint, setting it apart from the much better developed field of formal logic.

1. The Viewpoint of Informal Logic

When it comes to studying arguments, there are two points of view, or ways of analyzing and evaluating an argument, that need to be distinguished. First, you can study the argument empirically to try to judge what effect it had, or will be likely to have, on an audience. This viewpoint would seem to be one that would fit the kind of approach and methods of the social sciences. The other point of view is logical. You can classify the

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4 Aristotle portrayed rhetoric as “a seriously tainted and practically compromised knack serving a competitive quest for persuasive success” by contrasting it with the purely intellectual subject of dialectic (Hohmann 2000, p. 223), which studies reasoning supporting or criticizing an argument.
argument as being of a particular type. By means of such a classification, you show the given argument to be an instance of some abstract form of argument. Then you can analyze it by finding missing assumptions it is based on. Then you can determine whether the argument is correct or incorrect (valid or invalid, reasonable or fallacious). In other words, you can evaluate it according to the normative standards of correctness that this type of argument is supposed to meet. It has been thought, since the end of the nineteenth century, that these two tasks were entirely independent from each other and that they should be carefully separated and never mixed in together. But recently, the feeling has been that this separation is not as clean as was once thought (Johnson 2000).

The following thumbnail sketch of the history of logic will amplify this point. Aristotle’s syllogistic, along with the Stoic logic of propositions, developed into the science of deductive logic, which, in the twentieth century, became mathematical logic. On the other hand, Aristotle’s practical logic – which comprised the study of “sophistical refutations” or fallacies, which comes under the heading of “dialectical reasoning,” in which two parties reason with each other – fell into obscurity and neglect. Something approximating a resurrection of it was attempted in the nineteenth century, most notably, when idealist philosophers wrote about so-called laws of thought. With the ascendancy of formal (mathematical) logic, however, the whole idealist vision of laws of thought was repudiated, and called psychologism – a pejorative term, as then used in logic. A sharp separation was made between how people actually think (psychologically) and how they ought to think (logically) if they are to be rational.

Now to return from this thumbnail sketch, it can be seen why in logic there is thought to be a sharp separation between the empirical and normative viewpoints. Recent developments, however, have started to indicate that this separation is not as clean or sharp as it was thought to be. One recent development is the return to the quest, originating in Aristotle’s older logic of the Topics and On Sophistical Refutations, of studying informal fallacies. It has been found that to study the fallacies with any hope of success, attention must be paid to realistic cases in which arguments are used for various conversational purposes in different contexts. Such an approach requires getting beyond simplistic one-liner examples of fallacies and looking at individual cases in some detail on their merits. Needless to say, such a pragmatic case-oriented approach to realistic argumentation introduces something of an empirical component. While the abstract form of the argument (the so-called argumentation scheme)
is still very important, one also has to look seriously at how an argument has been used for some conversational purpose (supposedly, from what can be judged from the given text of discourse). The pragmatic study of arguments used in a given case is no longer purely formal and abstract. It has become contextual. Much depends on how you interpret a given text of discourse as expressing an argument or some other speech act. This pragmatic approach seems to make the traditional separation of abstract form and contextual content much more difficult to maintain.

This pragmatic approach to taking actual cases seriously is characteristic of the schools of thought now called informal logic and argumentation theory. The general theoretical approach can be described briefly as follows. The goals are the identification, analysis, and evaluation of argumentation. The field of argumentation is centrally concerned with arguments, but must also take account of related things, such as explanations and the asking of questions, that are not themselves arguments but nevertheless occur in an important way in sequences of argumentation. The ultimate goal is to evaluate arguments – that is, to judge in a given instance of its use how strong or weak an argument is and to judge whether the premises support the conclusions as good reasons for accepting them (Johnson 2000; Finochiarro 2005; Vorobej 2006).

The typical kind of case dealt with is one in which an argument of some sort has supposedly been put forward in a text of discourse in a given case. In this typical kind of case, the proponent is not around to defend her argument. The argument is expressed in some fairly short text of discourse presented in the logic classroom. The source of the text is known. It may be a magazine or newspaper article, a book, a transcript of a political speech, a transcript of a legal case, or any sort of text of discourse that appears to contain an interesting argument of some sort. The critics, usually a professor and a group of students, then undertake the task of identifying, analyzing, and evaluating the argument. Usually, an argument is selected because it fits the format of one of the famous informal fallacies. However, such arguments can be quite reasonable in many instances and are by no means necessarily fallacious. The game is to try to judge, in a given case, how the given argument, as far as it can be analyzed and pinned down, should be evaluated – is it fallacious, or just weak in certain respects and not so badly off that it should be called fallacious? Or is it reasonable – that is, should it be judged to be basically correct from a structural point of view, even though it may have parts that are missing or that are not very well backed up, as far as can be judged from what is known from the given text of discourse and
The viewpoint of informal logic is typically from a backward perspective. That is, you are typically confronted with a “dead specimen” – an argument that has already been put forward and is now embedded in some text of discourse that is being examined. The argument, presumably, is already over, and you are looking at it retrospectively. For example, the case you are studying may be from a political debate in a parliament or legislative assembly. The debate has already been concluded, perhaps long ago. So you are looking at it with all the benefit of hindsight.

This normative viewpoint characteristic of modern argumentation theory and informal logic has ancient roots. It goes back to the ancient but much neglected and misunderstood field called “dialectic” by the Greeks. To begin to grasp the nature of the interdisciplinary tensions between logic and rhetoric, it is necessary to go back to the roots of both subjects.

2. The Old Dialectic of the Greeks

In the ancient world, dialectic was an art of questioning and replying in which two speech partners took turns. The questioner begins by asking a question that requires the respondent to make a choice on an issue. Once the respondent has chosen a position, the questioner can pursue the discussion further by drawing inferences based on the respondent’s answers (Kapp 1942, p. 12). The exact purpose of dialectic is not known. But the best-known examples of it are the dialogues written by Plato in which Socrates plays the role of questioner. Plato called dialectic “the art concerning discussions” (Robinson 1953, p. 69). As we see Socrates using dialectic in the Platonic dialogues, it appears to be a critical art. Socrates uses a series of questions to probe into a respondent’s position on some issue or problem, and he tends to find weaknesses and contradictions in the position. In the early dialogues, dialectic seems like a critical art that has a negative aspect. But Plato had a very high opinion of dialectic as a method of finding the truth of a matter. His view of what dialectic is changed in his writings, but the term was always used to describe “the ideal method, whatever that might be” (Robinson 1953, p. 70). The best we can say is that in Plato’s view, dialectic was a method of question and answer, of the kind used by Socrates in the dialogues to cast philosophical light
on a question by examining in a critical way answers that seem plausible to some.

Aristotle defined "dialectic" in a more practical and more exact way. Like Plato, he saw it as a way of critically examining opinions that seem plausible. But he tied plausibility to the notion of the *endoxon*, or generally accepted opinion. In *On Sophistical Refutations* (165b10), Aristotle defined dialectical arguments as "those which, starting from generally accepted opinions [endoxa], reason to establish a contradiction." This definition makes dialectic similar to the way Plato saw it, but it is more precise, because it is tied to the notion of a generally accepted opinion. According to the *Topics* (100a25), generally accepted opinions are "those which commend themselves to all or to the majority or to the wise – that is, to all of the wise or to the majority or to the most famous and distinguished of them." For Aristotle, then, dialectic was the use of reasoning to draw logical consequences, and especially contradictions, from premises that are generally accepted opinions. Aside from its uses in philosophy, dialectic of the kind defined by Aristotle could be used to teach skills of arguing and debate. It could have everyday uses in casual conversations, and Aristotle also claimed that it is useful for critically questioning and discussing scientific axioms (Topics, 101b4). It is clear that for Plato and Aristotle, and for the Greek philosophers generally, dialectic was an important method. It was their attempt to reply to the criticism that argumentation skills could be used in sophistry to deceptively make the weaker argument appear stronger.

Aristotle saw dialectic and rhetoric as closely connected. The first sentence of the *Rhetoric* (1354a1) is: "Rhetoric is the counterpart of dialectic." He saw both arts as having to do with persuasion. Regarding rhetoric, he wrote, "The modes of persuasion are the only true constituents of the art: everything else is merely accessory" (Rhetoric, 1354a13–1354a14). He criticized the writers of the manuals on rhetoric for saying nothing about enthymemes, for they are "the substance of rhetorical persuasion." What did he mean by "enthymeme"? The conventional opinion throughout the history of logic since Aristotle has been that an enthymeme is an argument with an implicit premise that needs to be made explicit so that the argument becomes deductively valid. The traditional example, with the implicit premise in parentheses, is the argument "All men are mortal (Socrates is a man), therefore Socrates is mortal." In the *Prior Analytics* (70a10) Aristotle wrote: "An enthymeme is an incomplete argument [syllogismos] from plausibility or sign." This passage has long been taken as evidence for the conventional opinion that an
Aristotelian enthymeme is an argument with a missing premise. The word “incomplete” (ateles) shifts attention away from Aristotle’s primary concern with arguments from plausibility and sign (Hitchcock 1995). However, a minority of Aristotle scholars, notably including Burnyeat, have felt that the traditional view of the enthymeme as an incomplete syllogism is an error. Burnyeat (1994, p. 6) argued on the basis of textual evidence that the key word “incomplete” (ateles) may have been inserted in the eleventh century. The sentence without the term ateles is repeated three times in the Rhetoric: “An enthymeme is syllogismos from plausibility or sign” (Tindale 1999, p. 10). Burnyeat argued that Aristotle meant by “enthymeme” an argument from plausibility that does not have to be incomplete. What Aristotle really referred to, according to his view, is a kind of argument that rests on a premise that is only true “for the most part.” In terms of modern argumentation theory, it would be called a defeasible argument of the kind represented by an argumentation scheme. As a warrant, instead of a universal generalization of the syllogistic type, it would have a defeasible generalization that is subject to exceptions. Tindale (1999, p. 11) characterizes them as forms of probable argument that can “take on a number of different strategies or lines of argument.” He identified these types of argument with the Aristotelian topics. Topics represent defeasible forms of argumentation or strategies of argumentation, such as argument from consequences.

