"free economy" etc. In one such assignment I ask students to consider whether the abortion controversy is a factual or a verbal dispute, requiring not that they present their views on abortion, but that they attempt to clarify the nature of the dispute and how they think it might be resolved.

Overall, it seems to me that we, as philosophers, can make a special and distinct contribution in teaching informal logic, a contribution which is practical in both of the senses mentioned. Our skills in logical and conceptual analysis enable us to serve the immediately practical end of teaching students the basic techniques of critical thinking which they can apply to any subject matter. Our philosophical knowledge of the nature and functions of language and of the principles which philosophically ground and legitimate the rules and techniques of analysis enables us to also stress the ultimate ends which the activity of thought serve. And appreciating the extent to which informal logic can work to clarify and make students aware of the latter ends can help us to appreciate informal logic as a course in which we can fulfill our broader philosophical obligations and objectives.

What have I gained personally from teaching informal logic? Just as there are two senses of the word "practical" in my conception of the practical dimension of informal logic, there are also two senses in which I understand the ambiguous expression "teaching informal logic as emancipatory activity." One of these is the sense in which one teaches students that logically critical thought serves intellectual emancipation and the capacity for individual self-determination. The second sense is that in which the activity of teaching such a course is, or can be, emancipating as regards one's own perspective. In my case this has meant specifically that I have begun to envision an underlying compatibility between the two philsophical traditions in which I have studied: the Anglo-American tradition of analysis, with its stress on logic, language and clarity, and the continental traditions of critical theory and hermeneutics, with their stress on the relation between thought and the human condition. ●

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Appraising Argumentative Texts: Justificatory and Defensive Components

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Section One: The Quasiformal Approach

One familiar approach to argument appraisal in critical thinking courses involves analyzing and arranging the various premises, conclusions, and inferences and then assessing the validity of the inferences (or perhaps the degree of support given the conclusion by the premises). For appraisal to rise above the intuitive level, it seems necessary to introduce the usual classification of logically complex sentences and natural deduction inference rules associated with them. This additional regimentation requires augmenting analytic procedures; typically, one needs to supply missing intermediate conclusions and premises, and paraphrase to achieve greater uniformity of expression by condensing to eliminate irrelevant phrases or by expanding to replace pronouns, uncover tacit semantic linkages, or clarify elliptical phrases.

I think the best way to understand explicitly what is meant by the quasiformal approach is to consider a typical argumentative text (1):

(1) What are the economic prospects for the coming year? Either the tax rate structure will have to be modified to generate additional revenue or a federal deficit will occur. Reagan has made it perfectly clear that taxes won't increase. In addition, it seems reasonable to believe that economic improvement now requires a balanced budget. It's apparent, then, that the economy won't improve in the short term.

Text (1) presents a straightforward exercise for quasiformal analysis, being neither excessively complex in its inferential structure, nor very enthymematic, nor containing many extraneous prefixes, phrases, and remarks. A typical quasiformal analysis and structuring for text (1) is provided by diagram (2):

(2) Either tax revenues increase
or a federal deficit occurs.

&

Tax revenues
won't increase.

Disjunctive
inference.

(A federal deficit
will occur.)

&

If the economy improves,
there can be no federal deficit.

Modus
tollens.

The economy won't improve in the short term.

Producing analysis (2) usually requires overcoming two major hurdles: noticing the intermediate conclusion that a deficit will occur and extracting the conditional "if the economy improves there can be no federal deficit" from the phrase "economic improvement requires a balanced budget." Extracting the conditionals is the most difficult subtask partly because the conditional is embedded behind parentheticals and assuring propositional prefixes, partly because it is expressed in a nominalized form, and partly because there is a need to make a semantic link between "balanced budget" and "no deficit (and no surplus)."

It seems obvious that the quasiformal approach to argument appraisal conforms to the basic plan, if not the notation and rigor, of approaches in elementary symbolic logic courses. Like the process of formalization, the generation of a diagrammed representation is the exercise of a skill acquired and improved by practice on suitably varied examples. The advice and hints needed to extract argument diagrams from actual argumentative texts is extremely difficult to codify, as is advice concerning formalization. The absence of a systematic procedure governing diagramming is obviously one disadvantage of the quasiformal approach.

