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Evidence, Persuasion, Diversity – and Children

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Abstract: Does diversity include children? The Philosophy for Children movement shows children are capable of rational argument, including philosophical debate. Yet children who argue skillfully with their peers and adult facilitators may return to parents and teachers who doubt their reasoning just because of their age. What standards of evidence and methods of persuasion could permit children and adults to participate as equals in reasoned discussions beyond the classroom?

Keywords: Community of inquiry, critical pedagogy, dialogic pedagogy, discussion, diversity, education, interactionism, philosophy for children.

1. Introduction

When we consider groups of diverse individuals coming together to reason, we typically picture adults, coming to the discussion with some experience in reasoning. They may or may not be open to changing their reasoning practices to suit the group, depending on their particular background culture, academic discipline, or social practices. However, we recognize that their previous reasoning experience may justify their reluctance to change their ways, and we may proceed with appropriate caution in introducing standards and practices that are new to some members of the group. We don't typically exercise this same caution with children.

Children are presumed not to bring any extensive experience to reasoning. They acquire experience during their upbringing and education, and it is an open question what experience they should acquire. Should they learn to defer to authority? Should they learn to adopt the practices of their parents and teachers? Should they learn to think independently of the adults around them?

Since we operate in a North American context in which it is presumed children should learn to reason with some measure of independence, the question is what this reasoning should look like and how the education should proceed. Our aim is to use children as a test case for whether people should be acculturated to standard practices of reasoning, or whether practices should also be understood to emerge from each community of reasoners in accordance with the diversity of community members.

Our interest is in how to handle potential disputes about reasoning practice within a group discussion, and this takes us beyond the concurrent debate about whether group reasoning can match or improve upon individual reasoning (Dacey, 2020). In an extensively-researched paper, Dacey reviews the "interactionist" perspective on reasoning, concluding that even where suboptimal reasoning is offered in a group context, the communication may nevertheless help to counter individual reasoning biases and the overall result of the group deliberation may still meet standards for good reasoning and in some cases improve on individual reasoning. This is a significant step away from viewing the assessment of evidence, persuasion, and justification of reasoning as primarily an individual skill and responsibility. Interactionism positions reasoning as "an evolved adaptation with a social, communicative function: producing arguments to justify one's positions and evaluating the arguments of others" (Hugo Mercier and Dan Sperber, 2011, 2017, as cited by Dacey,

49). The focus is still on good reasoning results, but these results will sometimes not coincide with the best possible reasoning by each individual member of the group. Group discussion in education is a natural and effective component of improving reasoning. Dacey maintains that the "apparent tension between group-level outcomes and agent-level outcomes can be addressed by recognizing the phenomenon of agent success via group success. Typically, when a group reasons well together, its members are epistemic beneficiaries" (69).

We follow this line of reasoning in so far as it affirms that group reasoning can be an indispensable component of successful reasoning. However, Dacey's focus appears to be on groups whose members who have compatible beliefs about what argument should achieve. For example, they would all acknowledge that bias is undesirable. Our concern is with groups whose members may have divergent or incompatible beliefs about evidence or rational persuasion. For example, they may disagree about whether it is appropriate to share personal experience.

Diversity of beliefs may not be explicit. Dacey acknowledges that "dialogic environments are often influenced by structural features—such as cultural norms or technological nudges—that may be outside of members' immediate awareness or control" (63), He does not directly develop any suggestions as to how these influences may be brought to awareness or reconciled if they are inconsistent.

We've found it helpful to draw on the concept of an "argument culture", as defined by Zarefsky (2009) in "What does an Argument Culture Look like?" We use this concept to highlight how the dialogic environment impacts whether diversity is accepted by the group, and we explore how the concept of an argument culture helps one interpret children's practice of reasoning in group discussion.

When children are invited to reason in groups in the classroom, they are not assumed to be members of any specific "argument culture". To the extent that they come to share any particular set of argumentation procedures and standards of judgment, they are part of the creation of an argument culture in which they can function. We want to open the question of whether the development of an "argument culture" among children is a "co-creation" of a new argument culture or is an educational practice for membership in an existing argument culture. Raising this question in turn should indicate how groups can welcome and benefit from the individual diversity which is already present in our communities, without imposing specific argumentation practices which may disadvantage some participants. We will be looking at when and why we might want to see children as a paradigm of diversity in argument, rather than as outliers on our existing spectrum of adults who may vary in their expectations and practices.