As Tindale (1999, p. 12) has explained, the enthymeme was seen by Aristotle as connected to a special kind of audience that is interested in non-scientific arguments that are less rationally compelling than scientific arguments tend to be. Thus the enthymeme is the vehicle for mass media rhetorical arguments in which the audience is active and autonomous. If Burnyeat’s view is right, both Aristotelian rhetoric and Aristotelian dialectic need to be viewed in a new light. Both subjects need to be rethought and seen as based on what Aristotle called their “true constituents,” namely, enthymemes or argumentation schemes representing plausible arguments. Be that as it may, the history of the two subjects is that they grew apart. Rhetoric survived, but not in the form Aristotle would have liked, and dialectic faded into obscurity.

Dialectic failed to survive in the mainstream as a significant skill or method after the fall of the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome. Especially after the Enlightenment, science came to represent the only reliable model of rational argument and evidence. In the new model of scientific reasoning, theorems were to be rigorously deduced from self-evident axioms by deductive logic. The idea of dialectical critical
argumentation commanding rational assent outside science, or questioning scientific knowledge, had no important place in modern thinking after the rise of science. But Kant and Hegel attempted to find a place for it. Kant saw it as a negative art that inevitably leads to contradictions because it tries to resolve problems that are beyond the reach of empirical data and human understanding. According to Kant, we can know the world of appearances only as structured by our own understanding of it. We cannot know the world of “things in themselves,” even though we have a strong urge to think we can. For Kant, dialectic represents the limits of human understanding. Basing his philosophy on the empiricism of David Hume, Kant saw empirical science and mathematics (represented by Euclidean geometry) as representing the kind of knowledge that is possible for humans. Although we naturally try to go beyond these limits of our understanding to abstract metaphysics, Kant argued that this quest is futile. And it was dialectic, or his version of it, that was used by Kant as the tool to show that we cannot go beyond these limits. In this respect, Kant was a modern thinker who took scientific knowledge as the model of rationality and saw dialectic only as a lesser art. Dialectic, on Kant’s view of it, could be used only in a negative or critical way to show the futility of trying to go beyond the limits of mathematical reasoning and scientific observation.

Hegel, unimpressed by Kant’s warning, saw dialectic as the way of going beyond mere appearances and investigating “things in themselves.” Karl Marx built his philosophy of communism on Hegelian foundations. Hegel and Marx did not see dialectic as a purely verbal art of conversation, in the Greek way. They saw dialectic as studying contradictions between events in the real world. For example, Marx wrote about the contradictions in capitalism. In modern language, the term “dialectic” has come to be equated with Hegelian-Marxist notions. Thus it has been discredited as a serious scientific or philosophical notion. One takes some risks now by even using the term. But given the heritage of the term as representing such an important and central notion in Greek philosophy, it is better not to give up on it. Thus the new dialectic needs to be seen as having Greek roots. What is needed is a Greek revival.

By linking dialectic to the endoxon, Aristotle had done something highly significant. Dialectic was no longer confined to abstract philosophical discussions on arcane and technical philosophical problems. It now became linked to public opinion and widely held views that could be on any subject. The premises of a dialectical argument were taken by Aristotle to be the received views held to be plausible by both the public and the
experts at any given time. Note that such views can change over time and can be different in different cultures or countries. Dialectic, on this view of it, is flexible. Of course, on the modern view of rational argumentation, this flexibility is precisely the defect that makes dialectic unfit to command rational assent. For in the modern view, as emphasized by Descartes, knowledge can come only from true and self-evident axioms that are fixed as true and never change. This static view of rationality was also that so highly promoted by Plato. In contrast, on the Aristotelian view of dialectical argument, it is based on premises that are not fixed and that change over time. Thus it is easy to see why dialectic has not been highly valued for so long and has been seen as an ancient notion of no use to represent a kind of argument or evidence of serious worth to command rational assent. At the same time, it is becoming increasingly apparent, as we overcome our modernistic preconceptions, that something like dialectic of the Aristotelian sort can be extremely useful as a method. Of course, where it can be most useful is in the evaluation of argumentation, especially the kinds of arguments used in law and public affairs. Indeed, the notion of democracy, as well as our Anglo-American system of law, would seem to rest on our capability of understanding and judging arguments on matters of public opinion.

3. The Opposition between Rhetoric and Dialectic

The Sophists were itinerant teachers who taught rhetorical techniques of argumentation, especially of the kind that could be used in the courts or in political speeches. Greek philosophy was strongly influenced by the Sophists, and it was through them that both rhetoric and dialectic emerged as significant philosophical subjects, taking the shape they did. However, as philosophy grew, it came to be seen as an abstract and general subject motivated by finding the truth of a matter. Philosophy took on a critical and skeptical tone; rhetoric, as developed by Sophists, had always been seen as a practical subject. The aim of rhetoric was that of persuasion or advocacy. This aim often requires examining both sides of an argument, but the aim, in the end, is to advocate the one side. Philosophy came to regard itself as a discipline that needed to consider both sides of an argument, looking at strengths and weaknesses in arguments on both sides in a balanced way. Given this perceived divergence of aim, it was natural that an opposition grew between rhetoric and dialectic.

The criticism of rhetoric, and even suspicion and hostility toward it, is perhaps most pronounced and sharply formulated in the philosophy
of Plato. Plato often compared dialectic and rhetoric and consistently portrayed rhetoric as inferior and even untrustworthy. His method of attack was to use the bias *ad hominem* argument against the Sophists. Plato argued from the premise that the Sophists took fees for their lectures, whereas Socrates talked to anyone without charging any fee. He argued that because the Sophists were motivated by financial gain, it can be concluded that they have no regard for the truth of a matter. In other words, Plato charged the Sophists with being biased. He used this argument against them to discredit rhetoric as a discipline, or at least to compare rhetoric unfavorably with dialectic. This attack on rhetoric emerged in many places in the Platonic dialogues. Krabbe (2000, p. 206) has cited a few of the leading passages. For example, in the *Georgias* (463a–463d), Socrates denounced rhetoric as nothing more than “flattery” (*kolakeia*). Plato used the word “semblance” (*eidolon*) in describing the role of rhetoric in politics, and for Plato appearances are misleading and are not a good guide to the truth.

After Plato portrayed rhetoric as inferior to dialectic and emphasized its capability for deception, the *ad hominem* argument he used against it seemed to stick. For over two thousand years, the term “rhetoric” has taken on negative connotations. Although Aristotle took a more balanced view of the two subjects, and saw rhetoric in a more positive light than Plato, an opposition was still evident in his treatment of them. Hohmann wrote that Aristotle thought of dialectic as “a rather pure and theoretically sound method aimed at a cooperative search for cognitive truth” (2000, p. 223). By contrast to such a pure method, rhetoric is seen as compromised and even as untrustworthy. As Hohmann phrased it, rhetoric is portrayed as “a seriously tainted and practically compromised knack serving a competitive quest for persuasive success.”

Even in Aristotle, then, because of the contrast with dialectic, rhetoric still comes across as a subject with negative implications. While in the present day, it is not hard to find suspicion and mistrust about rhetoric, there is not much respect for philosophy as a subject, either. By the close of the twentieth century, philosophy had become a highly abstract subject for the most part, seen by the public as removed from reality and useless. By the second half of the nineteenth century, neither rhetoric nor logic were subjects held in high esteem in public opinion. As Whatley wrote (*Elements of Rhetoric*, 1863, preface, p. 1): “The subject [rhetoric] stands perhaps but a few degrees above Logic in popular estimation; the one being generally regarded by the vulgar as the Art of bewildering the learned by frivolous subtleties; the other, that of deluding the multitude
by specious falsehood.” At the beginning of the twentieth century, mathematical logic soared to new heights in both philosophy and mathematics. But the promise of formal symbolic logic to provide a dialectical method for the evaluation of philosophical or practical argumentation was never fulfilled. The parts of logic relating to argumentation in natural language, like the subject of informal fallacies, remained undeveloped.

