

Appeal to the Angry Emotions

ALAN BRINTON *Boise State University*

To the multiplying of "informal fallacies" there is no end. This essay is really not about a fallacy at all, and the fallacy it is really not about is the *ad populum*. Douglas Walton began an article ("Why is the *Ad Populum* a Fallacy?") some years ago with an accurate description of the "standard" characterization of the *ad populum*: "the fallacy committed by directing an emotional appeal to the feelings or enthusiasms of 'the gallery' or 'the people' to win assent to an argument not adequately supported by proper evidence."¹ The arousing of "mass feelings," Walton went on to suggest, is what gives the *ad populum* its importance; but, since a fallacy is a mistake in *argument*, the real character of the *argumentum ad populum* lies in other aspects or elements of the situation. There is, though, I want to suggest, a kind of argument whose essential character is a matter of the arousing of group feelings or passions. Whether this kind of argument is what we generally mean or ought to mean by "the *ad populum*" is a question which may be left open to debate; but it can at least be said, I think, that the kinds of rhetorical situations and performances in connection with which the label "*ad populum*" seems appropriate are ones in which the kind of argument I have in mind occurs.

Emotive appeals are, of course, made to individuals as well as groups, and they may or may not deserve to be called "arguments." I suggest the label "Pathotic Argument" for any appeal to the emotions or passions which qualifies as an argument. I also suggest that some *do* qualify as arguments and some of these as logically acceptable arguments. Appeals to emotion

have characteristically been regarded by logicians either as inherently fallacious forms of argument or as not really forms of argument at all, as alternatives to argument—as diversionary tactics for example. The prejudice against them among logicians goes back at least to Antoine Arnaud's influential *The Art of Thinking*, published in 1662, and is traceable through philosophers and through the most influential logic texts published from Arnaud's time down through the present day.² Widely used texts, especially those which speak explicitly of "*ad populum*," "*ad misericordiam*," and other sorts of appeals to emotion, continue to deal with the question of the role of emotion in argument almost exclusively in negative terms. For example, despite qualifying his definition of *argumentum ad misericordiam* by adding "where the conclusion is concerned with a question of fact rather than a matter of sentiment" to "the fallacy committed when pity is appealed to for the sake of getting a conclusion accepted," Copi continues to list the *ad misericordiam* or "appeal to pity" under the heading "Fallacies of Relevance." The qualification suggests to us that there must be legitimate appeals to emotion, but he makes no attempt to give an account of the character of such appeals or to suggest criteria for their evaluation. And his lead in this matter is still widely followed.³

Among the emotions or passions which may be aroused in *ad populum* situations are some of the harsher ones such as anger, resentment, indignation, and envy. I plan to focus our discussion on these sorts of emotions. They may appropriately be called "the angry emotions," though among

them indignation—in the context of treating some appeals to these kinds of emotions as a form of argument—has a kind of logical primacy; hence my title. In what follows, I will first briefly discuss the character of pathotic argument; then I will consider the angry emotions; finally I will focus on the *ad indignationem* as a kind of argument, with attention to a couple of examples.

Pathotic Argument⁴

That the emotions often interfere with, or take the place of, a careful weighing of reasons for belief or action seems beyond dispute. And it is a stock complaint against appeals to emotion that they are at best diversionary tactics and at worst attempts to get people to act from unreason rather than from reason. On the other hand, in ordinary life we do sometimes refer to fear or anger or other emotions as justified or unjustified, as reasonable or unreasonable, and even as blameworthy. This despite some tendency to think of the emotions as states of mind or mental occurrences which “happen” to us, as if they were not at all of our own choosing. One sense in which emotions may be reasonable or unreasonable—and I now appeal to the authority of the overwhelming majority of philosophical treatments of the emotions, from Aristotle down to the prodigious philosophical literature on the emotions published during the past thirty years—is that they may be (and usually are) in some sense grounded in beliefs or cognitions which are themselves reasonable or unreasonable.⁵ Another sense in which emotions may be reasonable or unreasonable is that they may be, in various ways, appropriate or inappropriate to, and in or out of proportion to, the beliefs or cognitions in which they are grounded. There is an added dimension to this as well: kinds of *action*, or particular actions, may strike us as appropriate or inappropriate responses to the experiencing of certain emotions, or to the experiencing

of them in certain degrees.

