

Good argumentation without resolution

Jean Goodwin

Northwestern University

1. Introduction

Three lines of inquiry have converged on a single conception of the function, end or aim of argumentation: that argumentation is the rational method for resolving differences of opinion. This conception has of course received its clearest expression in the works of our conference hosts, the Amsterdam school of pragma-dialectics. “Inspired by Karl Popper’s critical rationalism” for scientific inquiry (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Henkemans et al. 1996 (“*FAT*”): 274), the pragma-dialecticians have grounded their project in an ideal model of argumentation, the critical discussion. Critical discussions serve to resolve disagreements in a way that is “recognized by both parties as correct, justified, and rational” (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jackson & Jacobs 1993 (“*RAD*”): 25). A standpoint is advanced; criticisms are raised against it and responses developed; when the opponent is convinced to accept or the proponent convinced to withdraw the standpoint, the process concludes. In the pragma-dialectical view, argumentation is to be evaluated according to its contribution to the critical discussion, that is, its contribution to resolving the disagreement. Rules of argumentative engagement are justified because they secure this goal and particular argumentative moves excluded as fallacies because they hinder it (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992 (“*ACF*”): 104).

The same conception has emerged within the tradition of scholarship associated with the teaching and practice of collegiate debate in the United States, and especially in the work of Douglas Ehninger. Ehninger starts from the Deweyian notion that we best solve social problems through group discussion and argues that this ideal encompasses also the more adversarial procedure of debate. Debate too is a critical – that is, reflective, reason-actualizing – and cooperative method for settling differences (Ehninger 1958: 27). “The function of debate,” Ehninger affirms, “is to enable men to make collective choices and decisions critically when inferential questions become subjects for dispute” (Ehninger & Brockriede 1963: 15). This is a normative, not an empirical, claim. If debate does not always resolve disagreements, it is a result of human failings, not of a weakness in the method; participants in a debate must discipline themselves to meet its strictures, not use it as an instrument to achieve victory (Ibid.: 17-9).

A third line of inquiry has been pursued by political theorists swayed by Habermas (cf. Habermas 1996, Cohen, 1989, Manin 1987). Seeking to establish the legitimacy of democratic political institutions, some theorists have shifted from looking for principles to which all rational citizens must consent to looking for procedures through which such a universal and rational consensus can be attained. These, they agree, are procedures of speech, and in particular, the procedures of deliberation. Though other speech acts are involved in deliberation – for example, speech securing the free flow of information throughout society – it is clear that one of the central activities of deliberation is arguing. The deliberation theorists thus implicitly adopt a conception of argumentation in which argumentation ideally performs the function of rationally and therefore legitimately resolving differences of opinion.

One reason these three inquiries have converged toward what I will call the standard view of argumentation is that the standard view is correct. Argumentation can indeed rationally resolve differences of opinion. But we should notice that it is equally correct to say that argumentation does all sorts of other things as well. The

U.S. debate tradition, for example, has followed Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, 1.1 1354b) in claiming that argumentation: contributes to “the revelation of truth and the establishment of justice” (Laycock & Scales 1904: 1); “induc[es] people to believe as we do” (Laycock & Spofford 1906: 6); “demonstrate[s] the superior talent of one debater over another” (Shaw 1922: 3-4); “teaches one to think for himself, . . . encourages thorough thinking, . . . [and] produces broad-mindedness and toleration” (Shurter 1917: 2). Not only that, argumentation can help us to succeed on the job (O’Neill & McBurney 1932: 2).

To pick out disagreement resolution as *the* function is to say that argumentation not only can but must do this; that if it does not, it is either bad argumentation or no argumentation at all. This stronger claim would seem to need a defense. Some argumentation is aimed to rationally resolve differences of opinion, but need all?

In this paper I attempt to challenge the standard view by laying out an instance of argumentation – the 1991 U.S. Congressional debate on the Persian Gulf War – that is both conspicuously good and conspicuously not aimed at resolving disagreement. I suggest, therefore, that there are legitimate goals for argumentation beyond seeking resolution. What might these goals be? In the final pages, I sketch the view of argumentation that seems to emerge from the Gulf War debate itself, and propose a conception of argumentation as showing.

Let me close this introduction with a brief defense of my method of offering “empirical” proof of a “normative” claim. The standard view is properly that argumentation ought to resolve disagreements rationally; this is a statement of an ideal – of a norm, not of the normal. No collection of instances, we might think, should be able to move this norm, even as the frequency of lying is no argument against the principle that lying is wrong.