2. Developing argument practices for adults and children

In order to build and develop an "argument culture", either for children or for adults, a core question will be whether there are specific argument practices and reasoning standards they should be encouraged to adopt. It is tempting for anyone already skilled in the practices of one argument community to assume that those practices are "best practices" and should be encouraged among learners who are new to argument. Back when informal logic in universities and Philosophy for Children in the K-12 system were just getting off the ground, in the early 1970s, there was an unequivocal answer to what standards of reasoning to use: reasoning must be based on formal logic. Practices must be based on scientific objectivity and impartiality: it is the testimony and reasoning that matters, not the sentiments and personality of the reasoner. This answer has been challenged and increasingly refined in the decades since then. The

developments have opened up the question of how to balance sufficient consistency in what we mean by "argument" against the diversity we may find across argumentation practices in different dialogical contexts.

Zarefsky (2009) explores exactly this balance in describing an "argument culture", which is not necessarily co-extensive with any community of shared ethnicity, religion, discipline, or geographical boundaries, but does engage collaboratively in argument following consistent practices. We are using "culture" and "community" almost interchangeably here. We take the "culture" to be the shared practices, and the group which shares those practices to be the "community".

In a classroom, it is clear that we do expect children to have to learn how to engage in reasoned discussion. In Philosophy for Children this learning is typically achieved through a group process. The core of Lipman's method is the community of philosophical inquiry. Children's thinking skills are developed and improved upon through dialogue on philosophical inquiry questions. The role of the adult is one of facilitator. Children are presented with stimulus material (in Lipman's program this is a reading from a philosophical novel, but stimulus material now includes picture books, film, poetry, and games) and then are asked to formulate their own questions. A question is chosen (usual by vote) and then an inquiry into the question is conducted through the children's own discussion. The child acts as an individual agent within the group, and the members of the group must take one another seriously in responding to their contributions. The adult facilitator does not tell the children how to answer the question, but helps to keep the inquiry on track by encouraging children to give and expand upon the reasons for their answers, offer examples and counter examples, and critically engage with each other's arguments. A similar technique is used in instruction in critical thinking. Such instructional groups are defined as a "Community of Inquiry" (CoI), or "Community of Philosophical Inquiry" (CPI) if the topic is philosophical. The use of the word "community" signals not only that it is a group discussion, but also that the group members have some sense of shared interests and objectives in pursuing the topic of discussion. The more cohesive and sustainable a community, the more likely it is that it can develop a shared and effective practice of argumentation: an argument culture.

A CoI/CPI is a community in both a fragile and a robust sense. It is a robust community in so far as a consistent group of children are able to explore reasoned thinking over time, without externally-imposed criteria for what they must say or think. There is no evidence they must consider other than what is presented by members of the community, and no conclusion they must be persuaded by. They can collectively evolve their standards and practices by striking a balance that works for them between encouraging maximum diversity of individual expression and maintaining the level of harmony needed to continue group discussion. The levels of harmony and trust become particularly important if a decision must be made as a result of group deliberation, because the group may have to handle significant differences in opinion or procedural preferences (Kloster 2019).

It is a fragile community in so far as the minute the discussion ends, the group disbands. Its members return to their classrooms and homes, to other "cultures" and communities – in which, typically, their teachers, parents, and other adults are the authorities. The children's ability to weigh evidence rationally and muster persuasive arguments might have no influence at all outside the classroom even if the children as individuals have internalized traditional reasoning skills that are meant to be transferable.

The strong contrast between the effective functioning of a community of children and its fragility relative to the wider communities in which the children must also operate is a valuable test case for whether argumentation culture creates a community, strengthens an existing community, or simply reflects processes and standards individuals should internalize to apply across communities of practice.

Our first question must be whether a children's Community of Inquiry meets the criteria for an argument culture. Zarefsky (2009) defines an "argument culture" as a community or a subset of a community, with shared practices which include argument at some times and places. Even across diversity, Zareksky identifies commonalities between communities that use argument to reason with one another. The six key features these communities generally share are: the presence and importance of an audience, acknowledgment and possible embrace of uncertainty, valuing conviction even in the face of uncertainty, justifying claims rather than proving them, being co-operative even if apparently adversarial in tone or procedure, and risk-taking in being willing to be shown wrong and to change their beliefs, including being willing to lose face if unsuccessful in their attempts to persuade others.

A strong argument culture is also characterized by experiencing at least five productive tensions, between: commitment and contingency, partisanship and restraint, personal conviction and sensitivity to the audience, reasonableness and subjectivity, and decision and non-closure. Differences in how communities manage these tensions explain why there are multiple argument cultures and, hence, why we need to understand arguing both within and among different cultures.

These features and tensions are jointly an ideal, but not necessarily an abstract ideal. They are achieved in some times and places, and may not look the same in all cases. His definition allows for the precise standards to vary across communities, and for the communities to be temporary as well as on-going. Diverse cultures may have distinct practices: for example, the Uzbek farmers studied by Luria (1976) could make logical inferences just as Russians would, but they refused to draw even a hypothetical inference if it had to be based on information about places they had not experienced personally, such as the distant mountains or the north of Russia. The Uzbeks and the Russians both have argument cultures, but those argument cultures differ in important respects, such as the Uzbeks' unwillingness to be persuaded by logic in the absence of evidence from their own experience.

