

FIFTH EDITION

A TEXT AND READER



The Aims of Argument

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F I F T H E D I T I O N

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A T E X T A N D R E A D E R

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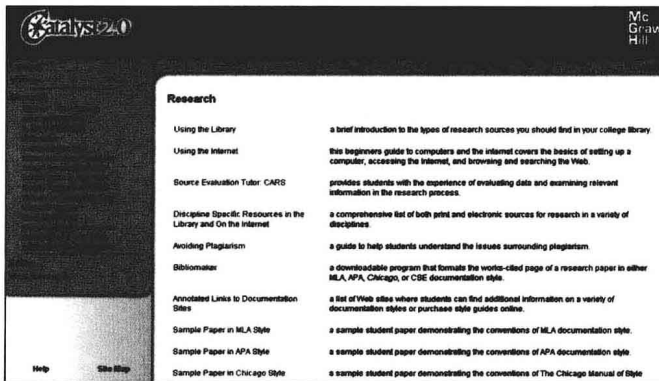
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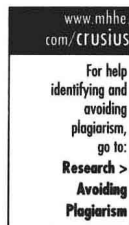
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The Aims of Argument

For W. Ross Winterowd



As its first four editions were, the fifth edition of *The Aims of Argument* is different from other argumentation texts because it remains the only one that focuses on the aims, or purposes, of argument. That this book's popularity increases from edition to edition tells us that our approach does in fact satisfy the previously unmet need that moved us to become textbook authors. We're gratified that our approach has proven useful.

NOTES ON THIS TEXT'S ORIGINS

With over thirty years of teaching experience between us, we had tried most argument books. Many of them were good and we learned from them. However, we found ourselves adopting a text not so much out of genuine enthusiasm but because it had fewer liabilities than the others. We wondered why we were so lukewarm about even the best argumentation textbooks. We boiled our dissatisfaction down to a few major criticisms:

- Most treatments were too formalistic and prescriptive.
- Most failed to integrate class discussion and individual inquiry with written argumentation.
- Apart from moving from simple concepts and assignments to more complicated ones, no book offered a learning sequence.
- Despite the fact that argument, like narrative, is clearly a mode or means of discourse, not a purpose for writing, no book offered a well-developed view of the aims or purposes of argument.

We thought that these shortcomings had undesirable consequences in the classroom, including the following:

- The overemphasis on form confused students with too much terminology, made them doubt their instincts, and drained away energy

from inventing and discovering good arguments. Informal argumentation is not formal logic but open-ended and creative.

- The separation of class discussion from composing created a hiatus between oral and written argument. Students had difficulty seeing the relation between the two and using insights from each to improve the other.
- The lack of a learning sequence — of assignments that build on each other — meant that courses in argumentation were less coherent and meaningful than they could be. Students did not understand why they were doing what they were doing and could not envision what might come next.
- Finally, inattention to what people actually use argument to accomplish resulted in too narrow a view of argument and in unclear purposes for writing. Because instruction was mainly limited to what we call arguing to convince, students took argument only as monologues of advocacy. They ignored inquiry.

We set out to solve these problems. The result is a book different from any other argument text because it focuses on four aims of argument:

Arguing to inquire, questioning opinions

Arguing to convince, making cases

Arguing to persuade, appealing to the whole person

Arguing to mediate, finding common ground between conflicting positions

COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT THE AIMS OF ARGUMENT

Instructors have certain questions about these aims, especially how they relate to one another. Here are some of the most frequently asked questions:

1. *What is the relative value of the four aims? Because mediation comes last, is it the best or most valued?* No aim is “better” than any other aim. Given needs for writing and certain audiences, one aim can be more appropriate than another for the task at hand. Mediation comes last because it integrates inquiry, convincing, and persuading.
2. *Must inquiry be taught as a separate aim?* No. It may be taught as a separate aim, but we do not intend this “may” as a “must.” Teaching inquiry as a distinct aim has certain advantages. Students need to learn how to engage in constructive dialogue, which is more disciplined and more focused than class discussion usually is. Once they see how it is done, students enjoy dialogue with one another and with texts. Dialogue helps students think through their arguments and imagine reader reaction to what they say, both of which are crucial to convincing and persuading. Finally, as with mediation, inquiry offers avenues for assignments other than the standard argumentative essay.