A more serious limitation of quasiformal modes of representation of structure and subsequent appraisal of argumentative texts is that there exist components of argumentative texts that deserve appraisal but are not represented in existing graphic displays. In the following remarks, I'll explore some parts of argumentative texts inadequately treated by the quasiformal approach.

Section Two: An Epistemological Turn

Within the quasiformal approach, argument appraisal is basically the assessment of inferential validity, determined by inferences conforming to a specified set of inference rules. Because stopping at an assessment of invalidity usually does not advance the state of discussion of the issues underlying the argument, it is usually preferable to augment the premise set in a charitable way until the argument's inferential structure becomes valid. At this point one proceeds to appraise the argument's soundness. At least this is a typical critical procedure.

Nevertheless, successful argumentation quite often involves the presentation of textual components not explicitly appraised in terms of validity and soundness. Given that argumentative texts usually emerge in response to disputed issues, part of the argumentative burden of an essay is to consider arguments and objections conflicting with one's positive position. Successful argumentation reflects an awareness of, and critical response to, relevant available objections and counter-arguments. An essay that ignores obvious objections and opposed arguments is rarely taken to be persuasive.

One common understanding of the purpose of reasoning and argumentation—to arrive at the truth—makes it difficult to understand why the anticipation and meeting of objections should be a factor in a successful argumentative text. After all, if a text's positive core argument is both valid and sound, it clearly fulfills the goal of arriving at the truth. And if this goal is the primary purpose of argumentation, it is difficult to understand on what basis we sense a text to be inadequate when it fulfills this aim, but ignores a critical examination of objections.

I'll here assume that not considering objections and opposed arguments is a failure in an argumentative text. The question then arises as to how the purpose of argumentative writing is to be reformulated so that the anticipation and meeting of objections becomes integral to argumentation. My basic proposal is that the purpose of argumentative writing is to be taken as an author's articulating the epistemic position within which the author's resolution of the problem(s) animating his investigation can be seen by a reader as more worthy of belief than other possible answers (the range of solutions to be specified in a manner analogous to that used in erotetic logic). The epistemic position might include understanding and motivating the issue under consideration and much else, but I'll here take the epistemic position to at least include satisfying the conditions for undefeated, justified belief. I'll not attempt to characterize these conditions precisely, because an intuitive understanding will allow some advantages of this enlarged conception of the purpose of argumentation to be formulated.

By understanding the purpose of argumentative writing to include articulating a position satisfying the conditions for undefeated justified belief, we immediately see two separable components of argumentation. One part is the positive core, the argument treated in the quasiformal approach. The other part of argumentation is the defensive perimeter in which one anticipates and meets relevant objections. An epistemic conception of the aim of argument clearly makes each of these components integral to successful argumentation; this unification is a primary advantage of the enlarged understanding of argument proposed here. Further advantages of distinguishing the positive core and defensive perimeter will be discussed in the final section of these remarks.

The epistemic characterization of argument function has other advantages, three of which I want to present before continuing my remarks concerning meeting objections as a distinctive component of argument.

First, because the justification of nonbasic beliefs involves a subject's being aware of the inferential connection between reasons and conclusion, an author's failure to articulate inferential connections in a publicly accessible and logically explicit way is not merely a stylistic flaw, but a failure with respect to the primary purpose of an argumentative text. In other words, given that the purpose of an

argumentative text is to articulate the epistemic position that reveals the conclusion as worthy of belief, we can understand and explain why defective inference resulting in a true conclusion is defective as argument in terms of the "accidental" character of the justification and the author's not being in the position to know the conclusion to be true. The epistemic understanding of argumentative texts then provides a basis for appreciating the importance of revealing the process of arriving at a result, as opposed to simply announcing it.

Second, to the extent that basic beliefs provide some of the reasons for our conclusions, we can explain indications of the causal or cultural sources of these beliefs as not merely stylistic assurances, but rather as argumentatively relevant indicators of the epistemic status of the basic reasons. Citation of authorities, references to documents, indications of circumstances of observation all allow the reader to discern the epistemic position being developed and to become alerted to possibly aberrant or inappropriate modes of production of basic beliefs. This dimension of appraisal is often neglected in the quasi-formal approach to the positive core or is at least not seen as integrally related to the purpose of the argument.