The key step in considering the development of an argument culture is that the people who are to participate do not come to the culture as blank slates. If there can be multiple argument cultures, then individuals from one argument culture may find themselves in discussion with individuals from other cultures. Each of those individuals, children included, will come to the discussion with some background experience in what the people they live with usually do and say. Any teacher or facilitator charged with helping to develop an argument culture then faces the dilemma of whether to turn them away from their current practices towards a "better" model, or try to integrate their existing practices. Luria concluded the Uzbeks were in need of a good Russian education, which may indeed have helped them to participate in the Russian culture imposed on them as a Soviet Socialist Republic. This kind of cross-cultural participation is often what we have in mind when we educate children or train adults in improving their reasoning skills: we don't want them to be limited to functioning within some specific group or community. We want them to be able to transfer their reasoning skills to other contexts in which good argumentation may be important. However, the imposition of standards from one

community on another are no longer automatically accepted, and "cross-cultural" participation is clearly not the only aim of establishing an "argument culture".

Philosophy for Children's Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CPI) meets the criteria for an argument culture. It is a group process, so the audience is present. The use of a facilitator to guide discussion ensures that it is co-operative, claims are justified, and risk-taking and uncertainty are modelled and encouraged. How it negotiates the five "productive tensions" will be examined in the next section, in which we will consider examples that show that all five tensions are certainly experienced.

The original design of P4C leant towards helping children prepare for the existing argument culture of analytic philosophy. The educational theory Lipman used to support this method is found in Dewey, Peirce, and Vygotsky (Lipman, 2003). The general idea is that by experiencing thinking in community, children will ultimately internalize the reasoning moves used by the community. In this way, children will learn to consider different perspectives, develop the habits of considering the reasons for their beliefs, and reflect critically on their own arguments and the arguments of others. This is entirely compatible with the type of interactionism described by Dacey (2020): a group of children, not themselves expert reasoners, can nevertheless reason well as a group with the right roles and facilitation. However, the adequacy of the reasoning is judged by its conformity to standards of reasoning established by a wider community, in this case the background standards of reasoning developed over the twentieth century by logicians both formal and informal.

This is no longer the only possible interpretation of what a P4C community of inquiry is doing or should be doing. P4C became popular worldwide, and its curriculum expanded to cover the entire range from K-12, and to cover philosophical topics from ethics to aesthetics. As it became obvious that children could and did engage in cogent discussion of a wide range of philosophical topics, the P4C movement itself diverged in its expectations of discussion. Questions about the goals of philosophy for children began to arise. Were children simply practicing reasoned discussion as preparation for democratic citizenship in an adult society, for the sake of their future autonomy, to facilitate their own philosophy and philosophical experiences, or a combination of all these things and more? The question which remains as a result of this development is whether it is reasonable to consider a children's community of inquiry as an argument culture of its own and one in which a diversity of voices and community relative to reasoning practices is essential.

For example, one of the authors (Anderson) experienced a recent community of inquiry with a kindergarten class using a lesson plan created by the Philosophy Foundation (Worley and Worley, 2007). The children were discussing a scenario in which at different times, two different toys found the same boat on a pond. They each used the boat to sail around the pond. They each loved the boat. They each thought the boat belonged to them. In this case, the opening inquiry question was provided to the class: who did the boat belong to? After some initial airing of different positions, they started testing hypotheses based on various principles. One child said that when she outgrew her clothes then they didn't belong to her, they belonged to her sister. So, she suggested, the boat belonged to the person who could best fit in it because thing belong to those they fit. A classmate responded with a counter example. He said that he could fit in his parents' bed, but it didn't belong to him. Other hypotheses were offered and tested. For example, one response was that because they shared nicely, it belonged to both of them. Another child said that his mother told him everything belongs to God. So, the boat didn't belong to either toy. It must belong to God. The majority of the children in the group were five years old and had no

trouble testing universal claims and applying them to individual instances. They also listened carefully to each other and responded to each other's ideas. They were eager to discuss the issue.

In this dialogue, we can see clear examples of subjective interpretations of a concept: things belong to those they fit, or to those who will share them nicely. We also see clear examples of logical inference – if everything belongs to God, the boat must belong to God, as well as the counter-example, fitting into your parents' bed doesn't make it belong to you. The children practiced reasoning skills that are used in adult argument cultures. However, they were also creating one of their own. Their argument culture did not require closure, but did allow for the testing of personal conviction and balanced sensitivity to audience against personal conviction in their openness and patience in listening and encouraging each other to speak.