These ordinary ways of thinking about the emotions have to some extent been supported by, and further articulated in, the work of some moral philosophers. Aristotle, for example, claims that virtue is concerned with *passions* as well as with actions, with how we are *affected* as well as with how we act. “For instance,” he writes in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, “both fear and confidence and appetite and anger and pity and in general pleasure and pain may be felt both too much and too little, and in both cases not well; but to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right way, is what is both intermediate and best, and this is characteristic of virtue.”⁶ Virtue for Aristotle consists in “a state of character concerned with choice, lying in a mean, i.e. the mean relative to us, this being determined by a rational principle...” [*Nicomachean Ethics* 1106b-1107a]. “Rational principle” here is “*logos*.” That is to say, in some sense getting it right with respect to how one feels is a matter of *logos*, of reason, even of logic. Now, among the three “modes of proof” distinguished in Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* are both *logos* (the giving of reasons) and *pathos* (the appeal to emotions or passions). But if passions may be felt too much or too little, appropriately or inappropriately, and if this appropriateness or inappropriateness, etc., is a matter of *logos*, then these two modes of proof are not entirely separable. And I do not believe that Aristotle ever meant to say that they were. And so there ought to be room within Aristotle’s ethical-rhetorical scheme for a sort of *logos* of the passions. If we want to get some idea of the nature of this *logos*, we can look to Aristotle’s analyses of the passions in Bk. II of the *Rhetoric*. For example, he characterizes pity as “a kind of pain excited by the sight of evil, deadly or painful, which befalls one who does not deserve it; an evil which one might expect to come upon himself or one of his friends,

and when it seems near.”⁷ Whether we agree with the particulars or not, this characterization gives us some idea of what the *logos* of pity will consist in. It will consist in certain propositions or beliefs, such as the belief that certain events have befallen some person, that these events are evil, that the person does not deserve this evil, and so on. Belief in some such combination of propositions will be one among possible causes of pity; but, more to our present point, it will constitute *grounds* for reasonable pity. Now, *pathotic argument* consists, first and foremost, in the giving of such reasons, the drawing of attention to reasonable grounds for the passion or emotion or sentiment in question.⁸ *Ad misericordiam* will be a form of pathotic argument, and what distinguishes it from other forms will be the special character of pity, or the nature of the combination of propositions which constitute the cognitive content or the *logos* of pity. As a result, the form or forms of pathotic argument which involve the “angry” emotions will have to be understood in terms of an understanding of those emotions. And if appeal to these emotions constitutes the core of the *ad populum* (as I have hinted but not asserted), then it can be properly understood only in terms of the special character of these harsher emotions.

The Angry Emotions

The harsh or “angry” emotions or passions are those which are directed against other persons. Francis Hutcheson, in his *Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions and Affections*, calls them the “unkind” affections and contrasts them with the “kind” or benevolent affections. Since the principle of benevolence is so central to Hutcheson’s moral philosophy, he regards the unkind affections as problematic and in need of justification. This uneasiness, though not shared by Aristotle, *is* shared by a number of writers on the passions, who

for that reason give special attention to the justification of anger.⁹ Aristotle’s view on the matter is clearly expressed in the *Nicomachean Ethics*: Anger, as well as some of its emotive cognates (though not all, for example not envy), is justifiable and may be even obligatory, even though it is directed against another person. “The man who is angry at the right things and with the right people, and further, as he ought, when he ought, and as long as he ought, is praised” [*Nicomachean Ethics* 1125b], and “those who are not angry at the things they should be angry at are thought to be fools” [1126a]. (It is quite clear in the text that Aristotle agrees with this sort of praising and thinking.) The Stoics, as is well known, tended to argue against the legitimacy of the passions in general, but they were particularly vituperative in the case of anger. The strongest case against the angry emotions in classical thought is perhaps made in Seneca’s long essay *De Ira*.¹⁰ If the passions in general, or if the angry emotions in particular, have no legitimate place in the moral life, then pathotic argument will in every case, or at least whenever it invokes angry emotions, be faulty (though it will still be an identifiable and analyzable form of argument). The remainder of this discussion, however, will proceed on the assumption that the Aristotelian position is correct, that some angry emotions at least are justifiable. So there are two different questions, one having to do with the justifiability of anger and cognate emotions—their legitimacy in the moral life, that is; the other having to do with their justification in particular cases. Having set aside the first question, we are concerned with the second.