3. *Should inquiry come first?* For a number of reasons, inquiry has priority over the other aims. Most teachers are likely to approach inquiry as prewriting, preparatory to convincing or persuading. And commonly, we return to inquiry when we find something wrong with a case we are trying to construct, so the relationship between inquiry and the other aims is also recursive.

Moreover, inquiry has psychological, moral, and practical claims to priority. When we are unfamiliar with an issue, inquiry comes first psychologically, as a felt need to explore existing opinion. Regardless of what happens in the “real world,” convincing or persuading without an open, honest, and earnest search for the truth is, in our view, immoral. Finally, inquiry goes hand-in-hand with research, which requires questioning the opinions encountered.

4. *Isn't the difference between convincing and persuading more a matter of degree than kind?* Sharp distinctions can be drawn between inquiry and mediation and between both these two aims and the monologues of advocacy, convincing and persuading. But convincing and persuading do shade into one another so that the difference is clearest at the extremes, with carefully chosen examples. Furthermore, the “purest” appeal to reason—a legal brief, a philosophical or scientific argument—appeals in ways beyond the sheer cogency of the case. Persuasive techniques are submerged but not absent in arguing to convince.

Our motivation for separating convincing from persuading is not theoretical but pedagogical. Case-making is complex enough that attention to logical appeal by itself is justified. Making students conscious of the appeals to character, emotion, and style while they are learning to cope with case-making can overburden them to the point of paralysis.

Regardless, then, of how sound the traditional distinction between convincing and persuading may be, we think it best to take up convincing first and then persuasion, especially because what students learn in the former can be carried over intact into the latter. And because one cannot make a case without unconscious appeal to character, emotional commitments (such as values), and style, teaching persuasion is a matter of exposing and developing what is already there in arguing to convince.

Here are the central tenets of an approach based on aims of argument:

- *Argumentation is a mode or means of discourse, not an aim or purpose for writing; consequently, we need to teach the aims of argument.*
- *The aims of argument are linked in a learning sequence so that convincing builds on inquiry, persuasion on convincing, and all three contribute to mediation; consequently, we offer a learning sequence for conceiving a course or courses in argumentation.*

We believe in the sequence as much as the aims. We think that many will come to prefer it over any other approach.

Of course, textbooks are used selectively, as teachers and programs need them in achieving their own goals. As with any other text, this one can be used selectively, ignoring some parts, playing up others, designing other sequences, and so on. If you want to work with our learning sequence, it's there for creative adaptation. If not, the text is flexible enough for almost any course structure or teaching method.

A NOTE ABOUT THE READINGS

You will discover that the issues around which this text's essays are organized involve students in race, class, and gender difference. This slant does not reflect a hidden agenda on our part. Rather, students can come to feel more engaged by issues of this sort than they do by others we have tried. Class debates are livelier, maybe because such issues hit closer to home.

Such issues work because they expose something obvious about argumentation: People differ because they are different, and not just on the basis of race, class, and gender. Without confrontation with difference, students miss the social and cultural roots of argument and fail to understand why people think in such varied ways about homosexuality, feminism, and other issues that obviously turn on difference, as well as issues such as genetic manipulation, which may seem at first to have nothing to do with difference.

We have avoided the "great authors, classic essays" approach (with the exception of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail"). We tried instead to find bright, contemporary people arguing well from diverse viewpoints—articles and chapters similar to those that can be found in our better journals and trade books, the sort of publications students should read most in doing research. We have not presented any issue in simple pro-and-con fashion, as if there were only two sides.

