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Connecting argumentation in the Americas: past, present, future

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ABSTRACT

This article synthesizes the results of several interviews with argumentation scholars from across the American continents to address three questions regarding the connections in argumentation studies between North and South/Central America: “What motivated the study of argumentation in the Americas?” “What commonalities, if any, exist in argumentation studies across the Americas?” and “What should the future of argumentation studies in the Americas look like?” Using these interviews in combination with existing textual sources, the article also provides motivated suggestions for directions for the future of the community in the field.

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Introduction

Argumentation scholars now work around the world. While Amsterdam, The Netherlands and Windsor, Canada have long been and remain central hubs for argumentation scholars, the birth of the IberoAmericain Society of Argumentation, the European Conference on Argumentation (ECA), the planned hosting of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation (ISSA) conference in China, and the creation of the Argumentation Network of the Americas (ANA) are just a few of the many indications that scholarly interest in argumentation has now expanded nearly worldwide. For this special issue, we focus on the past, present, and future of the argumentation community in the Americas.¹ We attempt to answer questions such as “What motivated the study of argumentation in the Americas?” “What commonalities, if any, exist in argumentation studies across the Americas?” and “What should the future of argumentation studies in the Americas look like?”

To do so, we consulted important textual sources from across the continents, but we also conducted semistructured interviews (Kallio et al. 2016; Rabionet 2011) with several argumentation scholars who we identified as having ties across North-South continental lines. Using the semistructured interview methodology allowed us to address predefined questions, but to also explore ideas and topics

Table 1. List of interviewees.

| Family name | Given name(s) | Position | Institution | Country | Specialization |
|-------------------|---------------|---|---|--------------------------|---|
| Amaya Navarro | Amalia | Tenured Professor | Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México | Mexico | Legal argumentation |
| Gilbert | Michael | Professor Emeritus | York University | Canada | Multimodal argumentation |
| Gonçalves-Segundo | Paulo Roberto | Tenured Professor | University of São Paulo | Brazil | Interdisciplinary and multimedium argumentation |
| Hample | Dale | Professor Emeritus | Western Illinois University | United States of America | Interpersonal Argumentation |
| Morado Estrada | Raymundo | Researcher | Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México | Mexico | Logic |
| Niño Ochoa | Douglas | Tenured Professor | Universidade Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano | Colombia | Semiotics |
| Santibáñez Yáñez | Cristián | Tenured Professor and Senior Researcher | Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción | Chile | Argumentation theory, Psychology of reasoning, Epistemology |
| Shecaira | Fábio | Tenured Professor | Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro | Brazil | Argumentation theory, Rhetoric, Philosophy of Law |
| Tindale | Christopher | Tenured Professor | University of Windsor | Canada | Rhetorical Argumentation |

Note: We use only the term “tenured” to indicate position permanence and accreditation. We do not mean to diminish any professor who has achieved the rank of “full,” “adjunct,” or “associate” professor, but those terms have differing meanings across different countries, and we’ve elected to avoid confusion in these distinctions by removing them here.

beyond those questions as they arose throughout the interviews. A list of interviewees, their affiliations, and their research areas appear in [Table 1](#).

In each of these semistructured interviews,² we asked about connections between the South and North, prominent events that have taken place, the impact of differing political situations, and what the future of argumentation studies may look like. Thus, in some ways, and inspired by Konishi’s work (e.g. [2009](#), [2016](#), [2020](#)), this article attempts to provide a brief history of the connections in argumentation between North and South America. Beyond that, it also offers a critical perspective on the current state of collaboration and provides motivated suggestions for future directions.

The past

A full account of the history of argumentation in the Americas would require a book length manuscript. But even at that length, it is a complex and complicated topic. In this regard, Cristián Santibáñez, Senior Researcher at Universidad Católica de la Santísima Concepción (Chile), who has been interested in writing a book on

the history of argumentation studies in the Americas, cautions that such a project needs much historical work. This is in part because if we simply identify the common background of the study of argumentation in the Americas as the informal logic movement of the 1970s, we are neglecting important issues and topics, such as European influences and the origins of traditions that are not usually mentioned, like the paraconsistent logic and the living logic in South America. Providing a full history would also require, for Santibáñez, a narrative regarding how our ancestors argued in different parts of the Americas. Thus, in this short article we do not want to be read as attempting to provide a full history of the emergence of the study of argumentation in the Americas. We would, however, like to highlight some developments and events that can be seen as central and that will help make sense of the current state of collaboration (section The Present) and help motivate suggestions for the future of the field (section The Future).³

Given the history and development of informal logic in Canada along with the long history of debate, communication, and rhetoric in the United States often on display at the well-attended Alta conference that began in 1979 (Hampl 2016), one may suspect that the study of argumentation in South America emerged as a result of the spread of scholarship from North to South America. In reality, however, European influence seems to have had at least as big of an impact in South America as influence from North America.