One of the authors (Kloster) experienced a similar discussion in a first year philosophy seminar. The majority of students, born and educated in Canada, were discussing ownership as if it must mean personal possession and exclusive right to use the item. An international student from Asia expressed surprise. As far as he was concerned, the sound system in his parents' living room was just as much "his" as "theirs". Neither exclusive use nor individual possession mattered when the family was the basic unit of ownership. In this seminar, the whole aim was to manage Zarefsky's "decision vs. non-closure" tension: to alert students to the existence and defensibility of world-views other than their own. The Asian student's intervention was a very welcome correction to the course of the debate, opening up ways to make the group aware of the other tensions they should be managing.

However, that student's willingness to express his view showed he had already become versed in North American group reasoning practices. He was willing to speak up in a group and to offer a personal opinion that clashed with the evident majority view. Neither of these moves is routine in Asian cultures, where deference to a teacher's expertise often inhibits any form of group discussion.

Here is a crucial problem for managing group diversity in reasoning. At the time, the instructor was "teaching reasoning" of a recognizable logical type: building into the discussion expectations for exactly the kinds of contributions she herself had learned to make in high school and university. Those principles of "critical thinking" are exactly the ones that may build in the implicit bias towards masculine norms and equal willingness to speak up that are now challenged by feminist and other scholars (Dacey, 2020). The diversity in K-12 and post-secondary classrooms means we do need to rethink which norms we are relying on and be open to very different ways of facilitating the learning of reasoning (Kloster, 2017).

Unlike the Uzbeks and other ethnic groups such as the Kpelle, who were studied precisely because they had reached adulthood without a state-imposed education, most students have already to some extent been socialized by their K-12 education into some practices that are standard in that education system. This makes it easy to underestimate their diversity of background and experience. Both authors teach in a Canadian university that welcomes international students and has a local community with at least three distinct ethnic and religious cultures: indigenous, evangelical Christians of European ethnic origin, and Sikhs of South Asian ethnic origin. The argument practices appear to be different in each culture, and different from a "Western" logical or scientific argument practice. This diversity is common in Canadian communities. When there is diversity in a community, it is arguable whether the best instructional approach is to inculcate reasoning practices and standards as already established in Canadian philosophy departments. Both authors have experienced the different participation patterns of students coming to our university from Christian high schools and from schools in

India, all of whom are far less willing to challenge authority than students educated in Canadian public schools. Students educated in India, however, typically are more comfortable with logical and scientific thinking than indigenous students may be. Christian and Sikh students are both comfortable with the idea and structure of schools, where indigenous people have good reason to be suspicious that the school system does not have their best interests at heart or respect their reasoning preferences.

Indigenous students are recognized in Canada as having not only a distinctive argument culture, but a right not to be required to conform to academic practices derived from Western European tradition. Their distinctive argument culture includes use of narrative, speaking subjectively, weighing personal experience and age heavily as evidence, and reaching decisions by consensus rather than majority vote.

All of these indigenous argument practices clash with Canadian practices in science and in the law. Science and law are both "argument cultures", similar but not identical in what evidence they accept and what practices they bring to persuasion. Indigenous ways of giving testimony, sentencing, and seeing the value of bringing a case to court at all are at odds with the Canadian legal system as it is currently. (See, for example, Ross, 2006, for an example of an Anglo-Canadian lawyer coming to terms with practice in northern Ontario communities.)

That makes it interesting to contrast the evolution of P4C in K-12 education with a different level and type of training in "argument culture". Law is in an important sense both a community of practice, and an argumentation community. It meets all Zarefsky's six key features and exercises them in dealing with all five productive tensions. It is a sustainable culture, and although it evolves, it does not allow its trainees to co-create its practices. Law students are adults who are educated in a specific mode of argument, during training in which they are not initially expected to be expert. Co-construction of knowledge may happen when law students and an instructor work through a case study, but the way they present their reasoning is governed by pre-existing standards. Legal argument is a mode with highly specific requirements for evidence, and in which the evidence needs to persuade only the judge or jury. (In contrast to the lawyers and judge, a jury can co-create its argument practices. Consensus must be reached, but the precise rules of engagement remain largely within the jury as long as they weigh evidence only as they have been instructed by the judge.) Instruction in the practice of legal argument will be teacher-led, to draw students into the existing community. Its practices are determined by its goal of even-handed application of the law. Each legal system will be in effect a different sub-community, as reflected by the need for lawyers who have qualified in one system to pass the bar again in a new system if they wish to practice there.

