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Reply to Andrew Young's "Argumentation Ethics and the Question of Self-Ownership"

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Abstract
In his "Argumentation Ethics and the Question of Self-Ownership" (2015), Andrew T. Young claims that, next to Hans-Hermann Hoppe's ethics of self-ownership, a subclass of systems based on every person owning part of every person also meets the criteria of being validated by the ethics of argumentation and is consistent with the requirements that an ethical system should qualify as a categorical imperative and allow for the physical survival of humanity. I argue that Young fails to understand argumentation ethics and that his alternative ethics cannot be considered categorically imperative; it is likely to stimulate rather than diminish political conflicts.

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I. Introduction

The title of Andrew Young's paper, "Argumentation Ethics and the Question of Self-Ownership," suggests that it is about argumentation ethics (also known as the argument from argumentation or the argument from reason). However, although Young's paper mentions argumentation ethics, it does not in any way depend on it and offers no analytically relevant criticism of it. He merely dismisses it as "a *gotcha!* tactic," noting, "As an economist, I find these tactics to be unproductive and distracting" (which, I am sure he will agree, is no more than an unproductive and distracting aside).

The objective of argumentation ethics is to determine which propositions—in particular, which normative propositions—are undeniable in any argumentation. This goes beyond identifying well-proven facts and formal or semantic contradictions, because an argumentation is an exchange of arguments, questions, and answers between at least two speakers who must follow certain rules and standards in asking and replying to questions in order to defend or

prove their own positions as well as to challenge or refute their opponent's positions. By and large, argumentation ethics assumes the rules and standards that define *due process* in a judicial trial, but it is concerned with all kinds of argumentations, not only with litigation in a court of law. The operative idea of argumentation ethics is that a speaker cannot, in reason, be allowed to challenge rules or facts on which he himself relies while objecting to his opponent's use of the same. In particular, a speaker should not be allowed to deny the obvious: for example, that he is making assertions, raising questions, and engaging the other speaker in an argument. Thus, apart from formal and semantic contradictions, argumentation ethics also identifies pragmatic, performative, or dialectical contradictions in a speaker's attitude and takes note of his dishonesty with respect to the ongoing argumentation itself (e.g., when he says or asks something and later denies having said or asked it).

The following elements of argumentation ethics are directly relevant to Young's paper: (1) a person's self-control is a necessary condition of his ability to engage others in argumentation; (2) exercising self-control with proper respect for others is a person's undeniable (i.e., *argumentatively undeniable*) right of self-ownership. If "libertarianism" is defined as the requirement that all persons' undeniable rights (their self-ownership in the first place) be respected, it follows that (3) any argumentatively defensible ethical system must be libertarian.

Young associates the third claim almost exclusively with the work of Hans-Hermann Hoppe.[1] Young rejects Hoppe's claim but does not argue against his defense of it. Instead, he merely presents, as a counterexample, an alternative ethical system that, in his opinion, is argumentatively validated but does not imply self-ownership (and is therefore not libertarian). If the counterexample were pertinent, it would refute Hoppe's claim. However, it is not pertinent, as I will show.

Young proposes to "generalize" from Hoppe's determinate concept (hereafter *H*) of a person's undeniable rights being based on 100 percent self-ownership (and 0 percent other-ownership) to the indeterminate concept of a person's rights being based on n percent self-ownership and $(100 - n)$ percent other-ownership. The point at

[1] Hoppe was not the first to note that *argumentation ethics* can serve to justify the core principles of the Western tradition of law: personal freedom, private property, contract, and personal accountability to be assessed in a public process of free and informed argumentation. See F. van Dun (1983).

issue is not whether for some value $0 \leq n \leq 100$, the generalized concept (hereafter *G*) is formally inconsistent. Rather, it is Young's claim to have discovered a specification of *G* that is both nonlibertarian and undeniable, so that respecting it is a "categorical imperative," binding in all conceivable circumstances on all potential arguers (i.e., on all persons—assuming that the ability to reason or argue is a mark of personhood). It is not obvious how respecting or abiding by an indeterminate concept can be a categorical imperative, but before we subject Young's assertions to critical scrutiny, a brief explanation of self-ownership is in order.

