

## ***Acts of Arguing: A Rhetorical Model of Argument***

**By Christopher W. Tindale**

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### **Reviewed by J. Anthony Blair**

The thesis of *Acts of Arguing* is, that of the three important models of, or perspectives on, argument the logical, the dialectical and the rhetorical the rhetorical is fundamental: "the most appropriate synthesis of the main perspectives in argumentation theory is one grounded in the rhetorical" (6). Following Wenzel, Tindale hopes to "[trace] argument to its rhetorical origins and [develop] from there a model that integrates it with the other two perspectives" (19). The book is an extended explanation of the rhetorical model and of what it means to situate it as foundational, and an extended argument for the importance of considering the rhetorical dimension of argument. The book's intended audience seems to be primarily philosophers, but could include anyone trying to understand arguments, their interpretation and their assessment.

The strategy of the book is to reveal the shortcomings of theories giving hegemony to the logical perspective or to the dialectical perspective, then show how conceiving the rhetorical perspective as basic solves those problems and how, moreover, "in its own right . . . a rhetorical model of argumentation offers the most complete and satisfying account of what arguing is, of what it is like to be engaged in argumentation, to be argued to, and to evaluate arguments" (7). In what follows I will sketch the contents of the book, chapter-by-chapter, then briefly indicate some central critical questions that I have for the theory.

The idea that any complete theory of argumentation will contain accounts of all three perspectives, the logical, the dialectical, and the rhetorical, has its roots in Aristotle, but in the recent past was independently revived by Wayne Brockriede and Joseph Wenzel in the late 1970s, and reiterated by Wenzel in a number of papers since then. In the Introduction (in effect the book's first chapter), Tindale reviews this tradition, and situates the rhetorical perspective in relation to the logical and the dialectical. He reviews Habermas's critique of Klein and Toulmin, taking it as support for a synthesis of all three perspectives. He then reviews the Aristotelian notion of rhetoric as part of a triad with dialectic and logic. Tindale finds significant Burnyeat's and McCabe's interpretations of the Aristotelean enthymeme, according to which, *inter alia*, the audience is actively involved in completing the argument. Among contemporary treatments of rhetoric Tindale mentions Levi's and Farrell's sympathetically, but it is in *The New Rhetoric* of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, with its notions of the particular and the universal audience, that he finds the prin-

cial inspiration for his own approach. He proposes “a development and adaptation of a number of [Perelman’s] ideas within a rhetorical model of argumentation that meets the challenges experienced by contemporary argumentation theory” (16). He believes he can construct from such ideas an account that meets Habermas’s challenge to provide “both specific criteria of evaluation relative to the occasion and objective criteria that avoid a thorough relativism” (17).

Chapter 1 is a critique of treatments of argument as product: the logical perspective, of which Tindale distinguishes formal and informal logic as two branches. He traces both back to Aristotle, who, he says, started the tradition of applying the deductive logic of proofs to arguments. Against some critics, Tindale holds that the argument forms of deductive logic can be usefully applied to arguments, so long as these are understood within a rhetorically based theory of argumentation (a claim explained later). Still, he argues that formal logic alone is not adequate as the tool of argument appraisal, since deductive validity is neither necessary nor sufficient as the standard of good argument. He explains how he thinks the informal logic of Toulmin, Woods and Walton, Govier, Johnson and Blair and others remedies or ameliorates many of the problems of the product-oriented account that arise in formal logic. However, Tindale contends, any product-oriented account faces the two problems of “adaptability” and “relevance.” The first is the problem of adapting the analytic tools of the theory to natural language arguments in context. For formal logic, this is the famous “translation” problem: the difficulty of translating natural language into standard formal notation without remainder and with confidence that the original sense has been retained. For informal logic, it is exemplified by the problem of ensuring that the analytical “tree diagrams” used to expose the argument’s logical structure are faithful to the context-embedded argument being evaluated. For formal logic the relevance problem is that material implication yields counter-intuitive results when applied to reasoning or arguments in natural language. For informal logic, it is that the offered analyses of propositional relevance, even if adequate on their own terms, fail to account for contextual relevance. (For example, the irrelevance of a straw man attack is not at all propositional, but only contextual.) Tindale reviews the attempts of Anderson and Belnap, and of Read, to produce formal relevance theories, and of Walton, Govier and Freeman to provide informal analyses of relevance, and finds them all wanting to some degree. The chapter ends with the introduction of Perelman’s concept of quasi-logical argument, which Tindale thinks provides a rhetorical setting for the application of deductive logical forms, and with an appeal to Perelman’s distinction between the “rational” (a priori, mathematical reasoning) and the “reasonable” (contextualized human faculties employed in the project of discovery and understanding) as marking the distinction between formal and non-formal reasoning.