We turn now to the particular angry emotions. *Anger* itself is characterized by Aristotle as “a longing, accompanied by pain, for a real or apparent revenge for a real or apparent slight, affecting a man himself or one of his friends, when such a slight is undeserved” [*Rhetoric* 1378a]. *Indignation*, he says, is the antithesis of pity

and consists in “being pained at undeserved good fortune” in others [1386b]. *Envy* is a matter of being pained at the good fortune of others, independently of whether it is deserved. Now, what anger and indignation share (and also share with *pity*) is an essential reference to *justice*. The good person *should*, according to Aristotle, be pained by injustice and desire to see it rectified [Rhetoric 1386b]. A good person’s desire to see another person (in a sense) adversely affected is a desire for rectification. The reason Aristotle rejects the view that there is a mean with respect to envy, it seems reasonable to say, is that envy is not grounded in a real desire for rectification—for justice, that is.

Those writers who are concerned with the justification of anger (both with its general justification and in connection with the evaluation of particular cases) typically focus their attention on the question of justice. Anger “seeks to inflict harm on another,” says Aquinas, “...But the desire for revenge is a desire for something good, since revenge pertains to justice.”¹¹ And he agrees with Aristotle that anger has a cognitive component or is grounded in a cognition: “...reason somewhat causes anger, by proclaiming the injury which causes anger.”¹² “The only way in which our reason and understanding can raise anger,” writes Butler in his sermon “Upon Resentment,” “is by representing to our mind injustice or injury of some kind or other.”¹³ In a sermon on “The Government of Passion,” Samuel Clarke says that anger is sinful “when it is stirred up without just cause...”¹⁴ The relationship between justice and anger is approached from another direction by John Stuart Mill in his analysis of the concept of justice in Chapter 5 of *Utilitarianism*. “The idea of justice,” he writes, “supposes two things—a rule of conduct and a sentiment which sanctions the rule.” This sentiment involves a desire for punishment of the offender and “the conception of some definite person who suffers by the infringement” (of the rule).¹⁵

An animal desire for retaliation is enlarged by sympathy in the sentiment of justice, according to Mill, insofar as it is a *moral* sentiment, so as to include all persons.

Earlier it was suggested that *indignation* has, in the context of the present inquiry, a kind of logical primacy. This suggestion will have to be pursued in terms of a somewhat wider conception of indignation than Aristotle’s. Suppose we first modify Aristotle’s “definition” of anger, replacing “slight” with “intentional injury.” Then suppose we define indignation as “a longing, accompanied by pain, for a real or apparent rectification for a real or apparent intentional injury to some person, *without regard to who that person is*, when such an injury is undeserved.” What will distinguish indignation from anger, then, is that anger takes special account of one’s own case. Now, this distinction in the way in which I have made it is artificial. We often speak of indignation in cases in which the identity of the sufferer does make a difference and also in cases which do not obviously involve a sufferer at all. But it is important to make a distinction between the “unkind” emotion which arises out of a disinterested view of injustice and that (or those) which arises out of an interested, self-oriented view of injustice, even if in actual cases there is a mixture of the two and even if in practice we can never quite sort them out. The important point is that the justification of the harsher emotions (in particular cases), insofar as it is to be given in terms of justice, is grounded wholly in *indignation* as I have just defined it. Other aspects of the harsher emotions are of interest, to be sure, but the core of these emotions, so far as their possible justifiability goes, is a kind of indignation against injustice. “That passion,” says Butler, “from whence men take occasion to run into the dreadful vices of malice and revenge; even that passion, as implanted in our nature by God, is not only innocent, but a generous movement of mind. It is in itself, and in its original, no more than indignation against

injury and wickedness” [p. 149].