As Santibáñez noted, there may be a temptation to identify informal logic as the origins of the study of argumentation in the Americas, which may be due to its status as one of the most well-known approaches to argumentation in the field. Emerging most prominently in Windsor, Ontario, Canada in the 1970s, informal logic was cemented as an enduring field of study in 1978 with the hosting of the First International Symposium on the topic (Blair 2019; Blair and Johnson 1987; Konishi 2009; Puppo 2019) and the publication of the Newsletter (now journal) *Informal Logic* in the same year (Tindale 2022). While debate about exactly what informal logic is continues (Johnson 2008),⁴ there is no denying that it has played a central role in thinking about argumentation for scholars around the world.⁵ This may be in part because Blair and Johnson began the study of informal logic with a multitude of open questions and a willingness to explore differing answers and differing perspectives as research continued. For example, in 1987, Blair and Johnson identified what they saw to be the main research areas for the development of informal logic, including a theory of fallacy, a theory of argument, the psychology of argument, and the teaching of informal logic, among others. Looking through any of the central journals in the field since then quickly reveals how many of these suggested topics were indeed developed in the intervening years and how many are still being developed today.

As Konishi (2009) has demonstrated, although the first scholars identified with informal logic had varying focuses and concerns, in one way or another they all emphasized the importance of informal logic to education. That is, a main driving force for the creation of informal logic was providing tools that could help students evaluate the arguments found in our everyday lives (Johnson 2008). However, for Tindale, the focus on education now marks a difference between critical thinking and argumentation theory:

Nowadays, almost everyone working in the field will note strict lines dividing critical thinking from argumentation. CT, for example, tends to focus on the development of particular skills that help students handle a range of materials in all disciplines and all walks of life. It is for that reason a largely pedagogic enterprise. Argumentation, as we see, is a far more interdisciplinary concern with a deep theoretical core (Tindale 2022, 157).

Importantly, the focus on education was also a motivation for the development of argumentation studies in the South. Michael Gilbert, Professor Emeritus at York University in Toronto, Canada, reflecting on one of the first Master classes he gave in Chile around 1996, noted that:

there was an interest in there in people learning about argumentation, and one of the reasons for that had been the terrible politics they had just come out from under. With Pinochet there had been a velvet revolution, which means that there was no great uprising, and a lot of philosophers wanted to instill an ethos of critical thinking to avoid such a thing happening again.

Paulo Roberto Gonçalves-Segundo, Professor in the Department of Classical and Vernacular Literature at the Universidade de São Paulo (University of São Paulo), also highlighted the role of argumentation in education in Brazil. Today, he notes, researchers are responding to the current political scenario in Brazil with an increased focus on “*letramento sobre práticas argumentativas como um instrumento de esclarecimento, de resistência e de construção de cidadania [literacy in argumentative practices as a tool for enlightenment, resistance, and the construction of citizenship]*.”⁶ He believes that argumentation scholars such as Isabel C. Michelan de Azevedo have been “*dedicando-se a pensar teórica e metodologicamente no ensino de argumentação na escola e no trabalho de formação de docentes para atuar como professores de argumentação na escola [dedicating themselves to thinking theoretically and methodologically about teaching argumentation in school and about the work of training teachers to act as argumentation teachers]*.”

Fábio Shecaira, Professor at the Faculdade Nacional de Direito from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (National Faculty of Law from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro), agrees that argumentation scholars should embrace their role as educators and offer clarifications on political issues where reasoning and communication are relevant: “*o atual governo fornece temas em abundância: fake news, pós-verdade, negacionismo, extremismo, autoritarismo [the current government provides topics in abundance: fake news, post-truth, denialism, extremism, authoritarianism]*.” Finally, in this regard, Santibáñez is currently leading a project to build a textbook on critical thinking written in collaboration with professors from the University of Windsor, which will be published in Spanish and edited by experts in pedagogy to make it more readable for teenagers.

Aside from educational focuses, several scholars began studying argumentation in efforts to address theoretical concerns. Raymundo Morado, researcher at the Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (Institute for Philosophical Research at the National Autonomous University of Mexico), traces the beginnings of argumentation studies in Mexico to García Máynez’s theory of legal logic developed in the early 1950s. Such studies were

focused on logical reflections of legal argumentation, at least until the 1970s, when other aspects of the argumentative phenomenon began to be considered. He attributes the richness of diverse forms of reasoning thanks to the study of non-deductive logics: “So, Mexicans started getting interested in other aspects of argumentation by the 1970s which is what happened in many other places to a high degree thanks to the Canadian school and all this movement about informal logic and trying to get a better grasp on the theory of fallacies.”

In addition, Morado explains that Mexican argumentation studies have also been enriched by the work of other Spanish-speaking countries, among which he highlights Argentina and Spain, as well as European argumentation theories such as Habermas’ theory of communicative action, and van Eemeren and Grootendorst’s pragma-dialectics. Christopher Tindale, Distinguished University Professor and Director of the Center for Research on Reasoning, Argumentation, and Rhetoric (CRRAR) at the University of Windsor, Canada, agrees with this perspective, noting the connections in language and scholarship between Portugal and Brazil, and Spain and the Spanish speaking Americas. This spread of influences led Morado to describe the Mexican community as eclectic: “in most cases the Mexican approach has been very eclectic; we just take whatever works from whichever place.” Nevertheless, logic remains a very important perspective in Mexican argumentation studies.