II. Self-Control, Self-Ownership, and Argumentation

Each of us has direct control over parts of our body, and no one has direct control over any part of another's body. Some bodily movements (e.g., sneezes, spasms) merely happen to a person; other movements happen because he makes them happen (e.g., he lifts his paralyzed left hand with his right hand); but there are also movements that he simply and willfully performs without first having to do something else (e.g., he raises his hand to greet or to draw the attention of another person). Similarly, each of us has direct control over parts of our mind, and no one has direct control over any part of another's mind. Some thoughts (dreams, hallucinations, and passing thoughts) merely happen to a person even when he is not thinking, but other thoughts require him to focus his mind, which he can do simply and willfully without first having to do something else. A person's powers of self-control wax and wane in the process of growing up and then growing old, but most people can and do extend and refine some of them considerably by training and exercise. They manifest themselves in movements of his body and mind that he can and does perform at will.

Although it may be possible for a person to override another's powers of self-control, he cannot make the other do or think something simply by willing him to do it. He needs to apply physical force in the form of drugs, mechanical or electromagnetic equipment, or other, less scientifically sophisticated means of distraction or torture to weaken or disable the other's powers of self-control.

In the context of argumentation, self-control is an undeniable fact, at least as far as the arguers are concerned. It is the ability to think for oneself about questions to ask and answers to give, and it is the ability to speak for oneself in making assertions, asking questions, answering questions, and evaluating answers. Assuming one

understands the distinction between participating in argumentation and pretending to do so or being forced to mouth or write down certain words, one cannot conceive of a case of argumentation in which an arguer lacks the self-controlled capabilities that distinguish a human natural person from a nonperson (e.g., a cat or a wardrobe) or an artificial person (e.g., a robot or corporation—one cannot argue with a robot, although one can argue with its manufacturers or programmers, and one cannot argue with a corporation, but one can argue with the people that own, manage, or represent it). Argumentation is a distinctly human form of interaction and communication.

The move from the *fact* of self-control to the *right* of self-ownership requires argumentation but is not problematic for humans. The simplest cases of argumentation involve only two persons, each of them referring to himself as "I" and to the other as "you." Concerning the distribution of ownership-in-persons between those two, there are several logically possible outcomes *or* conclusions of their argumentations: (a) each of us owns himself and only himself; (b) each of us owns the other but not himself; (c) each of us owns both himself and the other; (d) each of us owns parts of both of us; (e) one of us owns both himself and the other; (f) neither of us owns any part of either of us; and so on. Here, "*X* owns *Y*" is short for "*X* has the right to speak for *Y*, and *Y* has no right to say or ask anything without *X*'s permission." Notice, however, that while there are several logically possible outcomes of their argumentation, only (a) is an undeniable starting position. It and it alone makes it possible for the two persons to engage one another in an argumentation (in particular, an argumentation concerning the distribution of ownership rights in their persons). All the other positions make it impossible for them to even begin arguing with one another, for each of those positions requires a prior argument to answer one of the following questions: "Which one of us owns the other?" "Which part of me do you own, and which part of you do I own?" "What is my contribution to our discussion if nothing I can say or ask counts unless you validate it by declaring it to be really something you say or ask?" and so on.

In any argumentation, it is undeniable that "I" and "you" are persons, that "we" (the arguers) ought to respect one another as free and equal persons relative to one another, and that "we" *ought* to settle "our" differences by argumentation or argumentatively defensible methods. Moreover, "All arguers are persons and all

persons are capable of (though not necessarily skillful at) engaging others in argumentation" is analytically true. Hence, it is also undeniable that persons *ought* to settle their differences by argumentation or by argumentatively defensible methods. The reason is that a speaker's argumentative defense of a negation of this "ought" (e.g., "We may or ought to use argumentatively indefensible methods to settle our differences") entails his admission that, even if his arguments are successful, they are no more conclusive than, say, waterboarding one's opponent as a method for getting him to acknowledge the right way to resolve disagreements or conflicts. He is trapped in a pragmatic, performative, or dialectical contradiction—as if he were saying, "My argument, which I want you to take seriously, is that you should not take my argument seriously, because it is irrelevant."