Finally, the epistemic conception of argument provides a unified and more cooperative understanding of argument, useful not only when we take on the role of a critical audience for argumentative texts, but also when we adopt the role of generators of argumentative texts. The epistemic position to be articulated in an argumentative text is to be understood as a position anyone could occupy. A critic begins to understand the critical task as not so much an attack and rejection as an analysis of why the text fails in showing the conclusion worthy of belief; an arguer understands his task as not so much an attempt to coerce and badger the reader into submission, but instead to make public an epistemic position others may use to resolve or further explore the issue under consideration. It is important to attempt to convey the cooperative and communicative functions of criticism and argument in order to temper the engrained vision of argument and criticism as zero sum competition. While the quasiformal approach doesn't exactly encourage the competitive picture of argument, it does little to encourage a cooperative understanding of argument.

Section Three: Meeting Conditional Objections in the Defensive Perimeter Context

In the preceding remarks, I have urged embedding the quasi-formal approach to argument appraisal within an epistemic understanding of the purpose of argumentation and sketched a few advantages of this proposal. In my final remarks, I want to defend the importance of distinguishing the positive core from the defensive perimeter by showing how the failure to make this distinction can sometimes animate inappropriate critical reactions.

Let us suppose we are examining an argumentative text whose overall intent is to persuade us of the need for diversified investment in varied energy producing technologies. Within this text we find the following passage:

(3) There are, of course, more immediate reasons to divert capital from petroleum dependent energy technologies to other "softer" and less centralized technologies. U.S. importation of petroleum is massive. Most economists agree that funds required to pay the import bill are interfering with our capital formation. If our capital formation is reduced, we become even less able to revitalize the infrastructure of our economy. And we have already seen the undesirability of any reduction in our ability to improve the infrastructure. Not to divert capital from petroleum dependent technologies is, then, disastrous.

While it is true that if the petroleum exporting nations reduced their prices considerably, we would then not so much need massive new investment in alternative energy technologies, there is no indication that prices will be lowered over the long run, and the last decade has provided adequate evidence that prices will rise at least to keep pace with inflation.

I present passages very much like this one to students who have acquired the basic skills of the quasiformal approach and are being introduced to notions such as assuring, hedging, slanting, and discounting.[1] The intent of the exercise is to structure the roughly **reductio** positive argument of the first paragraph of (3) and discuss the discounting defensive function of the second paragraph.

The "ideal" discussion of the second paragraph is to recognize the author as in effect anticipating a counterargument to the conclusion of the first argument. The conditional of this argument is conceded to be true; but the counterargument is blocked by denying the antecedent of the conditional. This common strategy of defeating conditional objections owes its impact to revealing that the denial of the positive core's conclusion is not established, because the relevant antecedent is unavailable to permit detachment.

However, on many occasions students reconstructed the second paragraph as an additional positive core argument. The conceded conditional was interpreted as being combined with the denial of its antecedent to arrive at a missing conclusion, which was the denial of the consequent (that denial being that new diversified energy technology investment is needed). Students then observed that the inference conformed to "denying the antecedent," a discredited "rule" of inference.

This unexpected response was my first encounter with how the quasiformal approach, combined with a failure to distinguish between the positive core and the defensive perimeter, led to inappropriate critical reactions. Students assimilated parts of argumentative texts to their only available model of what such texts do (present reasons for the main conclusion), and what should have been regarded as a moderately successful blocking of an inference in a counterargument became viewed as an unsuccessful positive argument.

There are other situations in which failure to distinguish components of argumentative texts leads to inappropriate critical reactions. Authors sometimes present an entire argument for a conclusion that is inconsistent with their intended conclusion in the project of refuting one of the counterargument's premises. Such texts are surprisingly often criticized as inconsistent by students who simply fail to understand that not every argument presented in a text is being advanced by the author. It seems to me that some distinction between the positive core and the defensive perimeter, with some account of the reasons for such a distinction, is essential in instruction in informal logic, if one hopes to encourage the development of skills flexible enough to apply to complex argumentation.