In a similar vein, Amalia Amaya Navarro, also from the Instituto de Investigaciones Filosóficas at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, as well as British Academy Global Professor at the University of Edinburgh, emphasized the importance of Europe to the development of the study of legal reasoning and argumentation in the Spanish speaking Americas.⁷ She specifically highlights the importance of Manuel Atienza from Spain, Robert Alexy from Germany, and Neil MacCormick from Scotland, who have all contributed to the academic and practical application of legal reasoning in several important ways. First, Atienza not only developed his own influential ideas, including his view of law as argumentation, but he also supervised several PhD students in Alicante who then returned to Latin America and continued to work in law and legal reasoning. In addition, he participated in the creation of a one-month Master’s program in legal reasoning hosted in Alicante, which draws people from all over the Spanish speaking world, many of whom are judges, creating a notable impact on the judiciary. Alexy’s formula for weight and balance, Amaya Navarro contends, has had a major impact on the understanding of how to reason through complex cases and in the constitutional courts in Latin America. Finally, Neil MacCormick influenced several very good students, including Fernando Atria who is currently an elected member of the Chilean Constitutional Convention, the members of which are responsible for drafting Chile’s new constitution. Finally, she also specifically noted that what many readers here may consider two of the most influential approaches to argumentation, namely, informal logic and pragma-dialectics, have not had as much of an influence on legal reasoning or law in Latin America as one might think.

Argumentation studies in Brazil, like most humanities fields in the country, has its origins at the Universidade de São Paulo, and was influenced by European traditions, especially Francophone works. According to Gonçalves-Segundo, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca’s (1958) perspective is to this day hegemonic in the country.

There was, however, an already locally influential community of Brazilian researchers in the field, such as Zilda de Aquino, Lineide Mosca, and Luiz Ferreira, all concentrated in the Southeast region.

The beginnings of the study of argumentation in Brazilian Departments of Philosophy were largely restricted to symbolic logic. According to Shecaira, it was rare to be able to study argumentation theory, and most opportunities arose if you could work at its intersection with law. Shecaira also points out that he only was introduced to argumentation studies when he went to Canada for his PhD, “Lá, conheci uma comunidade grande de professores e estudantes interessados em lógica informal e retórica [there I met a large community of teachers and students interested in informal logic and rhetoric].” When returning to Brazil, the lack of interest in these topics persisted among Law and Philosophy researchers, “Na faculdade de Filosofia, encontrei poucas pessoas interessadas em teoria da argumentação (excetuado o estudo da retórica antiga). Na faculdade de Direito, encontrei um número um pouco maior de pessoas interessadas em argumentação jurídica [in the Philosophy faculty, I found few people interested in argumentation theory (except for the study of ancient rhetoric). In Law school, I found a slightly larger number of people interested in legal argumentation].” For this reason, his network mainly consists of North American scholars.

Gonçalves-Segundo describes the expansion and connection to North America as a recent event, coinciding with the establishment of the *Revista Eletrônica de Estudos Integrados em Discurso e Argumentação* [*Electronic Journal of Integrated Studies in Discourse and Argumentation*] (EID&A) in 2012. The main goal of its founders, Eduardo Piris, and Moisés Ferreira, was to, “ampliar o olhar que se tinha no país sobre a argumentação, tornando textos importantes acessíveis principalmente a nossos estudantes [broaden the view that was held in the country about argumentation, making important texts accessible mainly to our students].” Being invited to become a member of the editorial board in 2014, he was very involved in this movement that provided Brazilian Portuguese translations of “capítulos de livro e de artigos de pesquisadores de múltiplas localidades e interesses, representativos de perspectivas distintas [book chapters and articles by researchers from multiple locations and interests, representing distinct perspectives].” It was then that both South and North American scholars became an important part of the Brazilian network.⁸

From the North, Michael Gilbert has also been instrumental in spreading his passion for and research on multimodal argumentation to Mexico and Chile. He is one of only a few Canadian scholars who has maintained regular contact in Mexico, giving frequent talks in Monterrey, among other places, where his work is well-appreciated, “if they loved it in Canada and Holland as much as they loved it in Mexico, I’d be a superstar!” In our view it is the quality and applicability of his work that has created such excitement, and which has in turn led about a half a dozen students to use Gilbert’s approach to multimodal argumentation at the core of their theses. Moreover, according to academia.edu Gilbert’s most popular downloaded paper is the Spanish version of “Multimodal Argumentation,” providing further evidence of its ongoing importance and impact among Spanish speaking scholars.