Even now, the rift between dialectic and rhetoric remains, and it seems very hard to break down the barriers between the traditional disciplines of logic and rhetoric. It is perhaps for this very reason that neither field seems to be capable of growing and fulfilling its potential for usefulness as a scientific discipline. This problem is more than a mere matter of historical accident. There are fundamental differences between the two fields in what they do and how they do it. Even if we consider dialectic, which could also be called informal logic or applied logic, there is one very great difference between it and rhetoric. In dialectical argumentation, two participants take turns. First, the proponent makes a move and then the respondent makes a move responding to that prior move. Dialectic always takes as its framework of argumentation a connected sequence of moves in which the parties take turns. Rhetoric does not appear to fit this model. In traditional rhetorical argumentation, a speaker is seen as making a presentation to an audience, typically a mass audience. They listen to and/or watch the performance. The speaker is active. He is an arguer who makes claims and supports them with arguments. But the audience is relatively passive with respect to advancing argumentation. The audience may respond through eye contact, by shouting “hurrah” or “boo,” or by responding to a public opinion poll after the speech. But they don’t seem to be active respondents of the kind that one would expect in dialectical argumentation. Many examples of mass media argumentation, while they appear to fit the rhetorical format obviously enough, do not seem to fit the dialectical format at all, or at best only indirectly. This contrast of structure is perhaps the deepest and most impressive difference between rhetoric and dialectic.

Leff (2000, p. 247) recognized this difference and expressed it concisely by writing that dialectic proceeds by question and answer, whereas rhetoric proceeds through uninterrupted discourse. He also cited three other differences between rhetoric and dialectic, which he called “differences of degree”: (1) Dialectic deals with abstract issues, whereas rhetoric deals with specific issues. (2) Dialectic deals with propositions and inferences, whereas rhetoric deals with how propositions relate to social norms and circumstances. (3) Dialectic uses technical language, while rhetoric
accommodates and embellishes ordinary language. Leff argued (p. 247) that despite their very different orientation and emphasis, the differences between rhetoric and dialectic are not as sharp or irreconcilable as tradition has long held. Dialectic, if it is to be a practical subject that is useful to analyze and evaluate actual arguments in given texts of discourse in natural language, does have an empirical aspect. If applied to cases of fallacies of the kind that deceive or trip up arguers, dialectic will have an empirical and even psychological or sociological aspect. If it is applied to real cases, it can scarcely be denied that it has some sort of empirical component. Thus the contrast between rhetoric as having an empirical method and dialectic as having a normative method may not be as sharp or absolute as it is often taken to be.

Another difference between rhetoric and dialectic is that their methods appear to contrast. Rhetoric aims at directing argumentation to a specific target audience, and the role of a normative or cognitive component may not necessarily support this aim, depending on how the rational the audience is (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969). According to a conventional view, rhetoric has to do with the effectiveness of argumentation to persuade or influence a target audience (Tindale 2004). The presumption of this view is that this influence is one of changing the beliefs or behavior of the audience. Such a change, it might seem to follow, is purely a matter of the psychology of the audience. For example, in the case of a commercial ad used in the mass media, the persuasive impact of the ad can be judged, it may be assumed, by the subsequent increase or decrease in sales, measured in numbers of transactions or in dollars. In the case of a political message, the persuasive impact can be measured in public opinion polls or in votes. On this view, rhetoric is a branch of psychology, and the element of persuasion can be measured by empirical indicators. So conceived, it seems that rhetoric has nothing to do with the dialectical structure of the argument used to make the persuasive appeal. It seems to have nothing to do with whether the argument is structurally correct by some standard, such as that of deductive logic. The reason presumably is that an argument could be structurally correct, but an audience could fail to find it quite persuasive. Or on the other hand, it could fail to be structurally correct as an argument, but an audience could find it quite persuasive anyway. Thus, for example, in public relations, advertising, or mass marketing, the concern seems to be exclusively with the effectiveness of the argument. The concept of persuasion effectiveness is seen as purely instrumental and psychological, so that rationality has no part in it.
Those working in the fields of rhetorical persuasion often operate on the assumption that effectiveness is the exclusive technical aim of their craft. The corollary of this assumption is that matters of the rationality of the arguments they use, or their structure as correct arguments, are of no concern or utility. But more recently, there has appeared a certain ambivalence about this view, as observed by Schiappa (1995) and Jacobs (2000). Schiappa commented that despite the occasional impulses of rhetorical theorists to take the rationality of argumentation into account, how they actually treat argumentation in practice often seems to reduce to the issue of effectiveness. Jacobs (2000, p. 273) made the similar comment that while rhetorical analysts don’t explicitly accept the criterion of effectiveness as their exclusive aim in theory, they “tend to accept it in practice.” Its methodology is to measure how successful argumentation is to persuade an audience or secure compliance to an action or policy. This goal appears to be psychological in nature, and therefore rhetorical argumentation, it would appear, needs to be evaluated empirically by the methods of the social sciences. The usual method is to run a poll to judge how successful argumentation was in a given case. In cases of argumentation techniques used in mass media ads, collection of numerical data measures empirically how many more units of a product were sold. The methods of dialectic are visibly different, and do not appear to fit with social science methodology. The question to be determined is whether a given move in argumentation serves to contribute to some type of dialogue of which it is a part. This contrast also seems fairly deep and dramatic. Dialectic is a normative subject, whereas rhetoric is conventionally seen as an empirical subject that fits in fairly well with the usual social science model for collecting data by empirical observation and testing. However, Leff (2000, p. 245) has argued convincingly that the issue should not be seen as one of “a contrast between a normative art of dialectic and a merely empirical art of rhetoric.” He noted (p. 244) that Aristotle defined rhetoric not in terms of persuasive effect but as a faculty for observing in a given case the available means of persuasion. Following this viewpoint, the sharp division between dialectic as purely normative and rhetoric as purely empirical is not sustainable.

4. Topics and Fallacies

The term “topics,” from the Greek word for “having to do with commonplaces,” refers to classical and medieval sets of generally accepted arguments that can be used in a speech or composition (Bloomer 2001,
Topics have long been recognized as rhetorical devices representing common forms of argument that can be used for inventions of arguments in a speech. However, they have never proved to be very useful for this purpose, despite the attempts to make them so, especially by Aristotle and Cicero (Bloomer 2001, p. 781). The topics appear to be very similar to what are now called argumentation schemes. However, it is uncertain what the function of the topics is supposed to be. Because they didn’t prove to be useful for assisting argument invention, later writers, especially in medieval logic, tried to recast them in a dialectical role as devices that might be used to judge the worth of arguments already given. Perhaps the topics were not stated clearly enough or perhaps they were not fitted well enough into any general system of argument invention to be useful for rhetorical argumentation.

Any system of argument invention will have to be built on several basic components, so that arguments needed to prove a claim or to persuade can be constructed out of them. Basically, there will have to be a target proposition that is supposed to be proved or refuted, a given base of premises, and a tool for constructing chains of arguments that move forward from the premises toward proving this target proposition. Such systems have been attempted, but not in a formalized way, from ancient times onward. In modern times, formal systems have been constructed, called theorem-proving machines. However, these systems work only for deductive logic, and systems designed to use defeasible argumentation schemes have not yet been attempted. But it is the defeasible schemes that would prove most useful for inventing arguments in everyday reasoning, for example, in forensic debating and in legal argumentation.

One important function especially applicable to rhetorical argumentation is that of argument construction, providing means for the invention of new arguments. According to Kienpointner (1997), such topic-based systems of argument invention in antiquity, medieval, and early modern times had the following three characteristics.

1. The aim of the system is to search for arguments that could be used to support or attack some claim that is open to dispute (p. 225).
2. The search process looks not for all conceivable arguments but for ones that the audience either accepts or can be gotten to accept the premises, as well as the form of argument leading to the disputed claim from these premises.
3. The system can have stronger or weaker standards on what counts as a form of argument by means of which a conclusion can be shown to follow from a set of premises.
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An invention device of this sort could be used to cast around among a set of facts, or a set of premises accepted by an audience, and find arguments (argumentation schemes, or forms of argument) that could be used to prove some claim to the audience that it does not presently accept.

On the other hand, the topics were sometimes represented by the medievals as having a logical or dialectical function, in contrast to their invention function. Fallacies are forms of argument that represent weak inferences, or even deceptive argumentation tactics used to unfairly get the best of a speech partner. Fallacies are not just arguments that are logically incorrect. They are logically incorrect arguments that appear to be correct. Fallacies tend to be either erroneous arguments of kinds that look persuasive, or deceptive arguments that appear to be rationally persuasive. In the latter case, they are sophistical tactics that can be used to try to get the best of a speech partner unfairly, because they look reasonable to that partner. Thus the concept of fallacy does have a rhetorical element, meaning that fallacies are kinds of arguments that generally appear to be reasonable as attempts to persuade a speech partner or a target audience. In fallacies of mass media argumentation, the fallacious argument is one that appears reasonable and is persuasive to a mass audience.

Jacobs (2000, p. 273) observed that fallacies are argumentative moves that seem good when they are not. He also commented that just because an argument seems reasonable or seems unreasonable, it does not follow that “it is what it seems” (p. 273). Of course, if an argument looks reasonable to a mass audience, they might be persuaded by it more easily than by an argument that looks fallacious or unconvincing to them. Or would they? The P. T. Barnum approach is to assume that the audience is emotional rather than logical, and can be persuaded even by the most fallacious argument. Barnum said that you can never go broke underestimating the intelligence of an audience. Le Bon is noted for a similar skepticism. He felt that crowds are moved by emotion, not reason, and that it is pointless to try to use reason to persuade them. There is something in these admonitions, for appeals to emotion really are the key to persuasion of a mass audience. But the Barnum/Le Bon approach restricts the role of logic (if we can include dialectic and informal logic) too narrowly. The reason is that even appeals to emotion have argumentation schemes, and thus they have a “logic” or argumentation structure. Even an audience that responds to an emotional appeal to fear or pity, or a vicious personal attack, needs to be persuaded by orchestrating that appeal through forms of argumentation the audience can follow and respond to. They need to draw the conclusions suggested by the speaker, following the inferences set up by the speaker in his argumentation. It is
for this reason that dialectic is connected to rhetoric so that the one subject is useful and even necessary for the other. Dialectic is about fallacies, and explains how arguments that seem correct can be flawed underneath because the argumentation is defective or used for a communicative purpose in some deceptive way.