Furthermore, it is undeniable that persons *ought* to respect one another as free and equal persons relative to one another. This "free and equal" condition implies noninterference with the other's powers of self-control. Thus, it is undeniable that persons ought to respect each other's self-ownership. The libertarian nonaggression principle is but one implication of the undeniable categorical imperative that proper ways to resolve disputes ought to be determined by argumentation or argumentatively validated methods among the parties to a dispute.

Due process implies that that one cannot claim the right to affirm that it is wrong for others and right for oneself to use or to threaten violence against a self-owner. Hence, it also implies that it is categorically wrong to use or to threaten violence against a self-owner. Other implications are that every person must be presumed innocent of aggression, fraud, or any other undeniable wrong until proven guilty. Thus, in the absence of conclusive evidence of their wrongdoing, people are to be considered self-owners—as it were "by default."[2] Obviously, outside the context of argumentation, self-ownership (in the sense of Hoppe's *H*) is to be construed only as a presumptive right and not as an absolute right. For example, an aggressor cannot, in reason, argue that defensive or retaliatory uses of violence against his person or property are unethical (unlawful, illegitimate) on the grounds that they violate his self-ownership: "It is wrong for you to disregard my self-ownership, but it was right for me

[2] See my papers on argumentation quoted by Andy Young, van Dun (2006; 2009), and van Dun (1983).

to disregard yours." Still, he must be presumed a self-owner as long as there is no proof that he was indeed the aggressor: that question, too, ought to be settled argumentatively, just as the question "What constitutes proof in cases of this kind?" deserves a well-argued answer. "We both argumentatively presume each other's innocence or honesty" puts no obstacle in the way of further argumentation, whereas "I presume your guilt or dishonesty" makes further argumentation impossible: "Everything you say will be presumed a lie or a cover-up of your crime—so do not think that you can prove your honesty or your innocence, for your alleged proof will also be treated as a lie or as part of a cover-up. In short: you are at my mercy, so prepare yourself to be thankful for any mercy you might receive from me."

III. Force or Reason?

Rights are metaphysical things; they do not exert physical force and are not changed by physical forces. Some people prefer to live like beasts and determine never to let a nonphysical thing stand in their way. They do not care about argumentation and would rather take or destroy what they want by whatever means or methods available to them, without being deterred by the fact that they may not have a right to do so. They have nothing to contribute when it comes to answering the question, "Which things, states of affairs, or actions can be rationally justified in an argumentation?" As it happens, however, that question is precisely the one that Young proposes to answer—and proposes to answer argumentatively. After all, he has taken the trouble to devote an academic paper to it and expressed his thanks to many people with whom he had previously discussed his views, presumably in respectful argumentations.

Unfortunately, his argumentation consists of little more than a number of assertions, which I paraphrase as follows: "Hoppe says that each person owns himself and only himself; I say that each person owns a part of every person"; "Hoppe's scheme is an undeniable Kantian categorical imperative, and so is mine." However, whether or not it is a categorical imperative, Young's scheme is certainly not undeniable. Indeed, what would count as proof for the claim, "I, Andy Young, own a part of you, Hans Hoppe"? A thief may have acquired control over part of his victim's property (e.g., his car). In that case, we say that the victim owns part of the thief's possessions—for theft does not change ownership—if the victim can prove that the car was his property and that the thief stole it.

Assuredly, we can *imagine* a situation in which Hoppe had stolen or otherwise gained control of part of Young's body or mind in a nonargumentative way. However, Young does not even try to make the case that Hoppe did such a thing. In fact, he offers no argument at all for his claim to be the owner of part of Hoppe (or anybody else). Apparently, he assumes that ownership questions cannot or should not be decided argumentatively. Are they, then, purely matters of stealth or force?