If the proposed distinctions and orientations toward argumentation I have presented seem promising, there are many open questions deserving further inquiry. The characterization of patterns of objections and successful and inappropriate ways of responding to types of objections seems to me to be in a very undeveloped state. the analytic epistemological literature that emphasizes the "undefeated" condition does provide some useful suggetions, but is not very systematic. In addition, textual confusions themselves may, when analyzed, provide useful cautionary advice for writing and criticism, and could serve as a basis for exercises involving dialogues of argument and criticism in which problems arise from a critic's misunderstanding of a speaker's argumentative intent. A pragmatics of argumentative speech acts might be an appropriate way to approach some of the mysterious "talking through" exchanges so familiar but perplexing to us all.

Notes

[1] I use Robert Fogelin's **Understanding Arguments** (New York: Harcourut Brace Jovanovich, 1978), Chapter Two, to introduce the notions of discounting and so on. I've used the diagramming approaches of either Stephen Thomas's **Practical Reasoning** (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1981) or Michael Scriven's **Reasoning** (New York: McGraw Hill, 1976). ●

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Ryle On (And For) Informal Logic

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In their account of the rise of the informal logic movement, R.H. Johnson and J.A. Blair make several important judgments. [1, p.5] They find the movement characterized by two features. One is "a turn in the direction of actual (i.e., real-life, ordinary, everyday) arguments in their native habitat of public discourse and persuasion, together with an attempt to deal with the problems that occur as a result of that focus." The other is "a growing disenchantment with the capacity of formal logic to provide standards of good reasoning that illuminate the argumentation of ordinary discourse." In what follows, I accept these as **defining** features. That is, I'll regard them as necessary if not sufficient conditions for the existence of the IL movement

Johnson and Blair go on to estimate "only three monographs of significance to informal logic" as having appeared in the last quarter-century. These include Toulmin's **The Uses of Argument** [2], Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's **La Nouvelle Rhétorique** [3], both published in 1958 (though Perelman's work wasn't translated into English till 1969), and Hamblin's **Fallacies** [4], published in 1970. These estimates of significance and/or influence are perhaps as minimally arbitrary as such things can well be while a movment is still in progress. Let's not underestimate the task of the estimators. Admittedly it's tough to try to chart even roughly the force, mass, and directional flow of a movement while one is in the middle of it and contributing to it

Yet it's worth noting that five years before Toulmin's and Perelman's works came out, a major philosopher made a major statement (actually, a position paper) **pro** informal and **contra** formal logic. This statement, moreover, discernibly influenced Toulmin's and Perelman's works. The philosopher was Gilbert Ryle and the statement his set of eight Tarner Lectures, delivered in Cambridge in Lent Term 1953 and published the following year as **Dilemmas.** [5] For anyone interested in informal logic, the importance of Ryle's lectures generally (but especially the last, "Formal and Informal Logic") can hardly be gainsaid. In fact, I would say of them what Johnson and Blair say of Toulmin's, Perelman's, and Hamblin's works [1, xi]: they "require attention by anyone who wants to do theoretical work in the field."

Here, then, I have two aims. First, I want to trace, with the aid of Ryle's personal testimony, how he developed the conception of informal logic expressed and applied in **Dilemmas.** Then I want to examine that conception and to suggest what its value may be for those interested in teaching or studying informal logic.

I

Ryle tells us that when he went up to Oxford in 1919, he worked rather half-heartedly for Classical Honour Moderations, but "took greedily" to "the off-centre subject" of logic. "It felt to me like a grown-up subject, in which there were still unsolved problems." [6, p.2] In 1924 he became a lecturer in philosophy at Christ Church. As an undergraduate and during his first few years as a teacher, he found "the philosophic kettle in Oxford... barely lukewarm" and "Logic, save for Aristotelian scholarship... in the doldrums." [6, p.4]

By the end of the 1920's, however, things had started to look up. At the Joint Session of the Mind Association and the Aristotelian Society in 1929, Ryle struck up a friendship with Wittgenstein, whose **Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus** he had for some time studied and admired. What he found most admirable in the **Tractatus** was its central concern with "Russell's antithesis of the nonsensical to the true-or-false, an antithesis which mattered a lot to me then and has mattered ever since." [6, p. 5] During the same period he and five other junior philosophy tutors started the "Wee Teas," an informal dining-club that met once a fortnight during term, with the host of the evening