Rhetoric, when viewed through the framework laid out by Aristotle, is based on topics or argumentation schemes, and thus has a methodology with fundamental normative components. The importance of these argumentation schemes can be appreciated if one looks at Aristotle’s Rhetoric in a new light. Aristotle began the Rhetoric by drawing a distinction between deliberative and forensic oratory. But from the very beginning (Rhetoric 1355a11), he emphasized that the method of constructing argumentation in either type of oratory is concerned with proof. This seems a peculiar word to use. It even seems inappropriate, because to us the term suggests a conclusive type of proof that you might find, for example, in Euclidean geometry. So what does he mean by the term in this context? He went on to explain that proof is “a sort of demonstration,” suggesting that the Euclidean type of proof from axioms to theorems is exactly what he has in mind. But then in the next sentence he wrote, “We are most strongly convinced when we suppose anything to have been demonstrated.” What did he mean by these remarks? To the modern reader, they just seem wrong. They seem to say that argumentation in rhetoric should be based on the same kind of deductive form of argument called “proof” that is characteristic of argumentation in science. This claim just seems wrong to us, because we think that argumentation in rhetoric is generally inconclusive and is based only on persuasion. Later, in fact (Rhetoric 1355b2), Aristotle defined rhetoric as “the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whatever.” This definition appears to be at odds with the hypothesis that rhetoric is all about scientific proof or “demonstration.” So how can we resolve this puzzle? The answer seems to lie in how Aristotle uses the term “enthymeme.” Evidently, he thinks of an enthymeme as a kind of argument that is syllogistic in its form. It may not be the same as a logical (deductively valid) syllogism. But for Aristotle, it appears to be syllogism-like. He wrote (1355a11) that “the enthymeme is a kind of syllogism.”

These remarks seem very puzzling because it is unclear what rhetoric has to do, at its core, with logical syllogisms of the kind we are so familiar with in deductive logic. But Aristotle’s remarks start to make a good deal of sense as expressing a plausible hypothesis about rhetoric once
we adopt Burnyeat’s view. This view is that the enthymeme represents a presumptive form of argument that is like a syllogism but is based on a generalization that is held to be true “only for the most part.” Supporting this interpretation is the passage at 1355a12 where Aristotle wrote that in forensic rhetoric, it is not easy to persuade an audience by even the most accurate scientific knowledge, and therefore, “our proofs and arguments must rest on generally accepted principles.” On this view, an enthymeme, in the Aristotelian sense, is a presumptive argumentation scheme based on a warrant that is claimed to hold generally, but is subject to exceptions. Given this interpretation, Aristotle’s view of the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic becomes much clearer and easier to appreciate. For example, when he wrote (Rhetoric 1355a11) that rhetorical skills are much more powerful when the speaker can detect bad arguments, we can easily appreciate how rhetoric and dialectic are connected, and how both are based on argumentation schemes and both relate to persuasion. He defines rhetoric (Rhetoric 1355a14) as “the faculty of discovering the possible means of persuasion in reference to any subject whenever.” So defined it might initially seem that rhetoric has very little to do with dialectic. But a key term is “persuasion.” How is an audience influenced by a means of persuasion? The answer is that it is persuaded by means of arguments that are (at least typically) not syllogisms, but kinds of arguments they are familiar with in everyday thinking and discourse. Once this connection is made, it is not hard to appreciate the plausibility of the assumption that an audience will be more effectively persuaded by arguments that they think are reasonable.

5. Persuasion, Social Influence, and Democracy

Now that these various dialectical tools have been explained, they can be applied to various problems, phenomena, and cases of mass media argumentation. But of course, many of the readers of this book will still not be convinced that these tools really can be applied in a useful way to mass media arguments in the realities of the marketplace and public discourse. What should really matter, according to the conventional viewpoint, are arguments that have social influence in the marketplace of a free economy and in the marketplace of social decision making in a democratic political system. The conventional view is that such matters should be studied by the empirical methods of the social sciences. To set the direction for the investigations in the rest of the book, and try to put such readers in a receptive frame of mind, two points are made in
the final section of this chapter. The first relates to some recent findings on persuasion in social psychology. The second has to do with the wider implications of rhetoric and dialectic in relation to argumentation in the public sphere, especially in law and democratic politics.

Robert B. Cialdini, a social psychologist, has studied techniques of persuasion empirically. In his popular book (Cialdini 1993), he recognized seven techniques that he saw as basic to social influence.

**Contrast** is a technique concerning the sequence in which a persuasive message is presented. For example (Cialdini 1993, pp. 25–26), a salesperson in a clothing store, in order to sell an expensive sweater, may show the customer an even more expensive sweater first. Then by comparison, the cost of the sweater presented second may not seem so exorbitant.

**Reciprocity** is a technique by which a proponent makes a respondent more likely to consider or accept his argument by making the respondent obliged to the proponent in advance of the argument. For example, in an experiment by Regan (1971), raffle sales were increased when participants were given a free soft drink before being asked to buy a raffle ticket.

**Consistency** is the technique of using an arguer’s previous commitments, or getting him to commit to propositions that will support the conclusion you want to persuade him to accept. Cialdini (1993, pp. 76–77) gave the example of how the Chinese interrogators during the Korean war began the process of indoctrinating American prisoners of war by asking each prisoner to prepare a list of problems in the United States. This seemed harmless at first, but later it turned out to be a powerful device to assist persuasion.

**Social proof** presents evidence of what other people think as a reason for accepting a proposition or going along with a recommended course of action. A case cited by Cialdini was the mass suicide in Jonestown, Guyana, in which 910 people voluntarily drank poison in an orderly way. Conformity seemed to play a large role in the technique the charismatic leader, Rev. Jim Jones, used to persuade the group to carry out this extraordinary action.

**Liking** is the positive attitude that the person or group persuaded has toward the persuader. The example given by Cialdini (1993, pp. 163–166) is the hostess who invites all her friends to a Tupperware party. They like the hostess, and this attitude makes the persuasive task of the hostess that much easier.

**Authority** is the use of an expert opinion or accepted authority as a technique of persuasion. Cialdini (1993, pp. 212–213) uses the example
of a physician who tells a patient that he should take a particular medication.

Scarcity is the technique of telling a respondent that the item he is thinking of buying is in short supply, possibly because there is competition for it. Cialdini (1993, p. 197) used the example of a salesperson who told a customer that the machine the customer is looking at has just been bought by another person, but there might be one left.

Cialdini classified these seven techniques as cognitive short cuts, meaning that they go straight to a conclusion when there is no time to engage in a more lengthy analytical process of thinking. They are thinking techniques we all use in situations where hard evidence is insufficient to resolve a problem or make a decision by more thoughtful cognitive processing, but where a quick decision can be made on the basis of a guess or presumption. Thus when used by an arguer at the opportune moment in a deliberation, they can be powerful techniques of persuasion.

In the following chapters, these seven techniques will be encountered with some regularity. Some of them are associated with argumentation schemes and also with traditional fallacies. For example, the technique of authority is obviously related to the argumentation scheme for appeal to expert opinion. Social proof is very closely related to the appeal to popular opinion, a form of argument studied in chapter 2. Others of the techniques are not forms of argument, but argumentation strategies of various kinds. Contrast is an argumentation strategy that is not closely associated with any particular form of argument, but can be devised in advance by a persuader as a framework into which to fit a sequence of argumentation. It is related to the argumentation strategy called dissociation by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) as explained in chapter 8. Consistency falls into both categories. It is associated with a form of argumentation called argument from commitment in chapter 3, section 3. Using this argumentation scheme, the proponent argues from the commitments of the respondent. But commitment-based argumentation is central to all the types of dialogue in the new dialectic, and is a strategy used in all the various argumentation schemes.

At any rate, awareness of the seven powerful persuasion techniques shown to be so important in social influence by Cialdini is extremely useful for linking dialectic to empirical work on how people respond to persuasion. We now proceed to the second point, as the closing consideration of this chapter, thus pointing the way to the studies undertaken in the next chapters. Many of the case studies of argumentation treated in these chapters concern arguments that can’t just be viewed from a
simple rhetorical or dialectical framework of a persuading arguer and a single respondent who is the target of the argument message. Many of the arguments involve policies that are public in nature and may even be cast in law as rules binding at the national level. Of course, if we look back to the Greek origins of dialectic and rhetoric once again, these subjects originally rose out of the need to contend with legal and political argumentation in the democratic form of government of the Greek city-states. As Wenzel (1990, p. 14) emphasized, Aristotle, Cicero, Isocrates, and other ancient rhetorical theorists linked rhetoric to politics and law. Wenzel (p. 13) argued that in fact rhetoric, dialectic, and logic all originated in ancient Greece “to meet certain practical needs of people who were learning how to manage democratic government.” It is, of course, fairly obvious how rhetoric applies to politics in democratic government. What is less obvious is how dialectic might apply to the public sphere. Wenzel (p. 14) showed very clearly how it does when he wrote: “Democratic government requires the exercise of human judgment to choose among alternatives and that judgment requires skilled advocates to articulate the various options in public deliberation.” At the same time, this remark hints at the interdependence of rhetoric and dialectic. Dialectic has to examine and weigh all the relevant arguments on both sides of an issue to be decided. But it requires a skilled advocate, a rhetorician, to articulate the arguments in a persuasive way.