When Aristotle says in the *Nicomachean Ethics* that not feeling angry in response to unmerited insults indicates a defect of character, and when he says in the *Rhetoric* [1386b] that being pained at the sight of unmerited good fortune is a mark of good character, he is focusing our attention on what is essential to the justification and to the reasonableness of the angry emotions in general. It is this being pained at injustice (accompanied at least sometimes by a kind of pleasure at the prospect of the injustice being rectified), taken by itself, which we call for the moment “indignation.” Indignation in a larger sense and the other “unkind” emotions or passions are more than indignation in this narrow or “strict” sense. But, even in the strict sense, indignation is not a mere cool assessment or judgment; it is, or includes, a feeling or complex of feelings—it is an emotion or passion. As such, it is a motivator to action, which is why it is appealed to in rhetorical situations, for example in public speeches whose aim is to get people to take certain courses of action.

The *Ad Indignationem*¹⁶

Let us then call the form of pathetic argument which consists in giving grounds for the angry emotions the *Argumentum ad Indignationem*. There are certain rhetorical phenomena which we may refer to as the “appeal to indignation,” “appeal to anger,” “appeal to envy,” “appeal to enmity,” “appeal to jealousy,” and so on, at least one each for each identifiably distinguishable harsh emotion. These, we might say, when used on a crowd, are subspecies of the sort of rhetorical phenomenon for which the label “*ad populum*” seems appropriate. I say “rhetorical phenomena,” because what I have in mind here is the attempt to arouse the relevant emotions by *any* of the available means. The expression “appeal to” is

misleading, since typically the main concern is to arouse the relevant passions, with little need to then appeal *to* them as the bases for action. There are indeed two distinguishable aspects in the case of such appeals: the arousing of the emotion, and the moving to action by means of the emotion. But it is the arousing of the emotion which is now the focus of attention.¹⁷ Among the available means for arousing the passions is the giving of reasons or *grounds* for anger, enmity, or whatever. As a result, although the appeal to anger (say) is always a rhetorical phenomenon, it may also be a *logical* phenomenon (if we may be permitted this manner of speaking). When such an appeal is also a logical phenomenon, it will be an instance of the *argumentum ad indignationem*. The logical correctness of an *argumentum ad indignationem* will be a matter of at least two things: (1) whether the reasons given for the emotion are good ones, whether the truth of certain propositions, namely those which are appealed to, would in fact justify the feelings which they are supposed to arouse; and (2) whether the degree or intensity of the emotional response (or intended emotional response) is appropriate to the reasons given, in the context of the rhetorical situation considered as a whole. The usual sort of distinction between truth of premises and logical correctness can be made as well.

Let us now turn our attention to two examples, each instructive in its own way. The scope of the present account allows for only brief treatment of each of the two. At the same time, an adequate understanding of the kind of argument we are considering requires attention to larger bodies of discourse than the usual textbook examples, as well as attention to their rhetorical contexts. So, despite space limitations, I introduce for consideration two fairly complicated examples. The first is a speech made by Frederick Douglass (the “Reception Speech”) in England in 1846. The second is the speech of Cleon, in the Athenian debate over the fate of the colony of

Mytilene. In each, at least one main purpose of the speaker is to raise indignation or other angry emotions against certain persons. And each involves the giving of reasons for those emotions.