In terms of events, it is important to note that the Mexican community has created different scenarios for discussion on argumentation that have welcomed scholars from different parts of the world and have played an important role in the construction of the community in the Americas. On the one hand, the Mexican Academy of Logic, which was created in 2003 thanks to meetings and workshops on the didactics of logic, also created the *International Symposium on Research in Logic and Argumentation* in 2011 (Jasso Méndez and Estala Rojas 2017).

On the other hand, the Universidad de Guadalajara has made an important contribution to the dissemination of research on argumentation with two specialized publications: (1) the journal *Qautripartita Ratio*, which began in 2016, specializes in argumentation and rhetoric studies applied to the humanities and sciences; and (2) the book collection *Tablero de Disertaciones [dissertations board]*, created in 2017, which “represents a relatively unprecedented initiative in the Spanish-speaking world” (Leal Carretero 2021, 70–71) because it specializes in disseminating argumentation studies. The published books are therefore as non-technical as possible, so that anyone with a university education can read them without too much difficulty. In addition, this university has also created the *International Colloquium on Argumentation and Rhetoric*, currently in its fourth version.

In Chile, Santibáñez created the *International Conference on Argumentation, Psychology of Reasoning and Critical Thinking* in 2008 and founded the journal *Cogency, Journal of reasoning in argumentation* in 2009. These two efforts allowed for international visibility and the expansion of the Latin American argumentation community. The conference also later evolved to give rise to the first *Iberoamerican Conference on Argumentation*, organized at Universidad EAFIT in Colombia in 2019, which provided the opportunity to constitute a provisional committee to form the *Iberoamerican Society of Argumentation*.

The present

In addition to the different historical influences on argumentation in academic scholarship across the Americas, Dale Hample, Professor Emeritus at Western Illinois University, was clear that there is no common theme to how the citizens and residents of North and South America understand and use argumentation. Summarizing the results of a series of studies aiming to characterize argumentative practice in different countries, Hample explains, “I’ve got data from Mexico, Argentina, and Chile, and in Chile I have data from undergraduates, from senior citizens, and immigrants into to Chile, and I have no generalization to offer you about South-Central America.” Even within countries, generalizing seems problematic: “Assuming that [the United States of] America and Canada are the same thing is problematic... And gosh, to imagine that an American from the southeast is anything like an American from Oregon or Washington, you know, the literature doesn’t reflect it.” This lack of generalization was not what he expected. As he explains, “When I started all of this stuff, I thought ‘oh I’m going to get a European pattern, and I’ll get a South American pattern, and I’ll get an Asian pattern’. No, no, no.”

If there is no common pattern to how the public characterize argumentative practice within different countries let alone across countries or continents, and given the diversity of historical academic influences mentioned in the last section, it should come as no surprise that the academic study of argumentation in the Americas today remains very diverse. Santibáñez has observed an intellectual and academic manifestation of argumentation studies through many groups and individuals from different countries in the Americas and contends that this manifestation is rooted in different disciplines in each country. For example, while in Argentina argumentation is more related to linguistics, in Mexico it is more closely related to logic, and in the United States it is more related to rhetoric and communication studies.

He also highlights that the continuing diversity may be a result of a lack of effective community building. Although there have been publications, events, and translations that have connected the community, the organic manifestation of a network with the potential to produce a consistent research theme still needs a lot of work. That is, we have not formed a continuous and systematic network, as, for example, the European argumentation community has. This lack of organization is related to the lack of funding sources for networking and, more importantly, to the lack of power. In Santibáñez's words,

“los estudiosos y estudiosas de la argumentación todavía no hemos sido capaces de demostrar los beneficios que tiene a nivel social los estudios de argumentación. No tenemos una influencia en el ámbito político o en el ámbito educativo aún, como sí lo tienen otras disciplinas [we have not been able to demonstrate the social benefits of argumentation studies. We do not yet have an influence in the political sphere or in the educational sphere, as other disciplines do].”

Amaya Navarro also expressed surprise at the disconnect between people interested in the same or similar topics, but who have never heard of each other, “something that was surprising for me was that I discovered, I ‘discovered,’ theories of argumentation independently from theories of legal reasoning rather lately, which was surprising to me because I thought, ‘how is it possible that people are discussing the very same things and there’s absolutely no interaction?’”

Importantly, several interviewees connected Amaya Navarro's observation to a broader asymmetry. The asymmetry is that while scholars in the South take an active interest in and seek out scholarship from the English-speaking north, English speakers in the North do not seek out scholarship in Spanish or Portuguese from the South nearly as often. This imbalance is attributed in part to language barriers, but those barriers can themselves be seen as part of the problem in that Spanish, Portuguese, and French speaking scholars face far more pressure to learn English than English scholars face to learn a second language. One resulting consequence can be the impression that English scholarship from the north is more important or better. But as Amaya Navarro explains, “there is extremely, extremely good work done in many Latin American institutions that never reaches an audience beyond - I mean never reaches the north.” As Christopher Tindale explains, the result is often the impression that “you’ve got established scholars in the north, who have reputations and people want to listen to these people, read these people, you know the people from the south” but that “the reverse isn’t as true yet.” He also noted,

however, that there is a growing presence of South American scholars at European events, especially at the last ISSA conference in Amsterdam and reiterated that, “I haven’t seen much of the reciprocal presence yet.”