6. Argumentation Schemes

It wasn’t until the recent exploration of new methods of argumentation theory and the study of fallacies that prospects for either dialectic or rhetoric began to improve. One especially important tool is the classification and analysis of so-called argumentation schemes, or common forms of argumentation. Argumentation schemes are premise-conclusion inference structures that represent common types of arguments used in everyday discourse, as well as in special contexts, such as those of legal or scientific argumentation. They include deductive and inductive forms of argument, but also forms of argument that fall into a third category, called defeasible, presumptive, or abductive. The study of schemes gradually began to be developed, motivated partly by rhetoric, but also by the need in logic to deal with informal fallacies and other problems of informal logic. This work originated mainly in philosophy departments and in speech communication departments, but after a while it became interdisciplinary, including researchers from fields such as
Argumentation Schemes

linguistics and computing. Joint projects developed; for example, the recent Perthshire Conference on Argument and Computing had working groups combining expertise in the fields of law, computing, communication, and philosophy.

The new rhetoric of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969) began to study various common forms of argument used not only in rhetorical and philosophical argumentation but in law, science, and many other contexts of discourse as well. Of course, many such forms of argument are listed and treated quite extensively by Aristotle in his *Topics*. A table drawing up comparisons among the list of twenty-eight topics found in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* and the thirteen argumentation schemes in *The New Rhetoric* (1969) of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca has been constructed by Warnick (2000). Throughout the long history of the study of so-called topics (*topoi*), or common forms of argument, their role in dialectic and rhetoric has been controversial. Were they aids to memory in debate, were they rhetorical devices for arguing in a speech, or were they logical forms of argument of some undetermined sort? They are often referred to as “places” where you can find an argument. In rhetoric, they have often been seen as useful for invention – that is, to help a speaker think up a new argument to support advocacy of a claim.

As one looks over the comparative table of argumentation schemes from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca and topics from Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* listed in Warnick (2000, pp. 120–128), one finds some common and familiar forms of argument represented. Other forms appear obscure and are hard to relate to common argumentation. A familiar one is argument from example, a weak form of argument that is sometimes hard to distinguish from explanation. Argument from analogy is another familiar one found in both sources. The table shows that there are forms of argument common to both the ancient and modern accounts. But it also points up the difficulties with Aristotelian topics and the argumentation schemes of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca. The forms of argument are not worked out clearly by formalizing them and using case studies or realistic examples to show how the form applies to a common variety of cases. To advance the subject a bit further, we have to turn to the more systematic accounts of schemes given in Kienpointner (1992) and Walton (1996). The best introduction to this work is to give the example of argument from expert opinion, developed at length in Walton (1997a).

Presumptive argumentation schemes are modeled with the help of two components. One is a representation of the form of the argument. The other is a set of critical questions matching that form of argument. The
appeal to expert opinion, also called argument from expert opinion, is an example of a common presumptive form of argument. For example, in court, a ballistics expert may be called in as a witness to testify about a bullet found at a crime scene. The first component of the argumentation scheme for argument from expert opinion is the following form of argument (Walton 1997a, p. 210).

**Form of Argument from Expert Opinion**

- **Major Premise**: Source $E$ is an expert in subject domain $S$ containing proposition $A$.
- **Minor Premise**: $E$ asserts that proposition $A$ (in domain $S$) is true (false).
- **Conclusion**: $A$ may plausibly be taken to be true (false).

Argument from expert opinion is typically a presumptive form of argument, meaning that it carries tentative probative weight in a dialogue. But presumptive arguments of this kind are defeasible, meaning that they are subject to defeat at some next point in the dialogue. As the logic textbooks tell us, appeal to expert opinion can even be fallacious in some cases. The problem is that there is a natural tendency to defer to an expert, and it is easy to give in to this tendency uncritically, without making the effort to ask critical questions. Thus the second component of the argumentation scheme for appeal to expert opinion is the following list of six basic critical questions (Walton 1997a, p. 223).

**Critical Questions for the Argument from Expert Opinion**

1. **Expertise Question**: How credible is $E$ as an expert source?
2. **Field Question**: Is $E$ an expert in the field that $A$ is in?
3. **Opinion Question**: What did $E$ assert that implies $A$?
4. **Trustworthiness Question**: Is $E$ personally reliable as a source?
5. **Consistency Question**: Is $A$ consistent with what other experts assert?
6. **Backup Evidence Question**: Is $A$’s assertion based on evidence?

The evaluation of argumentation based on appeal to expert opinion takes the form of a dialogue. If a proponent puts forward an argument that has the form of the argumentation scheme above, and the premises are based on good evidence, then the argument carries probative weight. This means that the respondent in the dialogue is obliged to provisionally accept the conclusion of the argument. But the respondent also has the option of asking appropriate critical questions. If he asks such a critical question, the proponent has the burden of proof, meaning that he must either answer the question or the argument is defeated. That is,
proponent must answer the critical question adequately or he must give up the appeal to expert opinion as an argument carrying presumptive weight in the dialogue.

The technique of evaluating arguments defeasible through the use of a set of special critical questions matching each argumentation schemes is due to Arthur Hastings (1963). Hastings, in his innovative Ph.D. thesis at Northwestern University, set out a list of many common schemes with a set of critical questions accompanying each scheme. An argument fitting a scheme is defeated if an appropriate critical question is asked but not answered. As the field of argumentation studies developed, this approach became widely adopted, for example, by Kienpointner (1992) and Grennan (1997). Now argumentation schemes are being used in artificial intelligence, logic programs, natural language text generation, argumentation systems for legal reasoning, and multi-agent technology used on the Internet. The most useful and widely used tool so far developed in argumentation theory is the set of argumentation schemes, especially those representing defeasible argumentation. A defeasible argument is one in which the conclusion can be accepted tentatively in relation to the evidence known at a given point of the investigation in a case, but may need to be retracted as new evidence comes in.

A defeasible argument is typically not very strong by itself, but still may be strong enough to provide evidence to warrant rational acceptance of its conclusion on a balance of considerations as an investigation moves forward. The investigation can then move ahead, even under conditions of uncertainty and lack of knowledge, using the conclusion tentatively accepted. The recognition of defeasible argumentation has led to a paradigm shift in logic, artificial intelligence (AI), and cognitive science concerning forms of argument, such as argument from expert opinion, traditionally categorized as fallacious in logic textbooks. Among the defeasible argumentation schemes that have been studied are argument from sign, argument from example, argument from commitment, argument from position to know, argument from expert opinion, ad hominem argument, argument from analogy, argument from precedent, argument from gradualism, and several types of slippery slope argument.

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5 Recent conferences and workshops dedicated to the theory of argumentation in artificial intelligence include the International Conference on Computational Models of Argument (COMMA 2006), the Computational Models of Natural Argument (CMNA) workshop series, and the Argumentation in Multi-Agent Systems (ArgMAS 04, 05, 06) workshop series. In 2007, there has been a call for papers on a special issue of the IEEE journal Intelligent Systems on the topic of argumentation technology.
Among others that might be mentioned are argument from popular opinion, argument from verbal classification, practical reasoning, argument from sunk costs, argument from ignorance, argument from cause to effect, argument from correlation to cause, argument from positive or negative consequences, argument from threat, and fear appeal argument. Such arguments are now admitted to be reasonable in many instances, even if they are tricky and not always reliable because they are defeasible and hence inherently subject to failure. Argument from expert opinion, for example, had traditionally been treated in logic textbooks under the category of the fallacy of appeal to authority. And we can get into a lot of trouble, for example, concerning “junk science,” with such arguments. However, currently it is admitted that we could not get by without such arguments, for example, in the courts, where testimony by scientific experts and much of the evidence, including ballistics and DNA evidence, is based on appeal to expert opinion. Hence the importance of defeasible argumentation schemes has become readily apparent in the recent body of work on informal fallacies, leading to the new idea that such “fallacies” should no longer be treated as fallacies. We will see in this book that one of the most central argumentation schemes underlying many arguments associated with the traditional informal fallacies is the scheme for practical reasoning.