This objection, however, misconceives the relationship between the norms and the practice of argumentation. Argumentation, like any practice – and not like lying – is in part constituted by a more or less articulated sense of the good or goods achievable through that practice (cf. MacIntyre 1984: 187-90, Walzer 1983: 6-10, Taylor 1985a & 1985b). Ordinary arguers, in other words, are of necessity constantly engaged in evaluating their own and others’ argumentation. The role of the argumentation theorist is to render the goods aimed at more fully articulate; to catalog and analyze available strategies and techniques; to educate practitioners; and to critique and revise (or “engineer”) the practice to ensure it more reliably achieves the good (cf. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.1-2, 1094a-b; *RAD*: 178-83). The practice itself is thus the unavoidable starting point for any inquiry. The evidence of the practice – both the way it is carried out and the self-understanding of the participants – must be presumed to be correct: that is, it must be taken as correct until it is shown to be in error. As the pragma-dialecticians have said:

Empirical research can provide an important basis for evaluating the validity of normative models of argumentation. . . . Problem-solving validity depends on the adequacy of the model as a description of effective practice – its ability to discriminate good argumentation from poor. . . . [T]o the extent that actual argumentative practice departs from the standards [of the normative model] but results in intuitively acceptable procedures, we should be skeptical of the model’s problem-solving validity. Conventional

validity depends on the fit between the model and accepted notions of reasonableness, rationality, and so on. To the extent that actual discussants can be shown to reject the standards of the model or to accept other stands, we should be skeptical of the model's conventional validity (*RAD*: 23).

An instance of good argumentation without resolution, as evidenced by both the argumentation and the understanding of the arguers, should therefore at least require the proponents of the standard view to come forward and defend it.

2. Good argumentation without resolution

After Iraqi troops overran Kuwait in August, 1990, the international community swiftly deployed forces to block further advance into Saudi Arabia and imposed economic sanctions to prod Iraq to withdraw. By November, with his re-election secured, U.S. President George Bush began moving toward a more aggressive policy. Bush sent more U.S. troops to the Persian Gulf and obtained from the United Nations approval for the use of "all necessary" – that is, military – means if diplomatic efforts did not succeed by January 15, 1991.

When its session opened on January 3, 1991, the new Congress thus found itself faced with a two week deadline. After some preliminary maneuvering, matching resolutions were introduced into the Senate and House of Representatives, one supporting the President's plan, one calling for continued reliance on economic sanctions. A vote was scheduled for around midday on Saturday, January 12. What else did Congress need to do?

2.1 Argumentation

In the first week of the session, the Senators and Representatives – whom I will call promiscuously the Members – spent quite a bit of time talking about the talk they needed to undertake prior to deciding on the resolutions. Throughout, they referred to the task they faced as "debate." This term, sanctioned by both the U.S. Constitution and Senate and House Rules, outstrips all others by several orders of magnitude.

It seems not untoward to identify such debate as what has been called a "species" of the "genus" argumentation (*FAT*: 52, 193). Certainly the U.S. tradition has assumed this since its birth in George Pierce Baker's 1895 debate textbook, *The Principles of Argumentation*. The pragma-dialecticians apparently agree; their ordinary language definitions of "argumentation" list "debate" as a synonym (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1984 ("*SAAD*"): 29-30). Debate therefore seems one recognizable procedure for engaging in the process of argumentation, coordinate with the mediation examined in *Reconstructing Argumentative Discourse* or the philosophical dialogue modelled in Aristotle's *Topics*.

The evidence of Congress' talk itself supports this conclusion; the Gulf War debate is manifestly "reconstructible" as argumentation without distortion (cf. *ACF*: 36, *RAD*: 88-9). Members debated the resolutions beginning Thursday, January 10th, through a marathon session on the 11th – with the House meeting from 9 a.m. to 4:08 a.m. the next day, and the Senate from 9:30 a.m. to 2:39 a.m. – and in a final period before a series of votes on the afternoon of Saturday, the 12th. In this debate, each of the stages of argumentation predicted by the pragma-dialectical model is clearly articulated (cf. e.g. *FAT*: 281-2).

