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contents

from the editors

Folks, if you think this issue is a bit thin, you're right. This just indicates that contributions from our readers (articles, notes, discussion pieces, new course descriptions, teaching ideas) have slowed to something less than the trickle we have become accustomed to. Which leads us to emphasize, once again, our original proposition in undertaking this venture: i.e., that the substance of the ILN would have to be supplied by you, the reader. We haven't changed our minds about that.

We are worried that you are getting the impression that the ILN has become cliquish. We are well aware that the names Sam Fohr, Trudy Govier, David Hitchcock, Ralph Johnson, Doug Walton, and Perry Weddle have appeared with regularity in the table of contents. The fact is that they are the people who happen to have been contributing material. We know that there are a few hundred of you who are teaching informal logic courses, trying the

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many texts now on the market, thinking about points and problems as you teach, creating innovative ways to teach reasoning skills and the love of reason. We, and your colleagues, would like to hear from you.

Has our talk about moving in the direction of a journal scared you off? Perhaps our own conviction that there are lots of theoretical issues that deserve article-length treatment has led us to feature these items in a way that discourages brief and informal pieces, the airing of tentative proposals, the sharing of muddles and doubts and queries, the description of modest or untested innovations. If so, then we say to hell with journal talk. We'll drop it. If a journal is by definition stuffy and formal, inimical to openness and the easy sharing of ideas, the ILN will not become a journal while we are its editors.

Let us simply pose this question: Do you have some half-finished paper or article or note on a subject of interest to our readers lying around? Then for everyone's sake, dust it off, revise it, complete it, and send it along to us. There are, it seems to us, just dozens of topics that require critical thought and inquiry: the whole problem of missing premises and how to supply them; the role of formal logic in the informal logic enterprise, and the relationship between the two; how best to achieve the aims of informal logic/critical thinking. We could go on to list others, but surely you have ideas of your own on these and other topics.

this issue

In this issue we feature a note from Doug Walton on the various models of argument now available, and a comment from Trudy Govier and Nick Griffin on Ralph Johnson's article about the principle of charity (*ILN*, iii.3).

The bulk of the issue is the collection of examples for analysis originally intended for a special supplementary issue last Spring. We belatedly offer these examples now in the hope that they're better late than never. ✱

article

What Is Logic About ?

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Mrs. Jones has her ear cupped to the wall adjoining the next apartment. She hears some tense, guttural pronouncements — a man's voice? Then she hears some higher pitched responses that a speech act theorist might describe as "aggrieved whining". The lower voice now breaks into loud staccato accusatory stabs of statements. Mrs. Jones can even make out some unprintable words. The higher voice now responds with unmistakable screams, audible even to Mr. Jones, who is trying to read *Maclean's* magazine. The crescendo of voices is punctuated by a crash of crockery. "What's going on over there?" Jones queries his wife. Mrs. Jones replies, "They're having an *argument*!"

The paradigm probably most of us have of an argument — at least those of us relatively uncontaminated by the study of logic — is that of a verbal interchange between or among a number of participants with (a) an adversarial or disputational flavour, and (b) heightened emotions, very often anger, being involved. Of course none of these items is absolutely essential. One can argue with oneself. One can have a friendly, or constructive argument. And one can argue unemotionally, in the style of Mr. Spock, the imperturbable Vulcan. Nonetheless, hot interpersonal dispute is among the commonest conceptions of argument. Let us call this model of argument the *quarrel* (more fully exposited in the work cited in note 8, Ch. 1).

According to the much more modest and sober, not to say austere, conception of argument favoured by twentieth-century logic, an argument is merely a set of propositions. This conception strips away the emotion, the interpersonal element, and even the adversarial notion of disputation. By this conception, an argument can even be some chalk marks on a blackboard or ink-marks on a page, according to some of the most determined exponents of austerity, at any rate.

If we define logic to be the science of argument, which model of argument is better to start with? The first one is obviously rich in psycho-social information. Ann Landers would find lots there to be interested in. The second is very rich in mathematical results. Boole and subsequent generations of mathematicians have found lots there to be interested in.

It is not too hard to see the fascination of each model for the critic of arguments. The second one admits of formal models that are decidable and complete. You can