7. Basic Practical Reasoning

An important point made recently by Kock (2003, 2006) is that contemporary theories of argumentation have tended to define rhetorical argumentation with reference to the arguer’s goal of effective persuasion. For example, Johnson (2000) has made a contribution to argumentation theory by emphasizing the dialectical aspect of rhetoric in which he sees rhetorical argumentation as underpinned by an informal logic that has the aim of rational persuasion as its goal. Van Eemeren and Houtlosser (1999b, 2000, 2001, 2002) advocate a view in which rhetoric is seen as a persuasive effort at winning a discussion by resolving a difference of opinion in one’s favor. Although acknowledging the importance of both these views, Kock (2006) has also criticized them because they overlook the view of Aristotle that rhetoric is rooted in deliberation, a form of decision making that comes to a conclusion about which action to take given choices among alternative courses of action. The problem pointed out by Kock is that although these contemporary theories of argumentation have taken steps toward reconciling rhetoric and dialectic, they haven’t gone far enough. By emphasizing the view that argumentation is
Basic Practical Reasoning

exclusively about giving reasons to accept a proposition is true or false, they have tended to overlook deliberative rhetoric. The purpose of a deliberative discussion is not to prove that a designated proposition is true or false but to select a prudent course of action by looking at the reasons for and against this action compared with the alternative actions available in a given situation. To follow up on Kock's insight and pave the way for our analysis of deliberation as contrasted with persuasion dialogue in chapter 2, we now turn to the argumentation scheme most characteristic of deliberative reasoning.

The form of reasoning used in appeals to fear and pity is the so-called Aristotelian practical syllogism, or what is more often called practical reasoning (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969; Walton 1990). To use a simple example for illustration, consider the following inference.

My goal is to be in London before 4:30.
The 2:30 train from here arrives in London at 4:15.
So, I shall catch the 2:30 train.

There might be all kinds of complications. It might be cheaper or faster to fly to London. Still, one can appreciate how this kind of reasoning works in its simplest form. Aristotelian practical reasoning has now been much studied, both in philosophy and in computer science (particularly in AI), and its properties as a structure of logical inference are now becoming better known and formalized. Practical reasoning is carried out by an agent (or group of agents), an entity that has goals (intentions) and can carry out actions. Practical reasoning is made up of a chain of practical inferences. A practical inference has two premises. One states that an agent has a certain goal, meaning something that she thinks ought to be realized if possible. The other premise cites some form of action as a means, or part of a means, of carrying out the goal. Goals are often stated at a high level of abstraction. For example, an agent's goal could be to maximize her health. The question then is one of which specific means would contribute to this general goal. Practical inference meshes such abstract goals with the specifics of an agent's given situation. So, for example, some action that would contribute to my health might actually be harmful to your health. Here, there is a conflict of goals at an abstract level. However, in some cases, goals are highly specific. For example, my goal might be to arrive at a specific destination at a specific time. Practical reasoning is the form of argumentation underlying deliberative rhetoric. In section 9 below, a more complex example that brings out the rhetorical dimension will be offered.
Practical reasoning is a chaining together of practical inferences of the following form, where the first-person pronoun represents an agent (Walton 1990). An agent is an entity capable of carrying out actions, of seeing the consequences of these actions, and of modifying its subsequent actions on the basis of what it has seen (Wooldridge and Jennings 1995). The structure of practical reasoning as an argumentation scheme is built on the assumption that there can be a theory of action representing the logical form of imperative reasoning that concludes in a directive for an agent to carry out an action. According to one theory, an action may be analyzed as the bringing about of an event or state of affairs, represented as a proposition made true or false by what an agent does (Horty and Belnap 1995). As shown in an overview of this type of formal action system (Segerberg 1984), actions fit into sequences called routines (sometimes called scripts in AI) that represent standard ways of doing things. A good example described by Segerberg is a recipe for a culinary dish that lists a series of actions as steps that need to be carried out in a certain order in order to realize a goal, such as baking a chocolate cake, for example. On this model, outcomes of actions are represented as propositions \( A, B, C, \ldots \), so that carrying out an action can be described as bringing about a stated proposition by making it true.

Agents are seen as having the capability to bring about entities called states of affairs (Walton 1990). States of affairs can obtain or not obtain in a given case. They can be thought of as propositions that can be made true or false by an agent. Using the primitive notions of agent and state of affairs, the structure of the practical inference can be represented as follows. The letters \( A, B, C, \ldots \), stand for states of affairs, or propositions brought about (made true) by agents.

**Instrumental Practical Reasoning**

Bringing about \( A \) is my goal.

Bringing about \( B \) is a necessary (or in some cases sufficient) condition for bringing about \( A \).

Therefore I should bring about \( B \).

The first premise could be called the goal premise, and the second premise the conditional premise, because it expresses a conditional relationship of a practical sort. Bringing about one state is said to be necessary or sufficient for bringing about another. The conclusion expresses a so-called prudential, or practical, ought-statement.

In multi-agent practical reasoning, a group of agents communicate with each other in order to collectively carry out some shared goals, or
Basic Practical Reasoning

at least to deliberate on how to proceed in a situation that requires some sort of group action. The “should” in the conclusion is a practical “ought” that expresses a kind of prudential imperative that binds these agents. It means that if the agents are to be practically rational, they should become committed to bringing about \( B \), once they know that bringing about \( B \) is necessary (or sufficient) for bringing about \( A \), and they are committed to bringing about \( A \). In multi-agent reasoning (Wooldridge and Jennings 1995), one agent puts forward an argument in the form of a practical inference, and another is designated as the respondent of the argument. A typical context of use of such argumentation would be in planning, where the two agents are jointly trying to bring about some shared goal. Another context of use might be that of advice-giving dialogue, where the one agent is asking the other (an expert) how to carry out some task requiring technical expertise.

Practical reasoning is defeasible, meaning that it leads to a conclusion that is only provisionally acceptable, subject to the asking of appropriate critical questions. The key critical questions are the following.

1. Are there alternative courses of action apart from \( B \)?
2. Is \( B \) the best (or most acceptable) among the alternatives?
3. Should goals other than \( A \) be considered?
4. Is it really possible to bring about \( B \), in the situation?
5. What bad consequences of bringing about \( B \) should be taken into account?

The practical inference, as used in the argumentation in a given case, should be evaluated positively to the extent that it stands up to this kind of critical questioning. As noted above, practical reasoning is defeasible in nature. It holds tentatively, subject to rebuttal by critical questions. If the critical questions are asked but not answered adequately, the practical inference fails. The asking of any one, or any group of such critical questions, can lead to argumentation of kinds we are highly familiar with. For example, if it appears that carrying out the action considered may have bad consequences – that is, consequences that go against the goals of the agent – a critic may argue that the action should not be carried out because it is likely to have these bad consequences. This form of argument is called argumentation from negative consequences. In another common type of case, an agent may have a conflict of goals. If it carries out an action to realize its goal \( G_1 \), that same action may go against its goal \( G_2 \). Such conflicts often take the form of a dilemma, in which there is a choice between two incompatible actions.
So far, we have taken into account only the simpler kind of practical reasoning that is purely instrumental, in that it does not take values into account. Values are sometimes in the background in practical reasoning, and do not need to be considered. In such cases the basic instrumental scheme can be used to analyze and evaluate practical reasoning. In other cases, for example, those typical in political deliberation in electronic democracy, values often need to be taken into account. In these cases, for example, in ethical dilemmas, the more complex scheme for value-based practical reasoning needs to be applied. Note that in Q5, the term “bad” is used to denote negative value, and in Q2, the term “best” is used to denote a comparative rating of values.

8. Value-Based Practical Reasoning

Atkinson, Bench-Capon, and McBurney (2004, p. 88) have studied examples from the development of AI tools to assist electronic democracy that involve a more complex kind of practical reasoning based on values. Their example can be adjoined to the simple train example of practical reasoning stated above.

Friendship requires that I see John before he leaves London.
The 2:30 train arrives in London at 4:15.
So, I shall catch the 2:30 train.

Atkinson et al. (p. 88) showed how the action in the conclusion in this case is justified by citing an underlying general social value, friendship. On their account, there are three components of such value-based practical reasoning: the action, the goal, and the reason why the goal is desired, namely, an underlying value. They describe values as social interests that support goals by explaining why goals are desirable.

Thus there are two notions of practical reasoning, a simpler instrumental one and a deeper one that takes values into account. In political deliberations, such as those assisted by electronic democracy tools, an arguer may be trying to persuade an audience to see a course of action as practically reasonable for the group to adopt, based on their presumed values. In such an instance it is important to take values into account, even if they are implicit premises as opposed to clearly articulated goals. In addition to the instrumental basic scheme for practical reasoning, a new value-based scheme is also formulated below. The difference between this new scheme and the instrumental one above is that an additional premise, below, has been inserted to account for values.
PLATE 1 Araucaria diagram of example of political value-based argumentation.
PLATE 2 Araucaria diagram representing Captain Picard’s argument.
Plate 3 Argument diagram for Stevenson's culture example.
Plate 4: Value-based structure of argument invention in Captain Picard's speech.
Value-Based Practical Reasoning

Scheme for Value-Based Practical Reasoning
I have a goal \( G \).

\( G \) is supported by my set of values, \( V \).

Bringing about \( A \) is necessary (or sufficient) for me to bring about \( G \).
Therefore, I should (practically ought to) bring about \( A \).

Both the instrumental scheme and the value-based one should be regarded as representing defeasible forms of reasoning that can be rebutted by asking any one of a set of critical questions in a dialogue, such as: Which alternative actions to my bringing about \( A \) that would also bring about \( G \) should be considered? In the case of value-based practical reasoning, the following critical question is appropriate: How well is \( G \) supported by (or at least consistent with) my values \( V \)? Another is this one: Among bringing about \( A \) and these alternative actions, which is arguably the best of the whole set, in light of my values \( V \)?