The contrast between education in legal argument and education in reasoning for children illustrates some potential differences in handling Zarefsky's "productive tensions". For example, the law requires that litigators be partisans for their clients, while judges must remain impartial: the impartiality of the system is achieved by permitting maximum partisanship on opposite sides, weighed by an impartial authority. Children are expected to be less than partisan but also less than impartial: to begin perhaps as partisans of their own views but to move towards impartiality as they learn more. The law requires that reasonableness dominate over subjectivity; children's discussion tolerates both.

In this section, we have explored how diverse groups can have diverse "argument cultures", and we have examined the "argument culture" of P4C as it compares to other cultural practices of argument and to education in law as an "argument culture". Thinking in terms of argument culture allows us to consider how diverse argument practices can be between and even within a

wider culture. For example, we have indicated that the community of legal reasoners and the communities of indigenous people can have difficulty working together. The examples of the kindergarden children and the Asian student discussing "ownership" are an indication that it is not obvious any single set of pre-existing reasoning standards and practices can be imposed to help settle their differences of opinion through reason. For such groups, how would we work towards a mutually-acceptable and workable definition of who owns what? In the next section, we will consider how education might handle recognition of diversity in the learners' backgrounds and experiences.

3. Dilemmas of diversity

As indicated in the previous section, a dilemma for education in reasoning is whether to encourage only some specific set of practices or whether to increase diversity by exploring new practices. In this section, we will consider how P4C suggests options for exploring new practices, and in particular, options for co-creating of reasoning practices by a group. By "co-creation", we have in mind something more than "co-construction" of knowledge. Co-construction of knowledge is a group achievement in reaching understanding on a particular topic. It is based upon collaboratively examining and weighing evidence to resolve a doubt or settle an issue (Rapanta, 2019, 9 and 11). Co-creation of reasoning permits not just the reasons but the practices of argument to vary from previous or external standards, in accordance with what the group members collectively are comfortable with as evidence and as techniques of persuasion.

Research in P4C (see Lipman, 2003) has shown that children have competence both as individual arguers (measured against traditional standards**)** and as members of a group. We would add that these groups become an argument culture of their own as defined by Zarefsky (by showing flexibility, respect for difference, ability to create trust, and be a receptive audience in ways not often experienced by children in adult argument cultures).

As indicated in the previous section, in a CPI, the children's thinking skills are developed and improved upon through dialogue on philosophical inquiry questions. One or more adults may be present in the group, but the role of an adult is one of facilitator. Children are presented with stimulus material and then are asked to formulate their own questions. A question is chosen (usually by vote) and then an inquiry into the question is conducted through the children's own discussion. The adult facilitator does not tell the children how to answer the question, but helps to keep the inquiry on track by encouraging children to give and expand upon the reasons for their answers, offer examples and counter examples, and critically engage with each other's arguments. Lipman's curriculum did include exercise sets and practice questions to use outside of the community of inquiry dialogue, however, direct teaching of critical thinking skills is generally avoided now. There are varying versions of what the facilitator may do: e.g., in some versions, the facilitator may paraphrase a child's remark to confirm understanding. In other versions, the facilitator may not paraphrase anyone else's remarks in order not to risk seeming like an authority. This illustrates the core dilemma: is the facilitator's role to guide group members to better use of adult reasoning standards, or is the facilitator's role limited strictly to social leadership such as maintaining respectful behaviour and staying on topic?

Under any type of leadership and facilitation, to the extent that this philosophical learning is done in groups, it is done by groups as much as by each individual within the group. A group is not automatically just a subset of an existing argument culture. It might be, if the group is

homogenous and if the group has been brought together for a particular purpose by that argument culture. Leadership and facilitation by an adult who is encouraging a particular set of existing argument practices would be an example of treating the group as a subset of that adult's existing argument culture. For example, a high school law class might practice debate using teacher-guided legal standards for evidence and persuasion. However, where the group is diverse, and can direct its own behavior, it can also develop its own argument culture. For example, the kindergarden class discussing ownership does not need to determine legal possession of the boat. The group is free to explore wherever discussion takes it. Group members are learning about the variety of opinions and positions on a topic. As they learn, they are free to develop their own practices for handling evidence, subject only to mutual respect. . Participants are expected only to be open to modifying what they say and how they think as a result of their participation.

In any format in which the facilitator must refrain from leading and directing, the evidence a group uses, the standards by which it is assessed, the forms of persuasion they use and the effectiveness with which they persuade others are all open to evolution as the discussion continues. This evolution can be, then, a matter of the group's choices as members react to one another's contributions. It need not reflect any particular choices of roles or types of facilitation in order to produce "the best" reasoning.