For Morado it is in part that contemporary studies on argumentation are so recent that we still do not enjoy a fully consolidated community. For example, with respect to Mexico, he comments that there is not yet a division of schools, but only of approaches to applying theories, “we are still not big enough to be able to fragment ourselves into too many little groups... the regional differences as far as I can tell is not so much a doctrinaire division of Labor, it is more of an application division of Labor.”

Douglas Niño, Professor at Universidad de Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano (University of Bogotá Jorge Tadeo Lozano), argues that in Colombia, “no hay una masa crítica de personas trabajando en un conjunto de problemas o perspectivas comunes de la argumentación [there is no critical mass of people working on a set of themes or common approaches of argumentation].” Thus, although there are events on argumentation, such as the workshops of the Colombian Society of Philosophy or the *colloquiums on argumentation* of the Universidad EAFIT, it is difficult to bring the different current perspectives together. Something similar, in his opinion, happens with different groups working on argumentation in other Latin American countries, such as Brazil and Mexico.

While there may not be a single dominant school of argumentation yet emerging in the Americas, there does seem to be a consistent interest in using the variety of available argumentation tools to address political issues. Recall, for example, the focus of argumentation education on political matters discussed in the previous section.

Morado contends, however, that in Mexico that application tends to be more abstract because, “they have an abstract idea of political action.” This means that the focus of theories and conferences remains very theoretical, avoiding any political commitments. In his words, “the funny thing is that when you propose an argumentation theory in abstract it’s much easier to agree.” But on this point, Niño argued that the relationship between argumentation studies and political situations in the academic community depends on the political commitments and interests of the researchers. Thus, commitments can vary “desde un guiño pequeño o una simpatía política hasta un activismo más fuerte [from a small wink or political sympathy to a stronger activism]” that has its own claims depending on the location. This is not to say, however, that the political situation is intrinsic to argumentation as a subject matter. Rather, political commitment in research depends to a large extent on the level of abstraction of the study. Thus, Niño considers the high level of abstraction convenient, “por una cierta salud epistémica, es orri intentar proponer conceptos que podrían usar muy diferentes orrientes para que haya un terreno común en el que cualquier corriente pueda ponerse en los zapatos del otro [for the sake of a certain epistemic health, it is better to try to propose concepts that could be used by very different groups so that there is a common ground in which any group can put itself in the shoes of the other].”

He further contends that “the call for clear standards in relation to the assessment of arguments is something that is not very popular” in Latin America.⁹ In his opinion, there is no strong interest in proposing new approaches, but rather in

applying and defending a mixture of approaches already created in contexts such as education or politics. Therefore, he argues that, “si se se quiere desarrollar teoría nueva, se requiere introducir conceptos nuevos que subsanen los problemas anteriores sobre todo si ya se han identificado problemas y vacíos [If you want to develop new theories, you need to introduce new concepts that address previous problems, especially if you have already identified problems and gaps].” Thus, if we want to better understand the argumentative context, we should have an *agenda of doxastic arrival* more than an *agenda of epistemic defensibility* (Niño and Marrero 2015). In this way, it is in the interest of young researchers in argumentation to distinguish between these agendas, as well as between descriptive and normative approaches when carrying out their projects.

The future

For Santibáñez, keeping political issues in focus is also important for the future of argumentation in the Americas. First, he contends, it is necessary to gain a place and visibility within the discipline from which argumentation is studied. Second, it is necessary to strengthen the community, which will enable us to “participar e influenciar la toma de decisiones en distintos ámbitos de la sociedad [participate in and influence decision making in different areas of society].” In this sense, although there is an interest in understanding social problems from the point of view of argumentation and communicating ideas in a friendly way (Santibáñez references Aikin and Talisse 2019), there is still much work to be done in this regard. For example, unlike the European community, we have not analyzed pandemic-related phenomena from the point of view of argumentation in the Americas.

Santibáñez believes that some research topics will be more relevant to society, such as political discourse, education, and healthcare. However, the general challenge we have is to generate capacities to connect with other current disciplines, “I truly believe that the only way to explain this human phenomenon that we call the capacity to argue is by working with others, by connecting people, by translating, by learning languages, by participating in society.” For instance, he says, we need to connect with cognitive sciences, that is, to study in a scientific way the development of argumentative competence in different subjects so that we can understand human behaviour and generate social intervention policies. Tindale argues that this connection to cognitive science can be beneficial in the study of fallacies, “Today, we need to supplement it with the wealth of material emerging from studies in Philosophy and Cognitive Psychology on the nature of false belief and the explanations of apparently irrational behaviour” (Tindale 2022, 163). We also need to connect with computational engineering to generate argument mining and argument technology. In this sense, Santibáñez encourages new researchers to recognize that “by studying argumentation they have a wonderful door to understand social problems and to influence the public debate.” Moreover, the study of argumentation not only provides the opportunity to work with other disciplines, but such work becomes necessary for articulating a full theory of the phenomenon of argumentation.