The resolutions themselves were designed to accomplish the "confrontation stage," ensuring that there was an "adequate range of specific policy options to be debated" (U.S. Congress 1991: H142). In addition, many of the Members began their speeches by identifying the points on which all allegedly agreed – primarily, that Iraq must be driven from Kuwait – and then by isolating the

points at issue, in a further instantiation of the "confrontation stage."

The "opening stage" was also achieved at the beginning of the debate, when, after some behind-the-scenes maneuvering, the leadership presented what they explained was an "agreement on a procedure which would permit us to debate this issue in a full and open manner that combines both the opportunity for all Senators to fully express themselves on the subject" (S98, H87). This initial agreement had to be renegotiated later, since the traditional method of distributing debate time between the parties did not accommodate a third position: Democrats supporting the Republican President's plan; but after a few missteps, this too was accomplished (H142, H212).

The "argumentation stage" itself occupied most of the three days of debate. Throughout, Members frequently referred to at least some aspect of their talk as "arguing" or "argument." Most prominently, Members took argument to be what others were doing. They would say, for example, that "some have argued," or that "the other side is arguing" (H162, H246, H377, S124, S287, S296, S388, H133); or more strongly that they "do not agree with the arguments," or even "reject categorically the argument" (H273, S231). But occasionally a Member would use a performative formula such as "I argue" to label his or her own speech act (S259, S287). And they were right to do so. Much of what they said has a perfectly recognizable argumentative form, as in the following typical "unit" of discourse:

At most, 5,000 Kuwaitis have died since the August 2 invasion of that country. A war to liberate Kuwait would certainly kill many more Americans than this number. And it certainly would involve many more Kuwaiti deaths than have occurred so far. Let us not destroy Kuwait or thousands of young American lives in a premature effort to save Kuwait (S62)

Here the first statement is advanced in an attempt to justify the next two, which in turn are advanced in an attempt to justify the last (cf. *SAAD*: 43). Thus at the core of the debate we find, as the Members themselves found, argument.

Finally, a "concluding stage" was arranged in advance in which both Chambers made their decision roughly simultaneously through a series of votes.

In these three days Members engaged in debate, following the predicted stages of argumentation and deploying numerous arguments. It seems safe to conclude, therefore, that what they were doing was indeed argumentation. But how should this argumentation be evaluated?

2.2 Good argumentation

The Members approached their debate with care. One by one as they stood to speak they averred that this was the most important, most significant, most difficult, solemn, grave, profound, serious, momentous, sober, somber, consequential, tough, historic, thought-provoking and heavy issue, debate, decision and vote they would ever encounter in their careers. The venerable Senator Byrd termed it "the most important vote" of the 12,823 he had cast in 39 years of Congressional service (S357). Senator Wellstone, delivering his maiden speech, concurred: this was "the most momentous decision that any political leader would ever have to make" (S107).

By quantitative measures, the debate lived up to the significance of the occasion. 93 of the 99 Senators present, 268 of the 433 Representatives participated; the more than 30 hours of speeches set a modern record for the House. The qualitative conclusion must be the same. Consider first the assessments of the participants in the debate. Only two Members in three long days of debate offered significant criticisms of other arguers or their arguing (H214, H261, H364). Otherwise, the Members were unanimous in their

self-congratulation. The debate had been thoughtful, powerful, eloquent, serious, solemn and mature, with little rancor or party spirit but great civility (H154, H227, H329, H374, H394, S237, S305, S391, S392). It demonstrated that “reasonable men can differ . . . and do it reasonably” (H154). It continued the high tradition of Congressional debate and was a fine example of democracy in action (H223, H278, H406, S391). Participating in it, the Members felt proud (H174, H313, H361, H379, H399, H443, H466, S259, S287). As one commented: “These have been proud days for this House. The debate has been high caliber, it has been formative, dignified, and made us in my opinion healthier as a nation and as a body” (H362).

Those looking on agreed. In the days following the final vote, newspapers around the country (23 in my collection) editorialized on the high quality of the debate, commenting as the Members themselves had on its seriousness, thoughtfulness, thoroughness, honesty, eloquence, depth of feeling, civility and lack of partisanship. In a widely syndicated column, David Broder wrote:

One thing on which everyone could agree in the tense hours leading up to the deadline for war in the Persian Gulf was that Congress – that familiar whipping boy – had dealt with the issue of authorizing the use of force in a manner befitting the gravity of the subject. The weekend debate was civil and somber. Senators and representatives dealt respectfully with each others’ arguments and showed compassion for the anguish even their opponents felt. . . . From freshmen casting their first votes to the most senior members, there was – for all the anguish over the consequences – a real sense of pride that their Congress had met the responsibility the Constitution laid at its door (Broder 1991).