Chapter 2 reviews attempts to treat argumentation as fundamentally dialectical in nature. The strategy of the chapter is to show that a predominantly dialectical perspective turns out to be either objectionably relativistic or, if not, then covertly rhetorical. Tindale treats the pragma-dialectical theories of van Eemeren and Grootendorst, and of Walton, as representative of dialectical approaches. He takes their conceptions of fallacies and of argument evaluation, in particular, to demonstrate the vacillation he decries. Tindale argues that they treat agreement between dialectical partners as the standard of evaluation, which is objectionably relativistic, but they also covertly make reference to a reasonable audience. The latter, he points out, represents a disguised appeal to rhetorical considerations. After a brief, perspicuous outline of what a dialectical approach is and of the recent history of that perspective, he provides a nice summary of the Amsterdam pragma-dialectical theory, both its initial statement and its more recent amplifications, including a useful defence of it against some common misunderstandings. Tindale then spells out the two pragma-dialectical approaches to fallacies, first the Amsterdam theory, and then Walton's significantly different version, clearly tracing the evolution of Walton's views over the past decade (and several books). He documents an ambivalence in the Amsterdam theory, and plausibly identifies, both in it and in Walton, appeals to a third party or audience not accounted for in the official versions. Tindale contends that it is precisely this rhetorical reference that saves the theories from a vicious relativism, a claim he promises to develop and defend in future chapters. This outline cannot do justice to the fairness of Tindale's expositions and the plausibility of his critiques of these dialectical theories of fallacy.

Having reviewed the logical and dialectical perspectives, Tindale turns to the rhetorical perspective in Chapters 3 and 4. Chapter 3 introduces that perspective with a discussion of the new rhetoric, emotion and argumentation, context and audience; Chapter 4 presents Tindale's rhetorical accounts of the criteria of relevance and acceptability.

The new rhetoric (of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca) focuses on arguer, audience, and context in general. Argument is conceived as aiming not at disagreement resolution, but at eliciting or increasing adherence. The arguer seeks to bring the audience to participate by persuading itself of the legitimacy of the reasoning. Adherence may be to a course of action or an attitude as well as to a belief, and to practical action-guiding commitment to beliefs; so grounds that move to action count as arguments. Thus, appeals to emotion can be relevant to the truth or reasonableness of conclusions, and Tindale quotes Brinton on distinguishing between arguing for (invoking) emotions and arguing from (evoking) emotions, and when such arguments are reasonable. He also follows Brinton in holding that ethos can be a relevant (if not decisive) kind of support for a conclusion in argument.

Few deny that considerations of "context" are essential for the interpretation of arguments, and hence for their assessment, but what precisely is con-

text? Tindale suggests four components: locality (setting in time and place), background (what occasions the discourse, the prior argumentation, the relevant events in public discussion, consequences at issue), arguer (beliefs and intentions though these might not be clear and they usually don't exhaust all the plausible interpretations), and expression (how the argument is presented, what's left unsaid, the arguer's mannerisms, the medium and its conventions). In connection with "expression," Tindale contends there are limitations to the "speech act" approach of the Amsterdam school, and argues for an Austinian contextual, rather than Searlean formal, understanding of speech acts. Indeed, he proposes that arguers are fundamentally communicators, with speech just one of many possible modes of communication of argumentation.