Included in the range of perspectives are arguments made with both words and images. We include a full instructional chapter examining visual arguments such as editorial cartoons, advertisements, public sculpture, and photographs.

A FINAL WORD ABOUT THE APPROACH

Some reviewers have called our approach innovative. But is it better? Will students learn more? Will instructors find the book more satisfying and more helpful than what they currently use? Our experience—both in using the book ourselves and in listening to the responses of those who have read it or tested it in the classroom or used it for years—is that they will. Students

complain less about having to read this book than about having to read others used in our program. They do seem to learn more. Teachers claim to find the text stimulating, something to work with rather than around. We hope your experience is as positive as ours has been. We invite your comments and will use them in the perpetual revision that constitutes the life of a text and our lives as writing teachers.

NEW TO THE FIFTH EDITION

Here are the important changes for this edition:

- We completely overhauled Chapter 9, now “Resolving Conflict: Arguing to Mediate.” It had not changed much in previous editions and needed updating. For purposes of illustration, we discarded the topic of abortion and replaced it with a recurrent topic that changes with every new wave of immigrants: the melting pot versus the quilt metaphor-model for American culture. Finally, as the new title indicates, negotiation has largely been subsumed by mediation, partly because it makes far more sense to essay mediation than to attempt negotiation in prose. The chapter is now more coherent, better written, and easier to use—and reflects our continuing experimentation with this complex and fascinating aim.
- We also added more material on plagiarism, always a problem but aggravated by increasing student reliance on the Internet.
- We brought both casebooks up-to-date with many new selections. We also refocused them. The terrorism casebook has moved away from 9/11 and its immediate aftermath to a greater emphasis on the ongoing war on terror. As its new title, “Sex, Relationships, and Maybe Even Marriage,” implies, the second casebook concentrates on the lives of young adults, many of whom are not dating in the traditional sense, are postponing marriage, and are starting families later in life.
- As always, some readings in the anthology chapters fell out to make room for fresh ones. The biggest change in Part Four is the deletion of “News and Ethics.” Chapter 14 is now “Genetics and Enhancement: Better Than Human?” a topic having perhaps greater intrinsic interest and, with each advance in biotechnology, greater urgency. Note also the new titles in the feminism and the race and class chapters.
- Finally, as with people as they get older, textbooks with each edition tend to pick up a little in the waistline. We’re happy to say that *Aims* has lost weight in this incarnation, not by reckless, last-minute slashing of any one section or chapter, but by careful, general slimming down.

Revised Online Learning Center

In addition to the many changes the fifth edition offers in the text itself, this edition of *Aims* is accompanied by a newly revised Online Learning Center, accessible at www.mhhe.com/crusius. The bind-in card at the front of the text gives you access to this powerful resource, which now features all the tools of Catalyst 2.0, McGraw-Hill's award-winning writing and research Web site. You will find integrated references throughout the text, pointing you to additional online coverage of the topic at hand.

Online Course Delivery and Distance Learning

In addition to the Web site, McGraw-Hill offers the following technology products for composition classes. The online content of *The Aims of Argument* is supported by WebCT, Blackboard, eCollege.com, and most other course systems. Additionally, McGraw-Hill's PageOut service is available to get you and your course up and running online in a matter of hours—at no cost! To find out more, contact your local McGraw-Hill representative or visit <http://www.pageout.net>.

PageOut

McGraw-Hill's widely used click-and-build Web site program offers a series of templates and many design options, requires no knowledge of HTML, and is intuitive and easy to use. With PageOut, anyone can produce a professionally designed course Web site in very little time.

AllWrite! 2.1

Available online or on CD-ROM, *AllWrite!* 2.1 offers over 3,000 exercises for practice in basic grammar, usage, punctuation, context spelling, and techniques for effective writing. The popular program is richly illustrated with graphics, animations, video, and Help screens.