E.J. Dionne expressed the same sentiment in another national column, seconding Kathleen Hall Jamieson’s assessment that the debate was “‘extraordinary’” (Dionne 1991). “Americans got the most comprehensive and balanced discussion of all the issues that we could have at the most timely moment,” concurred veteran Congress-watcher Norman Ornstein (Ornstein 1991).

I will refrain from extending this list to pick up the endorsements of more local commentators. Although there were negative voices, especially among those who deeply disagreed with the outcome (Bennet 1991, Ireland 1991, *The Progressive* 1991), the consensus among the participants and onlookers was that the congressional debate on the Gulf War was a good one. Whatever argumentation is supposed to do, Congress did that conspicuously well. Was that to resolve a disagreement?

2.3 Without resolution

In planning for the debate, the Members indeed looked forward to resolving the issue of whether to use force in the Persian Gulf; “the time for decision is now,” they tell themselves (S40). How was this resolution to be achieved? Through voting.

It is not that the Members lacked other ways of reaching a collective decision. On procedural matters, for example, they operate as if it were necessary or proper to achieve consensus (cf. H86-7, S98). But not for the substantive question itself; there, a vote is required. The issues, as one Member insisted, “need not only to be debated but resolved, voted upon” (H41). The Senate, says its majority leader, should “debate [the resolutions] thoroughly and then

vote” (S99; cf. H41, H86, S64, S99, S139, S164).

A vote, however, while it settles the dispute does not resolve the disagreement (cf. *RAD*: 34 n. 2). Although they may now be equally committed to the decision taken, the outvoted minority need not and probably does not accept the decision as right. Since the Members understood that their debate would close not with consensus but with a vote, they could not have been expecting their argumentation to resolve their differences of opinion.

This objection to the standard model is of some generality, for deliberative assemblies since those of ancient Greece have characteristically taken decisions by voting. The theorist holding the standard model might respond by portraying voting as a sort of necessary, if not entirely happy, adaptation of argumentation to the environment of policy decision-making. In this view, an assembly would try to get as far toward agreement as possible through argumentation, and then submit to a vote in order to resolve the issue in a timely fashion. One’s vote, after all, is supposed to be based on one’s standpoint; voting because of pecuniary interest, party affiliation and so on is supposed to be an abuse. So debate may contribute directly to informing the standpoints accepted by members of the assembly, and thus indirectly to the resolution of the issue accomplished by the vote.

This slightly revised model does not, however, match the Member’s own conception of the function of their debate.¹⁶³ In their very frequent explicit descriptions of the process they had used in making their decisions, Members recited the factors which informed their votes. The Congressional debate stood as only one among these influences, and not the most prominent. In rough order of salience, the Members claimed to have made up their minds by talking with constituents (H214, H307, H332, S116, S245, S288, S327, S331, S334, S377); visiting the troops or the region (H214, H313, H341, H408, S245, S285, S331, S377); listening to debate, now and over the last few months (H214, H305, H307, H408, S42, S334, S385); attending to testimony at Congressional hearings (H341, H408, S124, S333, S334, S377); praying (H332, H339, S146, S376); talking or listening to the President and his aides (H214, H307, S331); reading, especially accounts in the media (H366, H371, S334); discussing the matter with staff (H366, S116), or with fellow Members (S245, S331), or with experts (S123, S245), or with friends and families (H366). But all these sources served at best to educate or inform; the real locus of decision was not without but within. The Members relied, they said, on their internal organs: heart (H118, H148, H222, H331, H341, H421, H474, H476, S146, S334, S376), gut (H341, S108). They searched their souls (H 214, H339, S122, S146, S168). Their decision was an exercise of judgment (H118, H331, H341, H332, H347, H371, S137, S150, S167, S275, S285, S309, S327, S334) or – to stress its independence from partisan considerations – an exercise of conscience (H142, H144, H148, H149, H217, H255, H270, H331, H341, H364, H449, H475, S42, S138, S168, S169, S245, S308, S313, S332, S334, S392).¹⁶⁴ Judgment in turn was conditioned by “history, philosophy, and cultural ties, . . . religious and patriotic convictions” (S137), and by experience, especially experience in prior wars (H217, H249, H345, S245, S275, S285, S327, S334).