Chapter 3 ends with a discussion of the importance of audience, and a review of the problems that Perelman's concept of "universal audience" encounters, because Tindale wants to be able to use (a form of) that concept himself. He notes that audiences are complex, that they change during the course of an argument or over time, that they are active participants in the argument, contributing assumptions, interpretations, and critiques, and that their adherence is necessary for the success of the argumentation. The last feature raises the problem of unpalatable relativism, for unless persuading by any means that moves the audience is allowable, what other criteria apply?

Chapter 4 is to my mind the most original and the most contentious part of the book. Tindale begins it with a defence of Perelman's "universal audience" against the charge of vitiating relativism mentioned at the end of Chapter 3, to clear the way for his use of a Perelmanian concept of universal audience in his own theory of argument acceptability. He then takes up, as central to both the interpretation and the evaluation of arguments, the questions of what is considered relevant support and of what is (and should be) acceptable support by the audience. With the allegation of relativism answered, Tindale turns to his own, original and rhetorically-grounded analyses of relevance and acceptability.

He identifies two types of relevance, "premise-relevance" and "contextual relevance" and distinguishes two sub-types of the latter, "topic" and "audience" relevance. Premise-relevance is the immediate bearing of a premise on a conclusion in a premise-conclusion set. Topic relevance is a premise's property of sharing the subject-matter of the conclusion (discussed by Walton and others). Audience relevance is the rhetorical property that connects the argument or reasons with the audience, and Tindale argues that it underlies the other two types of relevance.

In his analysis of audience relevance Tindale makes use of the concept of a "cognitive environment," which he borrows from Sperber and Wilson's *Relevance* (1986). "[A] cognitive environment is a set of facts and assumptions that an individual, or, in the case of shared cognitive environments, a

number of individuals, is capable of mentally representing and accepting as true (although they may be mistaken in doing so)" (106). The (shared) cognitive environment tells us not what people know or assume, but what they could be expected to know or assume. It replaces the concept of "common knowledge," for we don't know what others know or what's widely known or assumed, "but we do know that we share environments in which facts, information, and assumptions are readily accessible" (106). "We 'are relevant' insofar as we take into consideration this environment of the audience and construct our argument so that it relates to its features;" in a way that "is not inconsistent with any of the facts made manifest there, and can generally be understood in terms of what is already available to the audience" (107). Tindale adds that information is relevant if it creates the possibility of modifying the audience's cognitive environment. More specifically, "information is relevant to the cognitive environment . . . where it has contextual effect" (109), that is, if it (a) allows a conclusion to be derived (contextual implication), (b) provides evidence to strengthen an assumption, or (c) contradicts an existing assumption.

Tindale argues for four implications of audience relevance so construed. (1) A statement can be relevant to one audience but not another even when the same conclusion is at issue for both. (2) Irrelevant premises can be made relevant by the addition of information (added premises) that has contextual effect. (3) Such relevance comes in degrees; it isn't an on/off matter. (4) The concept of audience relevance opens the way for a new account of hidden premises. Knowing the audience's cognitive environment, or better, the mutual cognitive environment of arguer and audience, we know the domain from which relevance-adding information (the hidden premises) must come. Audience relevance is "prior" to topic relevance and premise-relevance, Tindale argues, making the point that it is a necessary condition (my term) of each. From an audience-relative perspective, premises must be not only relevant to the audience, but also acceptable to it and to the whole person, emotionally as well as intellectually. As Perelman put it, the speaker must adapt to the audience. Tindale proposes that we can identify what the audience will accept by appealing to what belongs to its cognitive environment. Moreover, there is a presumption in favour of such appeals. However, without further qualification there is a flavour of impermissible relativism and Tindale notes the need for objective standards of acceptability. The solution, he thinks, is via the concept of a universal audience.