(1) Douglass was a former slave who had escaped and for a time fled to Great Britain, where he gave speeches attempting to enlist British support for the abolition of slavery in America. He begins by saying that his purpose is to inform his audience about the "character of this institution" of slavery. But the underlying purpose is expressed graphically at the end of the speech:

I want the slaveholder surrounded, as by a wall of anti-slavery fire, so that he may see the condemnation of himself and his system glaring down in letters of light. I want him to feel that he has no sympathy in England, Scotland, or Ireland; that he has none in Canada, none in Mexico, none among the poor wild Indians... I would have condemnation blaze down upon him in every direction, till, stunned and overwhelmed with shame and confusion, he is compelled to let go the grasp he holds upon the persons of his victims, and restore them to their long-lost rights."¹⁸

The body of the speech consists almost entirely of graphic descriptions of the evils and injustices and barbarity of slave ownership as practiced in mid-19th Century America. There are rhetorical flourishes, to be sure, but the appeal made at the end is well grounded in a series of empirical claims (some documented by the speaker, others at least documentable). As I suggested earlier, the two usual sorts of questions about arguments can be raised: (1) Are the "premises," in this case the empirical claims in which the "conclusion" (the feeling of indignation) is supposed to be grounded, true? and (2) Do those "premises" support that "conclusion," in other words, in this case, is indignation the appropriate response? Douglass quite clearly thinks more than just that indignation is the appropriate response; his view is that for any good and decent person such a response will be unavoidable—failure to be

affected in the appropriate way will indicate a defect of character. This view, that failure to be appropriately affected is indicative of a weakness or deficiency of character, is essentially Aristotelian.

I certainly do not want to make all this sound simpler than it is. It might seem as though somehow a "moral premise" is essentially involved and has gone unnoticed, or that there is a certain amount of moral theory entering into the move from so-called "premise" to so-called "conclusion." This suspicion is correct. It might also be suggested that the conclusion, if there is one, is a proposition such as "You, my hearers, ought to feel indignant"; and the account certainly could be put in these terms.¹⁹ The reason for these difficulties is this: what we have here is a form of argument which is inseparable from a certain kind of backdrop of moral theory. The very character of this kind of argument cannot be fully and adequately understood unless we see that it is a kind of moral argument. The reason *ad populum* argument, *ad misericordiam* argument, *ad hominem* argument, and a number of other kinds of argument, which have for so long suffered abuse at the hands of logicians, have not been properly understood is that the cases in which, and the extent to which, they are forms of moral argument have not been sufficiently appreciated.²⁰ Moral argument typically aims to produce moral belief or moral action; and the passions or emotions are essential to moral belief or action, since they are essentially involved in the matter of the *manner* in which we believe or act, which is itself essential to moral belief or action.²¹

(2) Cleon's speech, as reported in Book Three of Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian War*, raises its own difficulties. Mytilene, one of the richest and allegedly least imposed-upon states in the Athenian empire, revolted in the fourth year of the war, attempting to forcibly unify the island of Lesbos into one state allying itself with the Spartans against the Athenians. After the defeat of the Mytilenian fleet, the

question was whether to execute only persons taken as prisoners in the battle or to put to death the entire adult male population. Cleon's speech is in favor of the harsher measures. He argues that no other city has ever committed such injury and insult against Athens:

Personally, I can make allowances for those who revolt because they find your rule intolerable or because they have been forced into it by enemy action. Here, however, we have the case of people living on an island, behind their own fortifications, with nothing to fear from our enemies except an attack by sea against which they were adequately protected by their own force of triremes; they had their own independent government and they were treated by us with the greatest consideration. Now, to act as they acted is not what I should call a revolt...; it is a case of calculated aggression, or deliberately taking sides with our bitterest enemies in order to destroy us.²²

There is a good deal more to the speech. Cleon aims to get the Athenians to follow a certain course of action; but he knows very well (as we could see more clearly by looking at the whole account) that they will do so only if their anger against the Mytilenians can be raised to a certain pitch, and so his immediate aim is to arouse their passions. This situation is somewhat more complicated. Whether there are adequate grounds for anger or indignation is one question. To Athenian sympathizers it may well appear that Cleon succeeds in giving adequate grounds for the emotion. But one ought to at least read the surrounding chapters or even perhaps the whole of Thucydides' history before making a judgment about that; and of course one probably ought to look into the circumstances even more deeply than that. This does not mean that instances of the *ad indignationem* are not really susceptible to evaluation. It just means that their evaluation is often difficult and often has to be tentative, or has to be made relative to a restricted point of view. But now another question about the emotion arises: Assuming that anger is justified,

is the *degree* or pitch of anger which Cleon aims to evoke proportional to the "evidence"? And then a third question is likely to come up in this case, about the appropriateness of the course of action production of which Cleon wants to stoke the anger of his hearers.