What we have here is a conception in which the dispute is resolved through voting and vote is decided by each voter, autonomously. This is a decision-making process the pragma-dialectician would call “internalized” and “unsocialized” – “a process whereby

163 I omit a more general objection to the revised view: that it errs in taking time constraints as a sort of imposition essentially external to the practice of argument, instead of one of the internal regulative ideals of that practice. I would argue that argumentation is valuable not in spite of, but because of the ordinary circumstances of practical decision-making, including the circumstance of timeliness; but I leave that for another place.

164 Onlookers (Sperling 1991) and later investigators (Burgin 1994) agree with the Member’s own assessment that their decisions were primarily shaped by their personal views, conscience or “ideology.”

a single individual privately draws a conclusion" (*RAD*, 12; cf. *FAT* 276-7) – a process at least partially decoupling dispute resolution from the “externalized” and “socialized” practice of argumentation. To put it simply, in the Members’ own view the argumentation of the debate did not extensively contribute to the commitments on which they based their votes.

The evidence of the debate itself confirms that the Members’ self-understanding was substantially accurate. The debate could have done little to inform the participants’ standpoints because these standpoints were manifestly formed before the debate began. Members – even those speaking early in the debate – were able to announce the votes they would make; none declared themselves undecided, and none altered their decision between speaking and voting. The Members were also sufficiently aware of each others’ views to foresee the eventual outcome. As early as January 4th, there were prophecies “that almost to a certainty the President will be granted . . . authority” to make war (S48; cf. H154, H199, H230, H269, H474, S144, S237, S248, S266, S328, S334, S336, S360). By the start of the second day of debate a leading opponent of the President’s plan admitted “I expect I will not be on the prevailing side” (S191). Commentators agreed; the result, they thought, had been a foregone conclusion” (Bennet 1991; cf. Isaacs 1991, Ireland 1991). The debate seems to have changed no minds.

The dispute in this case was resolved by voting; the votes were determined largely apart from and in advance of the argumentation. What we have in the Gulf War debate is thus an instance of argumentation which was good although it could not have had the function of resolving disagreement and was not understood by the participants to do so. The standard view of argumentation – the view that the function of argumentation is to resolve differences of opinion – cannot account for this. But if this good argumentation was not necessarily aimed at resolving disagreement, what was it for?

3. The function of argumentation in the Gulf War debate

The Members understood why they were debating: they were debating because it was their responsibility to debate. Some cited the U.S. Constitution as the source of this duty, although others admitted that under the Constitution debate was more accurately a privilege or right than a responsibility (H131, H331). Instead, many Members held themselves responsible for the debate because they would be held responsible for their votes. “We have a personal responsibility,” one explained. “We are decisionmakers in the most powerful country in the world. We have a personal responsibility in this particular conflict, for each death and each casualty” (H255; cf. H166, H181, H204, H243, H250, S332.). Because of this responsibility, each Member would have to account for his or her vote to those whom that vote would affect. In a common *topos*, the Members pictured to themselves what this would be like; for example:

My colleagues, I am haunted by one thought about what will happen if we vote to endorse immediate war today. I am haunted by the calls I will receive – calls that you will receive – from bereaved grief stricken parents asking us to explain just why their son or their daughter died in the sands of the Arabian desert (H354).

But even as the Members would be responsible in the future to give an account of why they had taken the decisions they did, they were,

they recognized, also responsible now – at least in the face of apparent doubts and objections.

This was for them the function of the debate: it allowed Members to fulfill their responsibility to account for their decision by making their private decision-making process accessible to others – or in the eloquent phrase they sometimes used, by speaking their minds (H128, H302). The goal was not to induce others to accept the same conclusion; indeed, one Member explicitly disavowed any effort “to convince.” Instead, he was only “trying to explain how [he] came to [his] own decision” in the “privacy” of his “heart” (S389; cf. H441, S259, S309, S332, S334, S373). Debate was thus essentially a fulfillment of “a responsibility to express” – that is, make evident – one’s “convictions,” one’s views, one’s opinions or even oneself (S183; cf. H118, H190, H200, S98, S99). Or in another common way of speaking, in debate one satisfied one’s responsibility not only to take a stand, but to stand *up* where one could be seen and *counted*. For example:

Every Senator should stand up and say clearly where he or she stands, and then we must vote so that we be accountable to the American people, together with the President, for what happens in the Persian Gulf (S105; cf. H154).