Following an account of Blair and Johnson's idea of a community of model interlocutors, which he finds helpful but flawed, Tindale proposes his own version of Perelman's universal audience as the required objective constraint on acceptability. While we cannot evaluate an argument independently of the audience for which it was intended, we can require the audience to be reasonable. The audience is expected to distance itself from its prejudices. "A

key test is whether something can be universalized without contradiction" (118). (This test rules out fallacies, and racism, for example, according to Tindale, presumably because one would not want fallacies committed or racism exhibited against oneself.) There are various ways of constructing, from the particular audience one is addressing, its corresponding reasonableness-demanding universal audience: by bracketing out all the features of the audience that attach to its particularity, to try to reduce it to the common elements that unify its members; by identifying the highest or most reasonable elements within the audience, excluding those that are clearly unreasonable; by banning practices such as ignoring experience, refusing to allow two sides of an issue to be heard, or cutting off the opposition from responding (which one would not want others to visit on oneself); and by imagining the audience distributed across time, beyond the confines of particular occurrences.

Tindale notes three results of constructing a universal audience out of a particular contextualized audience. (1) It raises a series of questions against the reasoning involved, the satisfactoriness of the answers to which indicate the quality of the reasoning. (2) It guides the arguer in the selection of premises, and it guides the interpreter in deciding what to take the argument to be, that is, what its most reasonable interpretation is, when that's in dispute. Both are to be guided by what the universal audience would agree with. (3) Constructing the universal audience involves considering what is reasonable in each case. There is no external conception of the reasonable that is imposed. "We do not transport in notions of reasonableness. We describe it; we do not prescribe it" (120). Tindale here seems to be saying that what is reasonable is relative to the particular audience. We must find ("describe") its values and beliefs. We cannot tell it what to value and believe ("we do not prescribe it"). How all this works in practice is not explained. Tindale refers the reader to the next chapter, in which the theory as a whole is illustrated by application to two actual cases.

Chapter 4 ends with a brief discussion of two examples intended to illustrate it and to pave the way for the case studies in Chapter 5. First, Tindale shows how the theory works in the evaluation of arguments. He discusses how the false allegation that Iraqi troops tore Kuwaiti babies from their incubators mistakenly played a role in influencing the U.S. Congress to support the Gulf War. Once the deception was revealed, the argument should no longer have been persuasive, because, "To endorse a position on the basis of deceit and falsehood is clearly in contradiction with what is reasonable here and cannot be universalized" (122). Taking the issue of doctor-assisted suicide, Tindale illustrates how a consideration of the universal audience in the particular audience he selects to address, plus the cognitive environment of that particular audience, help one to decide which lines of argument to use and which to forego.

If Chapter 4 contains the theory of how the rhetorical approach to argumentation illuminates the key concepts of argument relevance and acceptability, Chapter 5 is the application of that theory, and indeed of the rhetorical approach developed to this point in the book, in two extended case studies. A case is “an entire body of discourse with a unified subject matter and purpose, promoting some specific overall position” (125). The first case study is a paragraph-by-paragraph discussion of a full-page “message” that the Shell International Petroleum Company printed in leading newspapers around the world in November 1995. Shell was defending its continued oil extraction and exploration in Nigeria, and its attendant cooperation with the government of General Sani Abacha’s military junta. Shell’s policies had received widespread criticism after the execution by the Abacha regime of writer Ken Sago-Wawa and eight others after a farce of a trial on trumped-up charges of treason. In separate sections, Tindale discusses Shell’s dialectical obligations, the argument’s logical structure, and the reasonableness of the argumentation. The second case study examines the ethotic argumentation (the use of personality, testimony and expertise) involved in the trial of Holocaust denier Ernst Zundel and his subsequent appeal of his conviction in Canada for publishing false news, and the use of ethotic argument in the book, *Did Six Million Really Die?*, by the pseudonymous Richard Harwood, that figured in the trial and appeal.

Throughout both studies Tindale is at pains to show how the kinds of rhetorical consideration discussed earlier apply concretely, and with cash value, in an attempt to gain a deep understanding, and a nuanced evaluation, of the argumentation used in the two cases. In general, the parts of a case may have varied purposes and audiences, and in addition, the understanding of the whole affects the interpretation of its parts. Studying cases from the rhetorical perspective, Tindale contends, shows how the rhetorical model is “a tool for the analysis of argumentative discourse” (125), and how it integrates the logical and dialectical elements with “an underlying, context-establishing rhetorical base” (125).