Conclusion

I have been suggesting with respect to the kinds of rhetorical situations and maneuvers which give rise to the notion that there is such a thing as an *ad populum* fallacy, that there is a describable and analyzable kind of argument, in which theory at least may be in particular cases logically acceptable.²³ That kind of argument is what I am calling the *ad indignationem*. If there is an *ad indignationem* fallacy, it must be a way of going wrong logically in *ad indignationem* argument, it must consist in some failure in the relationship between premises and conclusion. When the *grounds* appealed to are inappropriate or inadequate, either for indignation, or for the called-for degree of indignation, then there will be a logical failure. I do not take myself to have provided an analysis of adequate grounds for indignation, but only to have pointed out that an adequate conception of the nature of indignation will provide the basis for such an analysis. The question of the relationship between grounds and *degree* of indignation is more complicated.

Moral theory, I have also suggested, enters unavoidably into the evaluation of this sort of argument. Supposing that this is the case, it should come as no surprise if the evaluation of this form of argument lacks the kind of precision "standard" logic textbook writers hope to impose on their subject-matter. Aristotle's warnings (in Book I of the *Nicomachean Ethics*) about not expecting more precision than the subject-matter admits of ought to be heeded in this context. To say that judgments

about the appropriateness of emotive response to the facts of a given case are inexact is not to say that they are arbitrary. It may be, and it seems to me that it is, the case that there are forms of argument whose evaluation is more like the critical evaluation of a work of art or literature than it is like the evaluation of a categorical syllogism. These less exact kinds of evaluation are grounded in analysis and theory just as fully as are the more exact kinds, and the exact modes of evaluation are as inappropriate to some forms of argument as the inexact modes are to others.

There are, of course, other ways of arousing the angry emotions, which are not forms of argument at all. When these are deceptively mingled with *ad indignationem* argument, as they often are, it is appropriate to complain of an abuse of that kind of argument. And then the premises may be false. Butler's account of some of the ways this may happen is worth quoting: "...when, from partiality to ourselves, we imagine an injury done to us, when there is none: when this partiality represents it to us greater than it really is: when we fall into that extravagant and monstrous kind of resentment, towards one who has innocently been occasion of evil to us..." ("Upon Resentment", Para. 10). The temptation is to speak of an "*ad populum* fallacy," considering these abuses and a disproportion between grounds and degree of anger or indignation all together as one kind of mistake, and then to be puzzled as to whether or not this mistake is a logical one. So conceived, the *ad populum* is a rhetorical phenomenon, one which usually, though not always, involves a kind of argument, the *ad indignationem*, a kind of argument which is sometimes, though not always, logically unacceptable.²⁴

Notes

¹ *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 13 (1980), 264.

² See Part III of *The Art Of Thinking* (often referred to as *The Port-Royal Logic*), Ch. 19, "Sophisms: The Different Ways of Reasoning Incorrectly," trans. James Dickoff and Patricia James (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1964). For a brief, but fairly comprehensive, account of the history of philosophical and logical opinions about these matters, see C.L. Hamblin's *Fallacies* (London: Methuen, 1970).