I do not think that any Senator believes we have been elected, and are being paid, just to make speeches. We are here to do a job; when necessary, to stand up and be counted; to take responsibility (S64; cf. H39, H40, H124).¹⁶⁵

Members speak in order to render their reasoning noticeable; argumentation in this conception seems primarily a matter of showing. This should not be surprising, since it is essentially the conception of argumentation embedded in our ordinary way of speaking. In concluding an argument, we might not unusually say “I have shown...”; the felicitous reply would be, “I see.” And the Latin and Greek logical terminologies have the same drift: both *demonstrare* and *apodeixis* refer to the act of showing. If we want to hypothesize a general function for argumentation, therefore, it might be to *show* something.

To show what? – for now, adopting the pragma-dialectical terminology, perhaps *to show that a standpoint is acceptable*. A standpoint, we might say, is acceptable if a person can accept it without facing criticism for having done so hastily, without sufficient evidence, through bias, from emotion and so on; i.e., to put the matter more generally, that a person can accept it without facing criticism for having by that acted irrationally. Although one ought not accept contradictory standpoints, it is possible to find them both acceptable; indeed, in our ordinary deliberations we often find ourselves in this situation. Argumentation as showing acceptability allows the arguer to ensure that a standpoint not only is acceptable, but even seems so; to render a standpoint conspicuously acceptable; to put the acceptability of a standpoint in such a condition that it can be noticed by her fellows. Or as Ralph Johnson has put it, argumentation is “manifest rationality” (Johnson 1996, Johnson 1995).¹⁶⁶

But what use could such manifest rationality be? It seems clear, for one thing, that manifest rationality may indeed be used to resolve differences of opinion, in that showing that a standpoint is acceptable can be a step towards getting it accepted. But it is equally clear that there are other uses. For example: as Fred Kauffeld has argued, undertaking a responsibility to make the acceptability of a standpoint conspicuous is an important constituent of a general strategy to get others not to accept, but just to tentatively consider

165 The occasionally noted opposite of standing up and being counted was hiding or running for political “cover”; see H115, H124, H143, H144.

166 See also the most recent definition of “argument” offered by Govier (1997: 2): “a set of claims that a person puts forward in an attempt to show that some further claim is rationally acceptable.”

accepting that standpoint (Kauffeld, forthcoming). Or again, as in the Gulf War debate, argumentation can be used to satisfy a responsibility to make clear where one stands. Or again, argumentation can be used to show that some standpoint is not acceptable, thus showing up the person who held it. Or again, argumentation can be used to address someone as a rational being, thus conspicuously showing respect. Or again, argumentation can be used to show a difficult position to be acceptable, thus showing off one's argumentative abilities. Argumentation can even become an art in the modern sense – a matter of producing an object conspicuously fine; as it has in the hands of some U.S. collegiate debaters.

This multiplicity of uses also should not be particularly surprising, since we already knew that argumentation can be used to do all these things. It is a common and frustrating experience which gives argument a bad name: to be defeated by the clever arguer though one knows one is right. The clever argumentation may be good argumentation, argumentation which succeeds in showing the acceptability of a standpoint – that is, after all, what makes the experience so frustrating. So we should not modify the theory of argumentation to rid ourselves of sophistry. Instead, as Aristotle suggested, using argument in this way is a moral choice, criticizable not as bad argument but as an abuse on ethical principles of greater generality (*Rhetoric*, 1.1, 1355b).

4. Conclusion

Well, perhaps such uses of argumentation should be criticized as abuses on ethical principles of greater generality. But I would like to close with rhetorician's plea. An incorrect understanding of argumentation may hinder us from "engineering" a more effective practice; equally, it may hinder us from appreciating the goods the unreconstructed practice already reliably achieves. Kenneth Burke, American rogue intellectual, once said that the proper venue of rhetoric is the "Human Barnyard," a cacophonous and crowded, an unruly and fecund place (Burke 1962: 442). Argumentation in such a setting might turn out likewise a bit unruly and fecund. It would be like the story I once heard of the decorous farmer. Each evening he'd come back to the farmhouse kitchen and first thing wash his hands, for it was improper to take the dirt of his work in doors. Each morning as he left the house, though, he would stoop and scrub his hands in soil. In the barnyard, dirt is appropriate.