Tindale believes that his theory does more than serve as a tool for the full-bodied interpretation and evaluation of particular arguments. In addition, it offers grounds for a revision of fallacy theory (Chapter 6), and helps to distinguish the cogent from the illegitimate in recent critiques of reason, including several post-modernist and feminist-inspired criticisms (Chapter 7).

In Chapter 6, Tindale begins by alleging four “problems with fallacies” which, he claims, bear on the disagreements in the literature over the nature of fallacy, the proffered lists of fallacies, and the elaboration and analyses of individual fallacies. (1) The “problem of theory” is Hamblin’s and Massey’s contentions that we have no theory of fallacy in the sense that we have a theory of correct reasoning. (2) The “standard treatment problem” consists of all the worries about the Aristotelian definition of a fallacious argument as

one that seems valid but is not so. (3) The “problem of relativity” is the problem of accounting for the fact that an argument that’s fallacious in one context can be solid in another, which seems to imply that it can be legitimate to commit fallacies. (4) The “counterside problem,” which Tindale says (without argument) is different from the relativity problem, is the problem noted by Walton among others that a type of argument can be fallacious in some instances and correct in others.

Tindale’s next move is a useful if brief compilation of senses of ‘fallacy,’ which leads him to conclude that there are in play three distinct models of fallacy, which he dubs, “bad product,” “bad procedure” and “bad process.” He then proceeds to devote a separate section of the chapter to an examination of exemplary treatments in the literature of each of these: Johnson’s, as representative of a “bad product” theory, Walton’s, as a representative of a “bad procedure” theory, and Willard’s, Brinton’s and Aristotle’s, as representatives of “bad process” theories. The last is the occasion for an extended analysis of the nine types of spurious enthymeme that Aristotle lists in *Sophistical Refutations*. What Tindale teases out of Aristotle’s treatments there and in the *Rhetoric* is the notion that what make arguments fallacious are features that impede the “process of legitimate communication between arguer and audience” (173). This notion reminds us of the pragma-dialectical idea that a fallacy is a violation of the rules of rational disagreement-resolution, and of Walton’s idea that a fallacy hinders argumentation or prevents its development. It is also what the “semblance of validity” and the “appearance of refutation” of the standard treatment can be seen to refer to. There is a necessary reference here to the audience, but to avoid making fallacies totally relative to the audience, Tindale reminds us of the other part of the standard treatment account: the argument seems valid, but is not, appears to refute, but does not. Who decides? Tindale’s answer, not surprisingly, is that “for an argument to be fallacious, it must seem not to be so to the particular audience, but be found to be so by the universal audience for that argument” (174). It is, from this perspective, reasonable to identify argument forms that have the potential to be deceptive, and in some contexts become actually deceptive to particular audiences. This account provides a solution to each of the four “problems” with which the chapter began, and has a place for the essentials of the “product” and “procedure” models within its essentially “process” model. The chapter ends with a discussion of Crosswhite’s treatment of fallacies, which Tindale finds similar to his own but troublesomely vague at key points, and with a section that repeats the general features of Tindale’s account.

Chapter 7 is an essay on post-modern and feminist critiques of reason, argument and logic. It is not possible to do justice to its subtleties and complexities in a paragraph or two. In a tour de force that flows smoothly from one to the next through more than a score of points, Tindale discusses, mentions or cites the views of (in alphabetical order) Alcoff and Potter, Anthony

and Witt, Appignanesi, Atherton, Ayim, Berrill, Billig, Cherwitt and Darwin, Cohen, Hikins, Homiak, Lloyd, Menssen, Meyerson, Nye, Orr, Perelman, Potter, Putnam, Roberts and Good, Rose, Rowland, Russman, Toulmin, Verbiest, Warren, and Willard. As I understand it, the gist of this chapter is that much, though not all, of the feminist and post-modernist critique of the dominant traditions of reason and argument is well-founded, but that a rhetorical (particularized, contextual, embodied) approach to argument of the sort developed in Tindale's book avoids the problems legitimately identified, incorporates the values and attitudes that animate those legitimate criticisms, and recaptures what is worthwhile and true in the tradition.