Both Hample and Tindale agree that political argumentation has been and should remain a focus, and that argumentation should continue increasing in interdisciplinarity. As Hample explained, “I would love it if a whole bunch of other people were doing [systematic empirical work], particularly if they were doing it with different instruments and we could kind of compare results. I would just be so much more confident in my own results if we had some triangulation from other people.” For Tindale, “that’s one of the strengths I see coming out of having the PhD program at Windsor being interdisciplinary - that we will attract students that have a background in social science methodology, and they can do empirical work.”

To help connect this interdisciplinary work, Santibáñez notes the challenge we have as a community to institute the systematization of a specialized argumentation bibliography. It is necessary, for example, to disseminate the translations that are being completed from different countries in the Americas and to create a library for the community. In addition, it is necessary to continue with professional translations in the four main languages of the Americas – English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French,¹⁰ and more importantly, we must make an individual effort to master these languages. He argues, “if we want to have a very nice Americas community, all of us are called to speak at least the language of the other person.”

For Morado, once we have a diverse and well interconnected community we will aim for “more ambitious projects in argumentation theory than we had in the past.” This includes a better understanding of the ideal audience and a strong theory of context that allows us to build a better theory of dialectical exchange in argumentation. This means having a more realistic and less idealized approach to such an exchange.

Thus, Morado recommends junior argumentation researchers to actively participate in academic events to find information and theoretical gaps that still need to be filled. In his words:

come to the conferences or connect to the virtual talks, participate in the meetings, and make a lot of dumb and silly questions because beginners’ questions are the best ones... you will find your curiosity rewarded every day that you work on this, so you will have a lot of fun. But don’t watch -as we say with Spanish- the bulls from the barriers. Get into the arena and grapple with the hard issues.

In a similar vein, Gonçalves-Segundo advises students to “procurar conhecer a diversidade de perspectivas sobre argumentação, de forma que eles possam se familiarizar com diferentes modos de perspectivar o objeto [learn about the diversity of perspectives on argumentation, so that they can become familiar with different ways of looking at the subject].” He also stresses that they should not shy away from the new approaches to study argumentation. In his view, to know computational techniques for data extraction and analysis, to master quantitative analysis procedures, or to know how to formulate experiments, are “oportunidades para a nova geração marcar seu espaço [opportunities for the new generation to mark its space].”

For Amaya Navarro this also means taking chances and facing the unknown:

One has to be open minded about job prospects in different places. And also open minded, not only in the sense ‘Okay, I have to go to this place, which wasn’t my first choice’ - also open minded in the sense that moving to another country to work for a

number of years is actually extremely interesting. And not only on a personal level, but also the professional level as well, so you become acquainted with different academic environments, you are exposed to different trends, different problems.

Facilitating these opportunities and setting up the resources necessary to turn the idea into a reality will require stronger connections between the North and South, something several of our interviewees expressed. Gonçalves-Segundo proposals to expand and consolidate the connection between the North and South mainly involve inter-institutional agreements and projects that provide the construction of a multilingual, multicultural, and theoretically eclectic space. For this reason, he sees the consolidation of ANA as “um passo importante para uma integração real do campo no continente [an important step towards a real integration of the field in the continent].” Morado also reflected on how we are still in a “networking stage” on the intercontinental-American level and argued that it needs developing if we want to “build a very diverse interconnected community.” He also noted, however, that this current stage is being strengthened by recent organizations (Also see [Appendix B](#) for a list of organizations):

Right now, we have many isolated groups in argumentation theory, many people interested in it and things like ANA, things like the Iberoamerican Society on Argumentation, are trying to put together all these resources and put us in contact with each other.

Shecaira shares this perspective and also considers the creation of institutional networks as a sign of development, “iniciativas como a da ANA mostram que a teoria da argumentação (que há poucas décadas era um tema amplamente ignorado por aqui) definitivamente entrou no horizonte acadêmico da região [initiatives such as ANA show that argumentation theory (which a few decades ago was a largely ignored theme in Brazil) has definitely entered the region’s academic horizon].” In this context, Santibáñez also articulated that “el esfuerzo que ustedes están realizando en ANA es extremadamente importante y por eso hay que apoyarlo [effort being made by ANA is extremely important and should be supported].”