In a speech reported in a newspaper article (Ivison 2006), the front runner in a liberal party leadership debate defended his support for extending the Canadian mission in Afghanistan using argument from positive values. He was quoted below as saying that the mission was based on Canadian values.

He said there is fear that if the international effort fails, Afghanistan will fall back into the hands of extremist Taliban forces, and argued Canada’s troops are there to protect human rights and free elections, which he said are “Canadian values.”

In this part of the speech, as reported above, two arguments are put forward. The first one is based on the alleged fear that if the international effort fails, Afghanistan will fall back into the hands of extremist Taliban forces. It is presumed as an implicit premise that the outcome of falling back into the hands of extremist Taliban forces would be a bad thing. The evaluation of this outcome as negative is partly based on the use of the negative term “extremist.” Hence this argument, although mainly an argument from negative consequences, is also partly based on argument from values and argument from verbal classification. For present purposes, however, the second argument is more interesting as an example for analysis. The speaker argued that Canada’s troops are there to protect human rights and free elections, and he claimed these to be Canadian values. The audience of his speech was composed, we may presume, of Canadians who might or might not support his side in the party leadership debate. We can assume that protecting human rights and free elections
would be taken as positive values by this audience of Canadians. And we can assume that the speech was aimed at this audience. Hence the argumentation in his speech can properly be fitted into the argumentation scheme for argument from positive values.

Based on this analysis, the argumentation in the politician’s speech can be represented diagrammatically as in Plate 1. The figure was constructed using Araucaria, a freeware system for automating argument diagramming. In an Araucaria diagram, each premise or conclusion (proposition) in an argument appears in a text box, while the inference between a set of premises and a conclusion is drawn as an arrow (Reed and Rowe 2002). Araucaria can also be used to display the argumentation scheme linking a set of premises to a conclusion (Reed and Walton 2003). As shown in Plate 1, the two premises are in a linked configuration supporting the conclusion. The argumentation scheme for argument from values is displayed on the linked inference.

The argumentation scheme for argument from values has the following structure.

**Argument from Values**

**Variant: Argument from Positive Value**

Premise 1: Value $V$ is *positive* as judged by agent $A$ (judgment value).

Premise 2: The fact that value $V$ is *positive* affects the interpretation and therefore the evaluation of goal $G$ of agent $A$ (if value $V$ is *good*, it supports commitment to goal $G$).

Conclusion: $V$ is a reason for retaining commitment to goal $G$.

**Variant 2: Argument from Negative Value**

Premise 1: Value $V$ is *negative* as judged by agent $A$ (judgment value).

Premise 2: The fact that value $V$ is *negative* affects the interpretation and therefore the evaluation of goal $G$ of agent $A$ (if value $V$ is *bad*, it goes against commitment to goal $G$).

Conclusion: $V$ is a reason for retracting commitment to goal $G$.

Given this argumentation scheme, a set of premises can be identified as supporting a conclusion in virtue of the scheme linking them to the conclusion.
The Star Trek Example

In value-based practical reasoning, argument from values is grafted onto basic practical reasoning, forming the composite argumentation scheme called value-based practical reasoning. To have a classification system for this family of argumentation schemes, we propose the ontology represented in Figure 1.1. This type of diagram is called an ontology in computer science, because it classifies key concepts in a systematic way so that operations concerning them can be automated in the semantic web. An ontology can be seen as a way of partially defining a term by classifying it in relation to other key terms in a subject or field.

Practical reasoning typically takes place in the context of a deliberation in which two parties are trying to decide on a best course of action for one or both of them in a situation of uncertainty. Public debates on complex social issues, such as the question of gun control legislation, take place in a context of deliberation in which the goal is to come to a decision on a prudent course of action. But the issue and its ramifications are so complex, with so many variables, that there can be no mechanical procedure, as in mathematical decision theory, for example, that is of much use in coming to a rational decision on what to do. Many factors are involved, and not all of them are purely factual. Deliberation is often based on goals and values, and the rhetorical speaker who wants to influence public deliberation must ground persuasive argumentation on what are taken to be the goals and values of the groups who are taking part in the deliberation and who will decide the outcome.

9. The Star Trek Example

A small story can be used to illustrate how values can vary in different groups or cultures, and how the different values from each group can
support the same goal. In the television show *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, there were three types of beings from different planets, and each had values that were very different from those of the other group. The Klingons were warlike and have values of courage and honor. For them, dying in battle, especially when outnumbered by a worthy enemy, is very valuable. For them, being in any way perceived as cowardly, or avoiding confrontation or battle, would be the worst thing, implying great dishonor. The Ferengi were commercially minded. They constantly think about making deals that are in their best economic interest. Their values were the accumulation of property, goods and money. They constantly negotiate on everything, scheming and swindling people into bad deals. For them, dying in battle would be impractical, unless it were merely a risk to take that would somehow be financially profitable. The Vulcans were very intellectual, noted for knowing a lot about science and computers and for making decisions based on reason and logic. They valued science and intellectual pursuits.

Now let’s consider the reasons each group might have for the goal of attempting to reach new planets by space exploration. The Klingons would see it as inviting possibilities of conquest and exploits in battle. Their value is courage. The Ferengi would see it as a way of exploiting resources that might be found on these other planets that could be sold or otherwise used to make profits. The Vulcans would see it as a way of finding new knowledge not only about distant planets, but also through the development of technology by building new spaceships and better computers. Their value is discovery. In this case, each group has the same goal – that of attempting to reach new planets by space exploration – but the values each has that support that goal are quite different.

The episode of *Star Trek* set out below is based on a real episode, but details have been changed, and the plot has been simplified. On Dozaria, a hot, desolate planet, the Breen operate dilithium mines. A Cardassian prison transport has crash-landed on Dozaria after being attacked by Breen warships. The survivors, Bajorans and Cardassians, are forced to labor in the mines, and Starfleet Command is to mount a rescue mission. Now let’s suppose that Captain Jean-Luc Picard is giving a speech to the three groups who are expected to take part in the rescue mission, the Klingons, the Ferengi, and the Vulcans. Such a mission would mean a long, dangerous trip to Dozaria, and all three groups might be opposed to such a hazardous undertaking. Picard is assigned the job of trying to persuade the three groups to go ahead with the mission, and gives the following speech:
The Star Trek Example

I admit that the rescue mission will be dangerous and costly. Still, I think that we should go ahead with it as a group undertaking, for three reasons. First, undertaking such an arduous mission culminating in victory over the Breens is a courageous exploit. Second, taking the dilithium mines from the Breens would be extremely profitable. Third, the proposed mission would explore a remote planet using new technology that would lead to new knowledge.

Essentially, Picard presented three arguments in favor of undertaking the mission.

A1: Undertaking such an arduous mission culminating in victory over the Breens is a courageous exploit.
A2: Taking the dilithium mines from the Breens would be extremely profitable.
A3: The proposed mission would explore a remote planet using new technology that would lead to new knowledge.

Even judging from what we have been told in the condensed presentation of Picard’s speech given above, it has many interesting aspects that could be commented on from the point of view of argumentation. It was the outcome of a deliberation process. It depends on practical reasoning, or so-called means-end reasoning, concerning a decision of whether a proposal for action should be undertaken. But most interesting, from our point of view, is the aspect of persuasion. Captain Picard’s goal was to persuade his audience to undertake a dangerous mission; of the arguments he used, each of them was directed to a specific value that he thought each of the groups in the audience would have. This type of argumentation is clearly connected somehow with practical reasoning. The goal-directed reasoning combining means and ends is based not only on the practicality and possibility of undertaking the proposed action, but also on the values of the groups that are to take part in carrying out the action.

Here we have looked at the argument in a rhetorical light, by showing how Picard’s speech was specifically targeted to the values of the groups he needed to persuade to undertake the mission that Starfleet Command had assigned. Once Picard made the speech, and put his argumentation forward to the three groups, there is another way it can be studied. It can be studied from a dialectical perspective by analyzing the arguments as premises and conclusions, aiming at evaluating how strong each component argument is, and how each of them fits together as supporting an ultimate conclusion.

Picard explicitly put forward three arguments, A1, A2, and A3. More precisely, each of these arguments can be seen as a claim or premise
that supports his conclusion that undertaking the mission by the three groups would be a good idea. In addition to these three explicit premises, Picard also appealed to the values of each of the groups in his audience. In the argument diagram in Plate 2, each of these values is represented as an implicit premise of one of the three subarguments leading to the ultimate conclusion. Each of these subarguments is a linked argument, meaning that each of the premises is required in order to provide an argument that strongly supports the conclusion. In other words, the two premises function together to support the conclusion, rather than being independent lines of argument for that conclusion.