The book ends with a five-page conclusion, a "Summation and Prolepsis" that begins with a re- invocation of Perelman. Tindale anticipates two objections to an insistence on the centrality of the rhetorical dimensions of argumentation. The first is that the pluralistic conception of argument inherent in rhetorical argumentation is too broad and undefined. His reply is twofold. On the one hand, he insists, it is not true that "anything goes." "Rhetorical argumentation requires the attempt to address an audience with a view to adherence to some claim on the basis of understanding, and it requires a . . . 'text' (broadly conceived) which can be identified as the product of an arguer or arguers . . ." (204). On the other hand, the vagueness can't be helped. It cannot be decided in advance what will count as argument, and an insistence on translating images, gestures or figures into propositions in all cases is unduly restrictive. The second objection is that the ambiguity essential to rhetorical argumentation is objectionable. There seem to be three threads to Tindale's response. First, the ambiguity of natural language and other properties of argumentation is a fact that any theory must accommodate. Second, the rhetorical perspective does not countenance reliance on the ambiguity of language and context to manipulate audiences, but insists on invoking the audience's reasonableness. Third, the ambiguity that is employed in equivocation of the sort identified as the fallacy of equivocation is unreasonable and so unacceptable. Tindale concludes by insisting that his emphasis on the rhetorical model is not meant to imply that the logical and dialectical perspectives should be abandoned, but rather to highlight a neglected perspective that is importantly illuminating, has significant implications for the practice of argumentation, and is fundamental to the interpretation and assessment of argument as product or as procedure. Thus, in the appropriate synthesis of the three perspectives, the rhetorical is not an add-on, but the basic framework for the other two.

I said at the outset that I would mention some critical questions I have for Tindale's theory. My first point is a minor one. There are two theses running through the book. On the one hand, Tindale is at pains not to reject the logical and dialectical "approaches" or "models," but to argue for a synthesis of them with the rhetorical approach or model. On the other hand, he argues that the

logical account of relevance and dialectical conceptions of fallacy are inadequate, and he proposes rhetoric-based accounts of both as superior. These twin proposals sit uneasily together. In the end, he argues for the addition of audience relevance to premise and topical relevance, but that is not a replacement for the allegedly inadequate theories of premise relevance. And he argues for a fallacy theory that allows for process fallacies as well as product and procedure fallacies, but that is not a replacement for the allegedly inadequate product and procedure accounts of fallacies. In both instances, the rhetorical perspective adds a further dimension, but it doesn't supplant the other theories. This is not to say that Tindale's initial criticisms were mistaken. In fact they seem to me plausible quite independently of his later discussions of a rhetorical perspective on these issues. But there is a difference between saying that a theory is wrong and that it is incomplete. Which is it?

My second point may be related to the first one. Nowhere does Tindale discuss what he means by a "model" of argument (or argumentation). He seems to consider the concept unproblematic. Yet in the book he uses interchangeably with 'model' other terms that on the face of it are not on a par with it. He speaks of logical, dialectical and rhetorical "perspectives" on, and "approaches" to argumentation, and sometimes he speaks of "rhetorical argumentation," of the logical "structure" of argumentation, and of "dialectical argumentation." Maybe these are just different ways of saying the same thing, but the eclecticism marks the absence of an attempt to specify carefully the nature of the three things being contrasted, and "synthesized," which to my mind is a significant omission. For instance, in Chapter 3 Tindale starts talking about rhetorical argumentation as if it were a type of argumentation instead of an aspect of or a perspective on argumentation. He may get this way of talking from Perelman, who makes a distinction between demonstration and argumentation. The latter is "rhetorical." But Perelman's "demonstration vs. rhetoric/argumentation" classification does not map neatly onto Tindale's "logical perspective vs. dialectical perspective vs. rhetorical perspective." (It won't do to reply that the theory itself calls for an accommodation with vagueness. Certainly vagueness is to be accommodated where it is appropriate or unavoidable. The formulation of theory, however, requires precision.) So what, precisely, are these three things?