References

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*.
 Aristotle, *Rhetoric*.
 Bennet, J. (1991). The Senate's Lame Doves. *The Washington Monthly* March, 43-6.
 Broder, D.S. (1991). Bravo, Congress. *Washington Post* 15 January, A21.
 Burgin, E. (1994). Shaping Members' Decision Making: Congressional Voting on the Persian Gulf War. *Political Behavior* 16, 319-338.
 Burke, K. (1962). *A Grammar of Motives*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
 Cohen, J. (1989). Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy. In: A. Hamlin & P. Pettit (Eds.), *The Good Polity: Normative Analysis of the State* (pp. 17-34), Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
 Dionne, E.J. Jr. (1991). Foolishness Falls Victim to War Debate as Eloquence Escalates. *Washington Post* 12 January, A8.
 Eemeren, F.H. van & R. Grootendorst (1984). *Speech Acts in Argumentative Discussions: A Theoretical Model for the Analysis of Discussions Directed towards Solving Conflicts of Opinion*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
 Eemeren, F.H. van & R. Grootendorst (1992). *Argumentation, Communication, and Fallacies: A Pragma-Dialectical Perspective*. Hillsdale: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
 Eemeren, F.H. van, R. Grootendorst, S. Jackson & S. Jacobs (1993). *Reconstructing Argumentative Discourse*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
 Eemeren, F.H. van, R. Grootendorst, F. Snoeck Henkemans et al. (1996). *Fundamentals of Argumentation Theory: A Handbook of Historical Backgrounds and Contemporary Developments*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
 Ehninger, D. (1958). Debating as Critical Deliberation. *Southern Speech Journal* 24, 22-30.
 Ehninger, D. & W. Brockriede (1963). *Decision by Debate*. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co.
 Govier, T. (1997). *A Practical Study of Argument*. Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Co.
 Habermas, J. (1996). Deliberative Politics: A Procedural Concept of Democracy. In: W. Rehg (Trans.), *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (pp. 287-328), Cambridge: MIT Press.
 Ireland, D. (1991). Pee-Wee's Congress. *Village Voice* 22 January, 8.
 Isaacs, J. Divided Debate in a Foregone Conclusion. *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* March, 3-5.
 Johnson, R. (1995). Informal Logic and Pragma-dialectics: Some Differences. In: F.H. van Eemeren, R. Grootendorst, J.A. Blair & C.A. Willard (Eds.), *Perspectives and Approaches: Proceedings of the Third ISSA Conference on Argumentation* (vol. I, pp. 237-245), Sic Sat: Amsterdam.
 Johnson, R. (1996). "Argumentation: A Pragmatic Perspective." In: *The Rise of Informal Logic: Essays on Argumentation, Critical Thinking, Reasoning and Politics* (103-114), Vale Press: Newport News.
 Kauffeld, F. (forthcoming). Presumptions and the Distribution of Argumentative Burdens in Acts of Proposing and Accusing. *Argumentation*.
 Laycock, C. & R.L. Scales (1904). *Argumentation and Debate*. New York: The Macmillan Company.
 Laycock, C. & A.K. Spofford (1906). *Manual of Argumentation for High Schools and Academies*. New York: Macmillan.
 MacIntyre, A. (1984). *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 2nd ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame.
 Manin, B. (1987). On Legitimacy and Political Deliberation. *Political Theory* 15, 338-368.
 O'Neill, J.M. & J.H. McBurney (1932). *The Working Principles of Argumentation*. New York: Macmillan.
 Ornstein, N.J. (1991). A Moving Debate Raises Hill Stature. *Roll Call* 17 January.
The Progressive (1991). Vestigial Congress. February, 7-8.
 Shaw, W.C. (1922). *The Art of Debate*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
 Sperling, G. (1991). Conscience or Politics. *Christian Science Monitor* 22 January, 18.
 Shurter, E. Du Bois (1917). *How to Debate*. New York: Harper.
 Taylor, C. (1985a). The Concept of a Person. In *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers I* (pp. 97-115), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 Taylor, C. (1985b). Self-interpreting Animals. In *Human Agency and Language: Philosophical Papers I* (pp. 45-76), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
 U.S. Congress (1991). *Congressional Record*, 102nd Congress, 1st Session, Nos. 2-8 (January 4-12).
 Walzer, M. (1983). *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*. New York: Basic Books.