Kantian categorical imperatives should not be confused with undeniable *ought* statements. To be sure, some undeniable *ought* statements happen to be also Kantian categorical imperatives, but that is not what makes them undeniable. For example, "Every person should have the same name" might qualify as a Kantian categorical imperative—because one *can* act according to it and *can* "at the same time, will that it should become a universal law"[3]—but it is certainly not undeniable. Kantian categorical imperatives are notoriously inadequate foundations for ethical thought. At the very least, Kant's often-quoted formula is ambiguous: "can" can mean many things. Only if "can will" means something else than "can want" or "can desire" can we begin to make sense of the quoted version of the Kantian imperative. Of course, "the will" is a metaphysical concept, unlike "a want" or "a desire," and I know many economists who find metaphysical concepts "unproductive and distracting." But it was Young, a confessed economist, who appealed to Kant in defense of his claims, so he will perhaps forgive me for making these comments.

IV. Young's "Nonlibertarian Ethics"

We note that neither the libertarian nonaggression principle nor the ethics of argumentation precludes any group of persons from committing themselves, by their free and informed consent, to live and work together according to the requirements of a particular ownership scheme that deviates from libertarian self-ownership. Full-fledged communism may be a foolish idea, but self-owners have a right to enter into an agreement with consenting others to try it out. Less than full-fledged communism was in fact the historical norm of human association (e.g., in traditional communities), but it did not often go so far as to repudiate self-ownership. Members, especially young adults, usually had exit rights, the right to leave at will, to free

[3] This is quoted by Young from Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, translated by M. J. Gregor (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

themselves from onerous community obligations at the price of losing standing, influence, or connections within the community, and so on. However, some communities did turn into prisons, did reduce parts of their population to the status of slaves or human resources at the beck and call of the community leaders. Their problem is not that they are necessarily doomed to be short-lived, but that their constitution cannot be rationally justified against all potential arguers (i.e., persons, who are capable of rational self-control). Whether their leaders or the majority of their members like to admit it or not, their constitution is a lie, because it denies an undeniable fact.

If Young were merely proposing a scheme for the establishment of a new voluntary society or community, a libertarian would shrug his shoulders and say, "Go ahead, try it—but don't pretend that your agreement with consenting others gives you the right to impose your scheme on nonconsenting others." However, his claim is not so modest. He claims to have discovered a nonlibertarian scheme of ownership-of-persons that can be justified categorically—not only contingently within a particular group of like-minded people sympathetic to the same idea, but argumentatively against the objections of every person. If that is not his claim, one can only wonder why he lards his paper with references to argumentation ethics and to Hoppe's defense of 100 percent self-ownership.

Let us consider Young's scheme—he calls it a scenario—which he labels *D*: "Each man will be partially and equally owned by everyone else, while maintaining a controlling share of self-ownership." Young clarifies his meaning of the term "controlling share of self-ownership" as follows: "A man's own will to act overrides any other individual's share [of ownership in himself] taken alone" and "could only be overridden by a coalition of two or more equal other-owners of noncontrolling shares." Specifically, a controlling share is not the only share: if it were, then *D* would be equivalent to Hoppe's 100 percent self-ownership. It is also not a majority of shares, which would mean that a man owns more than 50 percent of the shares in his person and so is able to overrule any coalition of other shareholders.

D is obviously a specification of *G* defined by three additional conditions:

(1) A person's percentage share σ in his self must satisfy $\sigma < 50$ and $\sigma > 100 \cdot (1 / P)$, where P is the total number of persons in the population;

(2) Every other person owns $(100 - \sigma) / (P - 1)$ percent of that person; and

(3) $\sigma < n \cdot (100 - \sigma) / (P - 1)$, where n is the least number of people required to make a self-ownership overriding coalition of noncontrolling shares.

It should be clear that, in proposing *D*, Young takes unannounced leave of argumentation and its ethics, even though these are the ostensible presuppositions of his paper. Typically, argumentation takes place between two people; it only becomes more complex when several two-person argumentations interlock: in their discussion of some problem, *A* and *B* refer to arguments used or conclusions reached in their discussions with others or in discussions in which neither of them took part. The two-person *I*-versus-*you* case is the paradigm of argumentation. However, what does *D* mean in that case? Let's see.