Picard’s argument is based on an argumentation scheme called argument from values. This form of argument uses values to support goals. It is a presumption of the use of this argumentation scheme that the participants in an argument have certain values that can be identified. It is assumed that these values can play a role as premises in arguments in which a proponent puts forward rational arguments that are supposed to be based on the commitments and accepted premises of the respondents to whom the argument is addressed. It was based on three explicit arguments that appealed to implicit values of the audience that can be viewed as additional assumptions. Araucaria can be used to insert implicit premises (or conclusions) in a given argument, by using the argumentation scheme to link a given set of premises with an added premise that was not given but is needed as part of the linked argument supporting the conclusion. The combination of these tools represents a method for analyzing arguments of the kind called enthymemes, where premises or conclusions are implicit (Walton and Reed 2005). It can be seen with the aid of Plate 2 not only what the explicit and implicit premises of Picard’s argument are, but how they are all connected together in a structure that can be displayed in an argument diagram. Plate 2 represents each of the three implicit premises in a darkened box with a border made up of dashes. Within each of the boxes representing these implicit premises, the owner of the premise is indicated. For example, in the box representing the premise that profit is a value, the owner of that premise is indicated as the Ferengi. Also, in each case, the argumentation scheme that fits the structure of the linked argument is indicated. For example, in the argument on the right, composed of the two premises A1 and the statement that courage is a value, the structure of the linked inference leading from these two premises to the conclusion that the three groups should go ahead with the mission is labeled as argument
from values. This labeling indicates that the argumentation scheme for argument values is applied to these two premises to support the conclusion that the three groups should go ahead with the mission. To sum up, then, we see that the argumentation as a whole is built up from three linked arguments, each of which is an instance of argument from values.

One other part of the argument also needs commentary. The proposition on the left in the darkened box joined by a double arrow to the conclusion of the previous argument represents what is called a refutation. A refutation consists of a proposition that is opposed to a previous claim. Such a refutation functions as a counter-argument or rebuttal that attacks a prior argument. Thus the argument diagram in Plate 2 represents the argumentation content of Captain Picard’s speech, showing not only all the positive arguments he used to support the conclusion he advocates, but also the arguments against that conclusion that he mentioned.

10. The Aims of Dialectical and Rhetorical Argumentation

The problem is that dialectical and rhetorical argumentation, while they share many of the same argumentation schemes (topics), appear to be different methods that have different aims and that use these schemes for different purposes. Take the example of a commercial ad for a product. Let’s say it is an ad to sell jeans, and the target audience is teenagers. Let’s say the ad uses an appeal to popular opinion, arguing that this brand is very popular and is widely seen as the best by teenagers. What is the argumentation in this ad? Evidently, it contains an argument with premises and a conclusion. But what is the purpose of the ad as a speech act that is presumably goal-directed and aimed with specific purpose at an audience? Popular opinion is basically in agreement with expert opinion in the field of rhetoric that the speech act is essentially one of persuasion and in this case that the purpose of the ad is to persuade the target audience to buy the jeans. Or perhaps it might be thought that the purpose of the ad is to persuade the audience that the jeans are desirable or that buying them would be a good idea. On the surface, this hypothesis seems reasonable. The aim of the ad is persuasion, and so the speech act is one of persuasion of some sort. There are two parties involved in the speech act. One is the writer of the ad, the group who thought it up, or the company that sponsored it. We can see this group as one entity, a
single agent who constructed the ad as its message. The other key party is the target audience. Of course, this entity is not a single person, or even a clearly designated group of persons. Various people will see the ad and be influenced by it. But the second party to the communicative act is really a construct. It is the presumed target audience. And so, if we can see the ad as containing a communicated message with a sender and receiver, the argumentation in it can be viewed as a dialogue. The one participant in the dialogue is the sender of the ad to the mass media. The other is the mass audience to whom the ad was sent. The type of message communicated, as indicated above, would be widely taken to be classifiable as one of persuasion, attempted persuasion, or an influence attempt.

But there is a problem with the hypothesis that the purpose of this message is one of persuasion. The problem is that interests are involved, in the form of money. In some cases, the ad will say nothing explicit about money. It may say very little. It may just picture the jeans and say that teenagers find them so “cool” that inventory is running out, or something of that sort. In other cases, the ad may tell you where the jeans are being sold, or even tell you they are on sale and give a price. In the second kind of case, an offer is being made. The ad is a form of so-called commercial speech. The store can even be held to selling the jeans at the offered price, because the ad offered to do that. The ad is seen as “making a deal,” or an offer as part of a transaction. In this kind of case, interests are clearly involved. The ad comes under the category of interest-based bargaining as well as the category of persuasion. Even if nothing explicit is said about prices or where you can buy the jeans, clearly commercial interests are involved. The company who paid for the ad and the firm who designed it are not just trying to persuade the audience about some property of the jeans. They are trying to sell the jeans. They are trying to get the audience to buy them. So even in this case, financial interests are involved. The purpose of the ad is not purely one of abstract persuasion. It is one of trying to get action, and action that has a measurable financial outcome. The hypothesis that the purpose of the ad as a speech act is simply that of persuasion is not quite right, or adequate to the reality of the ad. It may be partly a goal of persuasion, but the ad is also about promoting the proponent’s interests.

A comparable analysis can be made of political argumentation of the kind commonly found in the media. For example, consider a political ad used in Senator Smith’s election campaign. Once again, on the surface,
the purpose of the ad as a piece of mass media discourse seems to be one of persuasion. An argument used in the ad, for example, may cite Senator Smith’s past record of good deeds. Presumably, then, the argument has premises and a conclusion. The conclusion is a proposition to the effect that voting for Senator Smith is a good thing to do, or would be the right action to take. Even though the conclusion is best expressed as an action that is being recommended or advocated, still the speech act seems to be one of persuasion essentially. But once again, as in the ad case, interests are involved. In some cases, the ad may even appeal directly to these interests, by promising tax breaks to corporations, for example, or by making concessions to union interests. It may even appeal to certain groups that favor policies of a certain sort identified in it. We all know that politics is not pure persuasion dialogue in the same way an abstract philosophical discussion might be. People in identifiable interest groups vote for elected officials who they think will be most likely to support the interests of the group – or what the group thinks or says are its interests. The interests of one group may conflict with the interests of another group, in a way that has definite financial implications. So we know that it is naïve to think of argumentation in a political mass media message as having a purpose of pure persuasion.

To make the point in a more concrete way, consider the type of persuasion dialogue that goes on in a forensic debate. Let’s say the issue being debated is that of euthanasia, and the question is whether a physician should be allowed to stop treatment that will prolong life (such as removing a ventilator) if the patient voluntarily requests it. In a forensic debate, each side has a thesis, and during the debate each side brings forward its best arguments to support that thesis. At the end, a judge, or perhaps an audience, makes a ruling on which side won the debate. The debate is not a case of what might be called rational persuasion. For the opinion of the judge or audience on which side won does not necessarily coincide with the reality of which side had the stronger argumentation. Judges and audiences can, after all, be deceived by fallacious arguments that look strong when they are not. But even so, the purpose of argumentation in a debate can rightly be seen, on both sides, as one of persuasion. On the other hand, of course, interests may be involved. There may be a monetary prize for winning the debate. A debater on one side may be a health care professional who might see his interest compromised by certain kinds of rulings on policies of stopping treatment in the hospitals. Interests can never be absolutely excluded in real cases of
argumentation. But the primary purpose of the argumentation used by
the debating team on one side or the other is not really to bargain, to win
financial gain, or to promote the interests of some specific group to whom
one of the debaters may belong. The purpose of the argumentation is
just to win the debate. And given the structure of the forensic debate as a
format for argumentation, this aim is accomplished by bringing forward
the strongest and most persuasive arguments to support the designated
thesis of your side.

In a forensic debate, then, it is appropriate to see the purpose of an
argument as a speech act of persuasion, even if that analysis is subject to
some qualifications. The purpose is not one of interest-based bargaining,
as it would be in a negotiation type of dialogue. Now contrast the forensic
debate type of case with those of the commercial ad and the election
campaign ad in politics. Here, too, persuasion is a central aim, but it is
mixed with interest-based bargaining in a different way. Here the central
purpose of the ad is to sell. If the ad appeals to the interest of the audience
in an implicit or even in an explicit way, the argument could be perceived
as not inappropriate. In the debate, however, suppose an arguer for the
one team appeals to the interests of the opposing team by indicating they
will gain financially if they make some concessions in their arguments.
This kind of move is not appropriate. The users of this kind of argument
have gone outside the boundaries of the kind of argumentation that is
appropriate for the debate.

Of course, observations about any real examples of argumentation
will never be sufficient to resolve normative questions about whether
certain kinds of argumentation are appropriate or not for certain types
of communication frameworks. To answer such questions, it is neces-
sary to make hypotheses about the aims of rhetorical and dialectical
argumentation, and the methods used to achieve those aims, or help users
to achieve them, by studying how arguments can be used and evaluated in
different communicative frameworks. In argumentation theory and infor-
mal logic, the framework that defines such an idealized structure of goal-
directed communication is called a normative model of dialogue. Spec-
cific types of normative models of dialogue are introduced in chapter 2.
Abstract normative models are not meant to be instantiated in every
respect in any real example of argumentative discourse. But by bringing
in consideration of normative models, we can study how common and
familiar examples of argumentation are treated differently in dialectic
and rhetoric. We can ask what the purpose of the argument is supposed
to be, or what it should ideally be taken to be. Of course, in reality, the
designers or users of argumentation like that used in an ad may have all sorts of purposes, and the ads themselves can vary tremendously in the kinds of strategies they appear to employ. But to understand how these strategies work, and to understand how the arguments in the ads work, it will be argued in subsequent chapters that applying normative models to them can help, beginning with a normative model of the speech act of persuasion.