Beyond providing networking and career advancement opportunities, there is an opportunity for organizations like ANA and the IberoAmerican Society to facilitate challenging the “taken-for-granted logics of colonialism/modernism” (Paliewicz 2022) that inevitably permeate intellectual histories originating in Europe and North-Anglo-America. More, and more productive, dialogue could help researchers explore the extent to which “argumentation itself is the thing that needs to be decolonized from the colonial/modern matrix of power that has narrowly defined what, and who, counts as reasonable” (ibid). Recent works on local theories of argument (Hample 2021) and the anthropology of argument (Tindale 2021, 2022) have raised questions about the need to develop standards and theories of argumentation that pay greater attention to the particularities of culture, space, and time. Also, recent feminist perspectives on argumentation have pointed out that the idealized rationality model of argumentation has ignored “the gendered dimensions of arguing in other cultures” (Hundleby 2021), as well as the expression of emotions such as anger by women (Palczewski and Chase 2021). Dialogue between different voices and experiences from all over the Americas is needed in these discussions. Thus, we hope that ANA,

as well as other initiatives, can play a central role in promoting Paliewicz's vision of "more polyvocal and inclusive ways [of thinking about and conducting argumentation] that account for the range of experiences, languages, and practices that shape what is/is not reasonable, just, equitable" (Paliewicz 2022).

Conclusion

This article aimed at addressing three main questions. In this conclusion, we will try to draw together the strands from above to formulate some concise answers to each of them. The first question was "What motivated the study of argumentation in the Americas?" From our research and interviews it seems that political issues were a big motivation for many argumentation scholars, but not just on a theoretical level. Across both North and South America, argumentation scholars have and continue to tie the development of argumentation studies to the importance of education. Whether it is to help students understand arguments about the war in Vietnam (Kahane 1971, cited in Johnson 2008) or to create a new ethos after a decades long dictatorship, the study of argumentation, rational persuasion, and critical thinking have been centered as crucial tools.

But despite this common interest, the scholarly influences on the development of argumentation across the Americas were not all the same. While informal logic was being developed in North America and pragma-dialectics was being developed in Europe, both were influential, but neither appear to have been dominant, in the development of argumentation in South America. However, in both North and South America, other common European influences have been notable, including from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca and Habermas. Aside from European influences, work still needs to be done to provide an account of the ideas developed solely within South America.

The second question was "What commonalities, if any, exist in argumentation studies across the Americas?" Aside from the just mentioned interest in political argumentation, it might be best to characterize the status of argumentation in the Americas by using a famous European expression, *in varietate concordia* or "united in diversity" – the motto of the European Union. Every scholar we interviewed acknowledged the current lack of a singular dominant theory or approach to argumentation in the Americas. Moreover, they often applauded the diversity of approaches that are taken, encouraging the expansion of interdisciplinarity in the field.

At the same time, however, this diversity and its encouragement may be feeding what was also observed as a significant obstacle currently facing the community, namely, the seeming disconnect or siloing of research and researchers, as well as the asymmetry in scholarship between Anglo-North and Latin-Central/South America. The combined impact of the existence of small, relatively isolated working groups with the asymmetry in language use between English and Spanish or Portuguese may be contributing to the unequal levels of attention argumentation scholarship receives. In other words, there is a hypothetical chance that one or two dominant schools of thought in the South, each with a large number of scholars working with the same theory or methodology, might make the institutions and theories better known globally. We mention this hypothetical not as a suggestion for how to move forward, but

only as part of the observation of the tension accompanying the summation of factors identified by our interviewees as contributing to the current asymmetry.

Our final question was “What should the future of argumentation studies in the Americas look like?” The answer to this question was unanimous and is one with which we fully agree – we need to continue making connections in a systematic and lasting way. This means encouraging the acquisition of second (or third or fourth!) languages. But it also means continuing to translate works and keeping a record of all the available translations. It means hosting events, even virtually, that can systematically keep scholars in contact. And, it means supporting graduate students and junior scholars in the field, ensuring that whatever discipline they approach argumentation from, they have a network of others interested in similar topics at their disposal. Doing so will not only help them through their studies and early careers, but it will also help grow the field and provide it with more power and legitimacy in the public eye. That power will in turn enable more funding and more opportunities for even more scholars throughout the Americas.

Notes

1. In line with the general convention of identifying seven global continents based on the location of continental shelves, in this article, we will most often demarcate South and North America but do so broadly with the understanding that Central America is an important and, in many ways, distinct area.
2. The interview guide is included below as Appendix A.
3. Since there are already several historical accounts of the development of argumentation in North America (e.g. Blair 2019; Hample 2016; Johnson and Blair 2000; Konishi 2009; Puppo 2019; Tindale 2022), we are here purposefully more focused on the history in South America, which has received far less attention in English texts. See sections of the Handbook of Argumentation Theory (van Eemeren et al. 2014) and Dutilh Novaes (2022, 27) for interesting exceptions.
4. Johnson (2008) positions informal logic as between what he calls “Formal Deductive Logic” (FDL) and Rhetoric and Communication. He writes, “One of the merits, I believe, of the informal logic approach to argument has been its positioning of itself between the (excessively) abstract universalist approach taken in FDL (a theory where one size fits all), and the more contextualized and nuanced approaches found in rhetoric and speech communication – which are highly context sensitive.”
5. Moving beyond the theoretical, the University of Windsor has connected students and professors of argumentation from across the Americas (and from around the world) through their OSSA conferences, visiting research positions at CRRAR, the publication of the WSIA collection, and the opening of the PhD program in Argumentation Studies.
6. Quotes from interviews conducted in Portuguese or Spanish have been translated by the authors.
7. Being born in Spain, completing her undergraduate there, completing an LL.M. and a PhD from the European University Institute, and an LL.M. and a SJD from Harvard Law School, Amaya Navarro herself can be viewed as an important European influence on legal reasoning and argumentation in the Americas.
8. In North America, Gonçalves-Segundo mentioned the works of Michael Weiler, Christopher Eisenhart, Barbara Johnstone, Douglas Park, Harvey Siegel, Ralph Johnson, Anthony Blair, Douglas Walton, and Marc Angenot. In South America, he has highlighted the works of Cristián Santibañez, María Alejandra Vitale, María de los Angeles Manassero, Constanza Padilla, and Julder Gómez.
9. Although, in this regard, it is worth referencing Carlos Gómez’s (2012) proposed criteria for intercultural argumentation in Latin America.