This discussion is not unique to P4C. Rapanta, in"Argument as Critically Oriented Discourse" (2019) defines "criticality" as the measure of effective argumentation practice as observed in a classroom process. Her examples are taken from biology, physics, and history, and their key features are mutual sharing of knowledge, exploring or elaborating that knowledge, or even co-creating knowledge with the teacher. Any expertise the teacher has in the subject matter is presented as an invitation to further discussion, not as a conclusion to be accepted uncritically. The challenge for the teacher in these dialogues is to rethink what it means to be an "expert" or "authority". One example shows a teacher wanting to use regulatory authority to cut short a discussion for lack of time, yet quickly conceding the legitimacy of the student's inquiry and facilitating the continuation of discussion (Rapanta 2019, 21-22). The teacher's contributions in the extended discussion hover between welcoming the students' interest in the topic and providing her own examples that could sum up what has been said, so the discussion can be ended. Rapanta considers this an example of the teacher manifesting authority not through regulation but through her use of argumentative discourse. Rapanta concludes that if children are to learn to think critically, The teacher's level of expertise in some already-approved argumentation practices (i.e. "culturally accepted" for some argument culture) must not be permitted to limit the children to only those approved practices. Even when the group focus is on co-construction of knowledge in established disciplines, the actual practices in the group can diverge from existing models

This is not a tension exclusive to groups of children in an educational context. One reason that P4C experience illuminates diversity in general is that there is a very similar concern related to groups of diverse adults who are also not expected to be skilled reasoners when they start deliberating. As noted earlier, in deliberative/"direct" democracy, groups of adult citizens engage in dialogue to provide recommendations on public policy. Typically, these adults are chosen precisely for their diversity. They must represent the range of opinions and experiences in their community, in order for it to be useful to bring them together as a manageable subset of the community. These adult participants are not required to meet all the standards of logical or scientific reasoning that may predominate in their community. They are required to hear evidence and use persuasion to reach a decision the group considers reasonable. They have to

have enough confidence in their reasoning to be willing to make their recommendations to the community at large. Their freedom to deliberate as they wish highlights the tension between preferring existing norms of argument and permitting new forms to emerge. For example, existing norms of reasoning, influenced by science, suggests that the citizens should weigh heavily the evidence provided to them by scientists and that they should be objective in weighing this evidence. Experts are often provided to present information or to be available to answer questions. However, to the despair of their expert advisors (for example, Archer, 2012), the group deliberations appear not to weigh expert advice adequately. They appear to focus on mutual persuasion. They may have group facilitators, but the facilitation is even less likely to impose explicit standards than a teacher facilitating an educational dialogue. When an expert steps in to influence the direction of the group's thinking, it can be detrimental to the functioning of the group (for example, by dominating the discussion: Sprain et al. 2012)

Archer (2012) noted that in the Oregon Citizens' Initiative Review that she observed, the citizen deliberators were critically wary of the experts, recognizing that experts were not necessarily objective. They also showed concern if the experts "didn't show enough goodwill toward them or respect for the task at hand" (57). The reasoning practices of the OCIR deliberations included "mediating interactions between experts and citizens, providing ample time for citizens' questions, and giving citizens time for discussion without experts present" (60). Archer notes that this fits John Dewey's model for citizen collaboration: "the CIR gave experts the responsibility of informing citizens and placed the onus for deliberation on the citizens themselves (60). Under these circumstances, the citizens proved more than adequately responsible for collecting and weighing scientific and statistical evidence appropriately, even though they were not explicitly instructed that they must do so.

To the extent that the citizen groups function as a community and not just as an ad hoc collection of individuals, we want to respect the development of the community as an argument culture even while its members are still learning how to deliberate. In the OCIR process, the citizens accepted the significance of expert evidence without accepting the standard "authority" role for the experts themselves, so their procedure was not the same as their facilitators might have expected. It is in effect a "co-creation" of argument practices for a diverse community.

Without disregarding the value of argument cultures which rely on existing standards of reasoning, evidence, and persuasion, we can and should also be open to hearing different reasoning voices and exploring new possibilities. Transforming a reasoning culture does not always happen strictly within an existing paradigm. At the heart of all practices of Philosophy for Children is the recognition that children are capable of reasoning together and reasoning well about both abstract and applied philosophical issues. Convincing adults that children are not only capable of thinking rationally, but of engaging in philosophy has been a struggle from the beginning of the movement. However, the children do reason collaboratively, as the citizen groups do. Moreover, the collaborative reasoning often employs standards specific to the argument culture created by the individual children in the community, just as the citizen groups employed a non-standard approach to handling expert evidence. And since children come to their reasoning practice with far less commitment to existing adult practices, they may be more likely to create new practices.

For example, in one discussion, a boy aged about 10 said he was concerned that he might be like the bully in the story the group had just read. He said there was a kid who wanted to hang out with him and his friends, but they didn't want him. The only way they get him to go away was to be mean to him. He seemed to see himself as the victim in this situation. As the other

children in the group discussed his situation, they did not question his interpretation of himself as the victim, although they did show concern for the child who was being excluded. They tried to find a solution that would be best for everyone without judging either child.