³ Irving Copi, *Introduction to Logic*, 7th edition (New York: Macmillan, 1986), Section 3.2. Copi is closely followed in this by his sincerest flatterer, Patrick Hurley, *A Concise Introduction to Logic*, 3rd edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1988), Section 3.2. Howard Kahane's widely used *Logic and Contemporary Rhetoric*, 5th edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1988), does the same, as does Vincent Barry and Douglas Socio's *Practical Logic*, 3rd edition (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1988). A recent text which is more explicit in making the point that not all appeals to emotion are fallacious is James Freeman's *Thinking Logically* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1988), Ch.3; still, though, Freeman has "Emotional Appeals" as a main subheading under "Informal Fallacies," and he also offers no positive account of legitimate appeals. Some of these (and other) texts also take some account of the role of the emotions in argument in sections on "emotive meaning," but almost exclusively in terms of *abuses* in the use of emotive language. Trudy Govier's *A Practical Study of Argument*, for instance (2nd edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1988)), does not include appeals to emotion in its discussion of fallacies of relevance, but its brief discussion of "emotively charged language" is concerned just with abuses (pp. 48-50; see also p. 16). Despite an occasional bow in these texts in the direction of a

legitimate role for the emotions in argument, the implications are clear. The same applies to many textbook treatments of *ad hominem* argument; despite even wider acknowledgment that not all *ad hominem* arguments are fallacious, “*Ad Hominem*” is still commonly a subheading under “Fallacies of Relevance.”

- 4 A fuller account of the nature and justification of this general kind of argument is to be found in Alan Brinton, “Pathos and the ‘Appeal to Emotion’: an Aristotelian Analysis,” *The History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 5 (1988), 207-219.
- 5 The approach recommended in Book II of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* for arousing or calming the passions is almost exclusively cognitive. A useful collection of recent philosophical articles on the emotions is *Explaining Emotions*, Amelie Rorty (ed.), (Berkeley: Univ. of CA Press, 1980). A leading contemporary advocate of the cognitive view of the emotions is Robert Solomon, whose view is most fully worked out in *The Passions* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1976).
- 6 1106b, trans. Sir David Ross (London: Oxford Univ. Pr., 1925). The Ross translation will be referred to henceforth by *EN*. For a very illuminating discussion of the role of the passions in Aristotle’s ethics, see L.A. Kosman, “Being Properly Affected: Virtues and Feelings in Aristotle’s Ethics,” in Amelie Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle’s Ethics* (Berkeley: Univ. of CA Press, 1980), pp. 103-116.
- 7 *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J.H. Freese, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1926), 1385b.
- 8 An issue which I pass over is the question of the nature of the connection between the content of the propositions and the specific emotion. One view (the view

of Hume) is that the connection between the circumstances which give rise to (and perhaps justify) pity and the *feeling* of pity is, for all we know, accidental, a connection which we discover by observing constant conjunctions. Hume is able to take this view because he regards the emotion as just the feeling (so that for him the difference between pity, say, and anger, is that each consists in a uniquely distinct, qualitatively different feeling). The more common view, especially in the recent philosophical literature, is that different emotions are distinguishable in terms of differences in cognitive content, or in objects, or in terms of something or other which is above and beyond the mere feeling. The latter kind of view lends itself more readily to some more detailed account of the connection between “premises” and “conclusion” in pathotic argument.

- 9 Hutcheson’s *Essay* was published in London in 1728. His own attempts to provide a justification of the passions (in general, though with a particular concern with the harsher passions) are on pp. 48ff and 181-182. Butler’s justification of is given in Paragraphs (1) and (12)-(16) of his sermon “Upon Resentment.”
- 10 *Seneca: Moral Essays*, trans. J.W. Basore, in The Loeb Classical Library, (London: Wm. Heinemann, 1928), Vol. I. See also Plutarch’s essay “On the Control of Anger,” *Plutarch’s Moralia*, trans. W.C. Helmbold, (London: Wm. Heinemann, 1939), Vol. VI. Seneca and Plutarch both, however, although they recommend elimination of the angry emotions, agree with Aristotle in taking a cognitive view. Their detailed recommendations for calming ourselves and others down are very largely cognitive; in effect they advise us to entertain and to focus our attention on certain propositions. This is no less a kind of pathotic argument than the attempt to *arouse* the emotions by the same kind of means. So

even from this point of view there is a place for the kind of argument we are talking about.

¹¹ *Summa Theologica*, Second Part, Part I, Q. 46, Art. 2, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province, revised by D.J. Sullivan, in *Great Books of the Western World*. (Chicago: William Benton, 1952).