Teaching Composition Faculty Listserv at www.mhhe.com/tcomp

Moderated by Chris Anson at North Carolina State University and offered by McGraw-Hill as a service to the composition community, this listserv brings together senior members of the college composition community with newer members—junior faculty, adjuncts, and teaching assistants—in an online newsletter and accompanying discussion group to address issues of pedagogy, in both theory and in practice.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We have learned a great deal from the comments of both teachers and students who have used this book, so please continue to share your thoughts with us.

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Timothy Crusius
Carolyn Channell
Dallas, Texas



Note to Students

Our goal in this book is not just to show you how to construct an argument but also to make you more aware of why people argue and what purposes argument serves. Consequently, Part Two of this book introduces four specific aims that people have in mind when they argue: to inquire, to convince, to persuade, and to mediate. Part One precedes the aims of argument and focuses on understanding argumentation in general, reading and analyzing arguments, doing research, and working with forms of visual persuasion such as advertising.

The selections in Parts One and Two offer something to emulate. All writers learn from studying the strategies of other writers. The object is not to imitate what a more experienced writer does but to understand the range of strategies you can use in your own way for your own purposes.

Included are arguments made with words and images. We have examples of editorial cartoons, advertisements, and photographs.

The additional readings in Parts Three and Four serve another function. To learn argument, we have to argue; to argue, we must have something to argue about. So we have grouped essays and images around central issues of current public discussion. Part Three's two casebooks offer expanded treatment of two subjects we think you'll find especially interesting: terrorism, and sex and relationships. We selected the essays of Part Four rather than others for two main reasons. One is that the included essays have worked better than those we tried and rejected. The other is that most of the topics of these essays deal centrally with difference, which causes people to disagree with one another in the first place.

People argue with one another because they do not see the world the same way, and they do not see the world the same way because of different backgrounds. Therefore, in dealing with how people differ, a book about argument must deal with what makes people different, with the sources of disagreement itself—including gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexual orientation,

and religion. Rather than ignoring or glossing over difference, the readings in Parts Three and Four will help you better understand it.

This book concludes with an appendix on editing, the art of polishing and refining prose, and finding common errors. Consult this reference often as you work through the text's assignments.

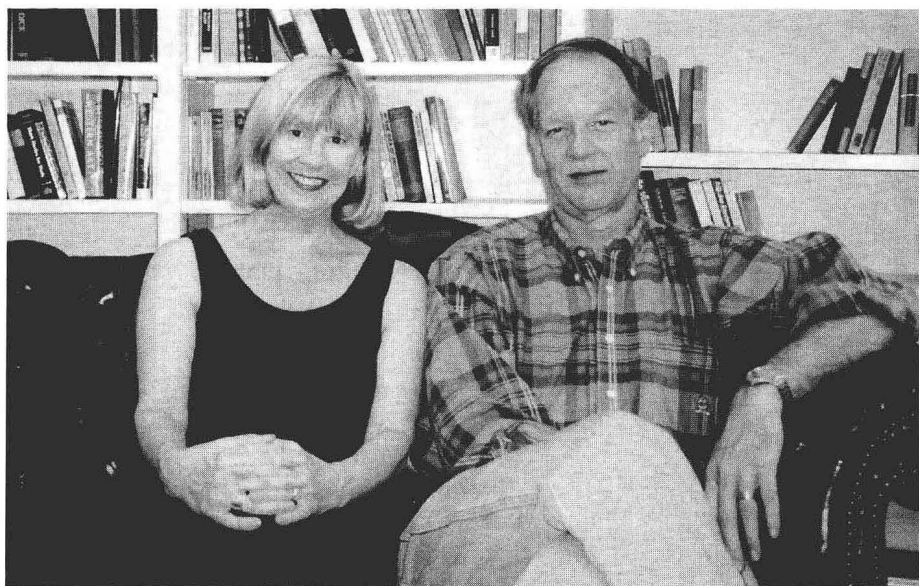
Arguing well is difficult for anyone. We have tried to write a text no more complicated than it has to be. We welcome your comments to improve future editions. Write us at

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