(1) *A*'s percentage share σ in himself must satisfy the impossible condition $\sigma < 50$ and $\sigma > 50$ ($\sigma > 100 \cdot 1 / P$, with $P = 2$);

(2) Every other person, i.e., *B*, owns $(100 - \sigma) / (P - 1)$, i.e., $100 - \sigma$ percent of *A*; and

(3) $\sigma < n \cdot (100 - \sigma)$.

Young's problem is to find a value for n that satisfies *D* but falsifies full self-ownership (*H*). Unfortunately for him, only three values are available in a two-person setting: 0, 1, and 2. The first ($n = 0$) is impossible because it reduces condition (3) to $\sigma < 0$, that is, a negative percentage share. The second ($n = 1$) and the third ($n = 2$) reduce that condition to $\sigma < (100 - \sigma)$, respectively $\sigma < 2 \cdot (100 - \sigma)$, that is, to *B*'s share in *A* being larger than *A*'s share—which violates the condition that *A* should have a controlling share in himself. In short, *D* cannot apply to the two-person case. Therefore, regardless of its argumentative deniability, *D* cannot even be a categorical imperative, if it is understood that a categorical imperative is a maxim that one can want to be a "universal law" for populations of any size (including the cases "I alone" and "only you and I").

If we take Young's "two or more override one" condition seriously, then $n = 2$. Consequently, if $P = 4$ then σ must be larger than 25 percent and smaller than 50 percent [2/3 of $(100 - \sigma)$]. If $P = 100$ then σ must be larger than 1 percent and smaller than 1.98 percent [2/99 of $(100 - \sigma)$]. However, should we take $n = 2$ seriously? A previous version of Young's paper had a final section (now deleted together with many others) in which he asked whether 26 individuals out of 101 can "ethically aggress" against a single person, and

answered in the affirmative. Why $n = 26$? Because he began with the arbitrary assumption that a controlling share equals 20 percent—and if $P = 101$, then 26 is the smallest number of opponents whose combined shares in an individual outweigh his one controlling 20 percent share. The value of n depends on a "given" value of σ. Recalculating the example with $n = 2$ (instead of 26), we find that a controlling share cannot be more than 1.9605 percent. The value of σ depends on a "given" value of n. So, which is the independent value, n or σ? If $\sigma = 50$, then n must be 101, which is a coalition that includes the individual himself: $P = 101$. Of course, on the Hoppean $\sigma = 100$, no coalition can lawfully override any individual's self-ownership.

So, Young leaves us with an intractable problem: How and where should the *D* people find the numbers that will condition their lawful relations? Why should they agree on any number defining the size of either a "controlling share" or a "minimal overriding coalition"?

The author tells us, rightly, "*D* does not necessarily imply a libertarian ethic." He also tells us that compliance with *D* is a categorical imperative on the grounds that it (1) passes a universalization test, and (2) permits action and the survival of mankind. Surely, there are lots of rules that satisfy those conditions but are nevertheless not undeniable: mankind is a tough species; the madness it can't survive has not yet been tried. What guarantee is there that any two such "categorical" rules are mutually compatible? A scheme that leaves us with conflicting categorical imperatives leaves us with no undeniable categorical imperative at all—it sets us adrift in the armchair logician's universe of "logically possible worlds." So, it remains a mystery why anyone should consider *D* a categorical imperative for *this* world. Could it be that Young confuses the ethics of argumentation with contractarianism? Is every "social contract" a categorical imperative? No, it is not: for a contract to be categorically imperative it would have to be such that *all* persons ought to accept it, regardless of their wanting to be bound by it. Why should any person accept any particular value for n (other than P, which at present exceeds seven billion people) or σ (other than 100)?

V. Ethics as a Justification of the Status Quo?

It is doubtful that the author's scheme does not significantly impede human action. For small populations of more than two but, say, fewer than 250 people, *D* may work. However, as the size of the population increases, the number of potential coalitions increases

exponentially. If $n = 2$ is maintained, then the concept of a controlling share rapidly loses significance. *D* ends up being practically indistinguishable from "each person owns an equal share in every person," which the author explicitly characterizes as precluding action. If, however, σ (the size of the "controlling share") is fixed at a value below 50 percent, then the minimum size of a lawful opposing coalition (and therefore the cost of organizing it) increases as the population grows larger. At some point, there is no longer a practically significant difference between *D* and full self-ownership.