¹² *Ibid.* Article 6.

¹³ Joseph Butler, *Fifteen Sermons Preached at Rolls Chapel*, (London: 1726), Sermon 8.

¹⁴ Sermon XLVI, *The Works of Samuel Clarke*, Vol. I, (London: 1738). 18th Century British moral philosophers and moralists tended to be preoccupied with the passions. The view of Hutcheson and Clarke that the moral life consists largely in the proper regulation or "government" of the passions was widely shared by popular moralists and sermonizers. A number of works from the period are specifically concerned with the justification and regulation of anger. See, for example, Jeremiah Seed's sermon "Of Anger, Meekness, etc." in *The Posthumous Works of Jeremiah Seed*, Vol. I (Dublin: 1750), and *An Essay on Anger*, by John Fawcett (Leeds: 1787).

¹⁵ (1863; Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1957), edited by Oskar Piest, p. 65. I am grateful to an anonymous referee for drawing my attention to Mill's discussion of this matter.

¹⁶ This label is inspired partly by the conception of *indignatio* in classical rhetorical theory. *Indignatio* as a rhetorical device consists in the arousing of angry emotions against opponents. See Cicero's *De Inventione*, trans. H.M. Hubbell, *The Loeb Classical Library* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Pr., 1949), I, liii.

¹⁷ This is not to say that the moving to action "on the basis" of passions is not in

itself problematic. The view is not infrequently expressed that we ought to act on the basis of reasons rather than in response to our emotions. That view is, in my view, simplistic and fails to appreciate the role of our passionate nature in the moral life; our present concern is, however, with the arousing and the justifying of emotions rather than with the question of the relationship between emotion and action.

¹⁸ In *Speeches by Black Americans*, ed. Daniel J. O'Neill (Belmont, CA: Dickenson Pub. Co., 1971), p. 41.

¹⁹ There are reasons, however, for *not* characterizing the conclusion of pathotic argument as a proposition, at least not unless we grant that the proposition essentially has a kind of emotive force. The point is that mere cool assent to the proposition "You ought to be indignant" is not the speaker or arguer's objective.

²⁰ The sometime moral character of *ad hominem* argument will perhaps not be apparent from what I have said here. *Ad hominem* argument is a form of moral argument most conspicuously in those cases in which it aims to undermine (sometimes justifiably) the moral authority or *ethos* of a speaker or writer or advisor; one of its ends, that is, in certain contexts, is a kind of moral disapproval or disqualification. For a fuller account, see my "A Rhetorical View of the *Ad Hominem*," *The Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 63 (1985), 50-63, and "Ethotic Argument," *The History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 3 (1986), 245-58.

²¹ The point I mean to make here is approached, I think, in comments made by Charles F. Kielkopf in "Relevant Appeals to Force, Pity, and Popular Pieties" (*Informal Logic*, 2 (1980), 1-5, though from a different direction, when he says that most accounts of the *ad populum*, the *ad baculum*, and the *ad misericordiam* are superficial in that they

are “based on a failure to distinguish between reading a conclusion primarily as a description as opposed to reading it primarily as a prescription” (p. 2). I think Professor Kielkopf is also correct in emphasizing that “considerations which are irrelevant as reasons for thinking” may be “relevant as reasons for acting” (p. 3), although I would want to say that they may be relevant as reasons for *thinking about acting*, especially for moral thinking.

The essential involvement of the emotions in moral believing or acting perhaps provides justification or at least establishes the appropriateness of rhetorical flourishes in the presentation of the “premises” of pathotic argument. I am grateful to Mary DiPietro for pointing this out to me.

²² *Thucydides: History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1954), pp. 182-183.

²³ “*Ad Populum*” is sometimes used of appeals to popular opinion. That application is not the one I have in mind—which is not to say that it has no connection at all with the application to the arousing of group emotions.

²⁴ I am grateful to Michael Wreen for encouragement in this project and also to two anonymous referees for suggesting improvements with respect to an earlier draft.

Professor Alan Brinton, Department of Philosophy, Boise State University, Boise, Idaho 83725 □