Third and fourth, I think that Tindale's rhetorically-based concepts of relevance and acceptability need work. Consider relevance first. Imagine the following exchange taking place, in which Ann and Bill are discussing a lake they lease for their private enjoyment and fishing:

Ann: I think we should stock more trout in our lake than we do now.

Bill: Really?

Ann: Yes. You know, that old truck of yours isn't going to last much longer if you keep driving it on the bad roads around our lake.

Bill: I suppose you're right. . . . Does that have anything to do with stocking more trout?

It seems that on Tindale's account of audience relevance, Ann's comment about the truck is relevant to her claim about the need to stock more trout, for it takes into consideration the environment of the audience (Bill) and is constructed so that it relates to its features, it is not inconsistent with any of the facts made manifest there, and it can generally be understood in terms of what is already available to the audience all specified relevance conditions. Tindale may say that to be relevant as support for a claim, information also has to have "contextual effect." That is (as noted above), it must allow a conclusion to be derived, provide evidence to strengthen an assumption, or contradict an existing assumption. That seems right, and those conditions would rule Ann's truck comment irrelevant to her trout-stocking plea, but here we have moved away from features of the cognitive environment and on to questions about what, consistent with that environment, is probative. How does the rhetorical model help to solve the latter problem?

Here is another question about Tindale's account of relevance. He says that if a premise or argument has contextual effect, then it is relevant to the audience (109). That seems to be a descriptive (causal), not a normative, account of relevance. If relevance is a causal concept, then it would make sense to consider it to have degrees, as Tindale does. An argumentative intervention can have more or less contextual effect. However, Tindale also wants to be able to say that people can be mistaken in their judgements of what is relevant not because they miscalculate the effects of offered premises on the audiences of their arguments, but because the premises are beside the point. Otherwise he could not insist, as he does, that a straw man rejoinder can be logically relevant, but is rhetorically irrelevant. One might expect Tindale to appeal here to the standards of the universal audience as grounds for normative relevance judgements, but he doesn't. So how is this tension between the normative and descriptive accounts of relevance to be resolved?

Mention of the universal audience brings me to a question about Tindale's rhetorical account of acceptability. I find the idea of the cognitive environment of the particular audience an extremely useful way to identify what can be expected to be acceptable to the audience a significant and valuable innovation. But I have trouble understanding how the universal audience constructed out of the particular audience adds anything beyond the arguer's own sense of what it would be reasonable for that audience to accept in that cognitive environment. Tindale appeals to the notion of universalizability (Kant's? R.M. Hare's? he doesn't say). For example, he suggests that the deployment of fallacies is unacceptable because we could not universalize prescribing their use. He also suggests we should not use claims we believe to be false because we could not universalize the recommendation to do so. Presumably we cannot universalize commending an improper appeal to authority, or the use of misinformation. But why not? If the answer is that we would not want someone else to appeal improperly to authorities, or to offer us misinformation, when

they are offering arguments to us, the question still comes back why not? What's wrong with doing so? Why ought we to object to it? This is Hegel's old objection to Kant, but it remains pertinent. We seem to have to have made a prior moral/logical/rhetorical judgement that the behaviour is objectionable in order to rule that it cannot be universalized. So, what is the authority for a judgement that a particular property of the actual audience is "reasonable" (and so will characterize the universal audience constructed from it) and that another of its properties is objectionable (and so is to be excluded from the characterization of that universal audience)?

If these critical questions give the impression that there are insuperable problems in this book, or that this reviewer is fundamentally unhappy with it, let me end by correcting that impression, for nothing could be further from the truth. I believe that Tindale succeeds in making his case that a rhetorical perspective on argument is both necessary and valuable. He shows, I think, that the analysis of the "logic" of particular arguments and of the dialectical rules, roles and relations appropriate to them must be embedded in a rhetorical reading, and that in the construction of arguments a sensitivity to the particular audience is essential. Even for those who might dissent from particulars of his case, Tindale has, I believe, more than shifted the burden of proof in favour of making the rhetorical dimension a central one in argumentation studies by philosophers as it long has been for scholars in speech communication. In my opinion this is a major book, a must-read for any serious scholar in the informal logic community.

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