It would be very easy in a discussion like this for the facilitator to import adult standards of reasoning, and encourage the children to be more consistent in recognizing that they could not simultaneously condemn the bully in the story and accept the child in the group whose own experience turned out to be remarkably similar. Equally, with experience of adult reasoning, it is tempting to look for more objectivity by the group and by the boy himself in analysing his behaviour.

Yet if the facilitator refrains from imposing judgment and objectivity, the reasoning continues with a focus on caring. Caring is more important than consistency to this group. As the discussion continued, the focus on caring led to concrete suggestions for how to handle the problem, and these suggestions were just as workable and just as defensible as solutions that might have come from a more objective analysis. More than that, it was possible for the discussion to continue amicably. If a group member had said, "But your behaviour is exactly like the bully in the story, so you are a bully", this would have violated the group's apparent principle that they should not make inferences that would be hurtful to anyone actually present.

This might be a case of this group drifting away from acceptable standards of reasoning, or it might be a case of co-creation of a different standard. To decide the issue, we should recognize that there are two separate questions here: 1. Should the child recognize that he is indeed a bully? and 2. Should he hear it in and from this group?

At this point, applying standards of logical consistency to group members' statements connects directly to the same issue of possible inconsistency as it arises in reasoning practices by adults in different cultures. James Hamill, in *Ethno-Logic* (1990) notes that his Navajo test subjects, who were fully bilingual in English and Navajo, counted the statement "You are tall or you are short" as true in English but false in Navajo. The inconsistency is accounted for by the social unacceptability in Navajo of asserting anything directly of the person to whom one is speaking. The balance between "reasonableness and subjectivity" is different than in English. Here too, we could hypothesize that caring takes precedence over consistency.

What is important in the children's discussion is that as it actually flowed, it resulted in concrete suggestions for how this boy could engage fairly with the child he did not like. For example, they suggested the child could tell the boy he could play with them if he didn't engage in the unwanted behaviour, or that the child could speak to the teacher to find out if there were other classmates who would play with the boy. Whether the other children failed to recognize him as a bully or simply refused to openly identify him as one, they made it possible for him to see a way through his dilemma. His participation in this argument culture was not just an opportunity to develop his personal reasoning skills, but the opportunity to develop ways to improve his skills in interacting with people outside the group. The group's ability to co-create standards for their argumentation/reasoning actually allows for genuine dialogue and hearing one another's voices.

We take this example to indicate that even though the group had been brought together for training in reasoning, the function of such a group is intrinsically multifaceted. In the process of learning respectful ways to contribute to the argument, its members are also building respectful relationships and practising new social skills that contribute to the creation of their own argument culture.

Another example came from a surprising statement made by a girl in a group discussion about the book "A Gift of Nothing". This girl said in the group that she would be okay receiving a gift of nothing because friends were more important. However, when the observer (Anderson) asked the child afterwards if she'd really be happy with nothing, the girl replied, "Oh, no. That's just what I said in there." Again, this is inconsistency, and perhaps of a more problematic kind. On the one hand, it indicates that context is driving the child's behaviour rather than the child internalizing a concept of consistency. On the other hand, the observed group discussion had gone well, and to the extent that the girl's contribution was less genuine than it might have been, it served both to keep the group open to new possibilities, and also to let her test what kinds of contributions she could safely make. The group she was in was at that point only beginning to shape itself as a community. For an argument culture to operate, it has to have more than one dialogue, and it is not unreasonable that the tension between personal conviction and sensitivity to audience may change as members of the group begin to understand how open they can be with one another.

If we compare her comment to the other group's reluctance to name a bully, it may seem that in both cases the children are prone to mere surface politeness or insincerity. The facilitator might want to move the group in the direction of expressing their personal convictions more honestly. But these two examples can equally well be interpreted as setting out standards for acceptable reasoning steps that will move the inquiry forward. As one of us has argued elsewhere (Kloster, 2019) this amounts to affirming that for a group to discuss topics on which the members disagree, we cannot set reasoning standards first and leave the social aspects of reasoning, such as how to establish trust, until after we've resolved everything else. These social aspects may be a key component for differences between argument cultures that may have similar reasoning standards but very different practices to express them, as for the English and Navajo cited by Hamill.

The contrast between different options for the facilitator, and the difficulties in becoming a good facilitator, are a reminder that it begs the question to assume that the adult is "the expert" or that an expert is solely responsible for what happens in the group. The examples of discussions by diverse participants reveal that the use of expert evidence, open identification of inconsistencies or contradictions, and empathetic rather than objective responses can all be varied within a specific group without the group losing its standing as an "argument culture". Both the educational and adult citizen contexts indicate that the opportunity to evolve diverse reasoning practices is not limited only to expert reasoners.