10. Santibáñez notes that there has been a systematic and continuous translation of argumentation literature from French into Spanish by colleagues in Argentina, but that it has not been sufficiently disseminated.

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Appendix A

Semistructured interview guides

(English)

1. Can you describe your first contact with argumentation from the North/South?
2. Can you recall any specific events that helped connect Southern and Northern argumentation scholars?
3. How do you feel about the current state of connection/collaboration between argumentation scholars?
4. How do you think the differing political situations across countries have impacted the study, or ability to study, argumentation?
5. Where do you see the future of argumentation in the Americas heading?
6. What advice would you give junior scholars looking to enter argumentation studies?
7. Which concepts in argumentation are you most interested in?
8. Do you know of any writings that articulate the history of the study of argumentation?

(Portuguese)

1. Qual foi seu primeiro contato com estudos sobre argumentação nas Américas do Norte e do Sul?

2. Houve algum evento específico que auxiliou no processo de conectar os estudiosos da argumentação do Sul com os do Norte?

3. Como você se sente sobre o atual estado de colaboração entre os estudiosos da argumentação nas Américas?

4. Como você acha que a situação política de seu país teve impacto no estudo, ou na capacidade de estudar, a argumentação?

5. Para onde você vê o futuro da argumentação nas Américas?

6. Que conselho você daria aos jovens pesquisadores que procuram se envolver com estudos de argumentação?

7. Em quais conceitos de argumentação você está mais interessado atualmente?

8. Você conhece algum escrito que articule a história do estudo da argumentação?

(Spanish)

1. ¿Puede describir su primer contacto con los estudios en argumentación en América?

2. ¿Recuerda algún evento concreto que haya contribuido a conectar a los estudiosos de la argumentación del Sur y del Norte de América?

3. ¿Qué opina del estado actual de la conexión/colaboración entre los estudiosos de la argumentación en América?

4. ¿Cómo cree que las diferentes situaciones políticas de los países de América han influido en el estudio de la argumentación, o en su capacidad para estudiarla?

5. ¿Hacia dónde cree que se dirige el futuro de la argumentación en las Américas?

6. ¿Qué consejo les daría a los jóvenes investigadores que quieren entrar en los estudios de argumentación?

7. ¿En cuáles conceptos de la argumentación está interesado?

9. ¿Conoce algún texto que articule la historia del estudio de la argumentación en América?

Appendix B

List of Argumentation Organizations and Publications

Organizations:

Academia Mexicana de Lógica (Mexican Academy of Logic) <https://amlogica.webnode.mx/>

Argumentation Network of the Americas (ANA): <https://www.argnet.org/>

Sociedad Colombiana de Filosofía (SCF) (Colombian Society of Philosophy): <https://socolfil.org/>

Sociedad Iberoamericana de Argumentación (SIBA) (Iberoamerican Society on Argumentation): <http://sibarg.org/>

Publications:

Cogency: Journal of Reasoning and Argumentation: <https://cogency.udp.cl/index.php/cogency>
Informal Logic:

https://informallogic.ca/index.php/informal_logic

Revista Eletrônica de Estudos Integrados em Discurso e Argumentação (Electronic Journal of Integrated Studies in Discourse and Argumentation) (EID&A): <http://periodicos.uesc.br/index.php/eidea/index>

Quadripartita Ratio:

<http://www.quadripartitaratio.cucsh.udg.mx/>

Tablero de disertaciones:

<https://editorial.udg.mx/catalog/category/view/id/524>

Windsor Studies in Argumentation (WSIA): <https://windsor.scholarsportal.info/omp/index.php/wsia/catalog>

Events:

Congreso Iberoamericano de Argumentación (Iberoamerican Conference on Argumentation): <https://www.eafit.edu.co/escuelas/humanidades/departamentos-academicos/departamento-humanidades/debate-critico/Paginas/i-congreso-iberoamericano-de-argumentacion.aspx>

Ontario Society for the Study of Argumentation: <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/ossaarchive/>

European Conference on Argumentation (ECA):

<https://ecargument.org/>

International Society for the Study of Argumentation

<https://ilias-argumentation.com/issa/>