We contend that as soon as an educator or other expert group leader becomes aware that the group is diverse, then it also becomes important to let the group members guide their own reasoning process. The development of reasoning skills and argumentation practices is about the participants, not just about the facilitator's own skills.

4. Conclusion: argument cultures as co-creation

We have argued in the preceding section that facilitating reasoning in groups of children or adults requires recognition of their diversity as individuals, and so building an argument culture is not simply a matter of introducing these reasoners to a pre-existing set of "best practices". Any newly-formed group of reasoners will provide a complex mix of expertise, background, and social practices. While in some cases it may be appropriate to direct that group towards a common set of argument practices and social practices, there will also be cases in which the

group should be free to co-create its own practices and relationships. Even inexpert reasoners can and do evolve argument cultures. Perhaps one way to honour diversity in general is to stop thinking about participation in argument as directed only towards respecting existing argument cultures, and to recognize that it can also involve developing anyone's ability to co-create argument cultures across a diversity of participants and goals. To evolve these group practices, they may need the assistance of a facilitator. However, what is crucial to good facilitation is not the imposition of the facilitator's own reasoning skill, but the facilitator's ability to lead without leading. The facilitator not only needs to rethink the nature of "authority" (Rapanta, 2019), but also to reconsider what it is to "facilitate" when there is no pre-established procedure to be facilitated. Some theorists have suggested approaching facilitation with appropriate epistemic humility in order to avoid epistemic injustice against children. Thus, facilitators are encouraged to allow the 'newness' of children's approaches to reasoning and answering philosophical questions and to develop methods that will allow children's voices to actually be heard.

The facilitator may have to practice humility and avoid giving undue weight to the facilitator's voice either as a teacher or just as an older person. In general, to help eliminate unconscious bias towards any type of person, type of contribution, or existing standard of reasoning, members of socially dominant groups may need to remember to invite contributions from others before offering their own comments, and to ensure they have understood before offering any judgments.

The key element here is being open to newness. The facilitator may have to discover new ways to encourage and develop discussion. The group members may have to look for new ways to express their thoughts and new rhythms for introducing their contributions, in order to become a functioning group that can not only explore difficult topics but where necessary agree on conclusions or recommendations.

The group process might constrain how and when a viewpoint may be expressed, but it does not – and should not – blur or transform the individual's freedom to hold a particular viewpoint unless persuaded otherwise. Diverse individuals with distinct identities contribute to the variety of viewpoints expressed in the group, yet the group has a shared identity such that the practices and deliberations of the group become the responsibility and co-creation of the group as a whole.

Where adults differ from children is in having a much clearer entitlement to participate in reasoning. If we accept that children have the ability to engage in rational thought and rational argument, that they have perspectives and criticisms, and experiences to draw on that adults may not, it follows that it is also worthwhile searching for ways to hear what they have to say for the sake of inclusion.

Even if one does not see participation in adult group reasoning as a moral demand, children have a legal right to free expression and participation that has existed in Canada at least since the ratification of the UNCRC in 1991. If we stop thinking about education in reasoning as directed only towards initiating children into adult argument cultures we can recognize that they are capable of co-creating argument cultures with each other and with adults. Co-creation of adult/child argument cultures is what will allow them the voice and participation that is their right.

We have argued that argumentation is, for children as much as for adults, a group process whose effectiveness is determined not primarily by the individual's ability to apply reasoning elsewhere but by the group's ability to deliberate using a reasoned process. If group practice in argumentation is used only to develop and assess the skills and dispositions of individual participants, then it misunderstands and misses out on a key element of what argumentation is: a

"cultural" or community practice. If the group does not conform to existing reasoning practices as measured by recognized tests, the group can take responsibility for creating, testing, and implementing its own standards of acceptable reasoning.

We are proposing that the focus of developing group argumentation will always have to include ways to promote the success of the group at meeting its own needs for respectful deliberation and decision-making. Whatever skills a person brings to argument from previous experience, these skills are likely to need modification for the specific group and context in which argument happens.

We need to recognize the depth of the problem of building a culture of practicing reason in and for a community, where the community is diverse and where it includes both adults and children. Tempting as it might be to rely on pre-existing standards for "good reasoning", it is even more important to stay open to the possibilities of co-creation of new combinations of practice and emphasis. Children, no less than adults, are important participants in this co-creation of new insights into reasoning. Using principles of accommodating diversity, a group can co-create the standards of evidence and methods of persuasion that would permit children and adults to participate as equals in reasoned discussions beyond the classroom.

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