It is not clear whether *D* comes with a presumption in favor of majority tyranny ("an individual person should prove that there is no coalition against his undertaking a particular action that is larger than any coalition willing to let him do so") or a presumption in favor of individual liberty ("an opponent of an individual's action should prove that those against it control more shares than those in favor"). Nor is it clear whether those who express no opinion on the permissibility of an action should be presumed to side with its opponents or not. We are not told how and where either party should present its claim that it has the majority of shares in an individual. Nor are we told about the legal liability of the members of either party: Are they to be held accountable and liable for the consequences of an individual's actions that they permitted, or for the consequences of an individual's abstaining from action in compliance with their demands?

What happens to someone who acts before a vote is taken? According to Young, an individual "always has . . . first-mover status," because "a contrary coalition is costly in terms of time, effort, and information gathering." However, *D* does not guarantee immunity for opportunistically exploiting the costliness of forming an opposing coalition by an unanticipated first move. Nor should it do so: an aggressor has first-mover status, because he can choose his targets as well as the time and place of his attacks and because organizing a defensive coalition is a costly affair. Surely, we do not want immunity for all aggressors.

In any case, under *D*, all practical questions concerning an individual's life and work are to be resolved ideally and ultimately by counting noses, not by argumentation. Needless to say, counting noses is not the proper way to identify categorical imperatives or to resolve disputed questions generally—including questions about the proper way to resolve a particular dispute. "A majority has the right

(ought to be permitted) to use violence against a minority" is not an undeniable normative truth.

Young gives his game away when he warns us—albeit in a footnote—that we should not lose sight of "the analogy [of *D*] to ownership in a corporation." Supposedly, that analogy "effectively indicates that exclusive control is not presumed in justifying actions and statements rationally." This is wrong. By making an argument in the general assembly of a corporation, a person *does* demonstrate exclusive self-*control*, even if he does not thereby demonstrate exclusive *ownership* of his status as a shareholder of the corporation. That status is determined in the corporation's statutes. A "corporate decision" (legally valid under the corporation's statutes) can change his status as a shareholder of the corporation but not the fact that he is a natural person, capable of self-control and argumentation.

Young asks us to consider the case of a shareholder who owns only one out of a total of *n* corporate shares and makes a proposal in the general assembly. Then he tells us that this "does not in any way belie the fact that [the proposal] is indeed an argument," even though its "weight" is only 1 / *n*. From the point of view of the ethics of argumentation, this is irrelevant. It is true that in the general assembly, only the number of votes counts in weighing the proposal, but in an argumentation, its weight depends on whether it can be defended satisfactorily against counterarguments, and ultimately, on whether it ought to be accepted by all rational persons.

So, what is the point of the corporate analogy? It is to be found in the fact that *D* implies that every person be considered as if he were a corporation (p_i) the shares of which are held by *every* person: all natural persons are shareholders and therefore members of the general assembly of every p_i. Now, seriously, how many general assemblies can a natural person attend in his lifetime? Arguably, apart from the holder of the "controlling share" and a few of his friends and personal enemies, the most likely attendees in any assembly will be chronic meddlers, who [under *D*] are also likely to be the majority of those present to vote. If so, would those meddlers (as politicians and would-be politicians) not find it efficient to merge all those p_i into a single corporation *W* ("The World, Inc."), even if it meant that every p_i (and therefore, every person) is fully and legally owned by *W*, under the statutes and regulations of *W* drawn up and approved by those very same inveterate meddlers? Moreover, since Young assumes that *D* is a categorical imperative, any statute drawn up in conformity with *D* would be "ethical," no matter how arbitrary,

foolish, coercive, or evil it may be: "[coalition-based coercion] opens the door for the possibility of ethical government."[4] Noting these consequences, we may admit that, even though Young's scenario *D* is not argumentatively justifiable, it is a good approximation of the actual ways of thinking of most politicians in the present world. As an economist, he may find that a compliment. It concedes the "empirical relevancy" of his scenario.

At this point, the connection—if there ever was one—between argumentation ethics and the author's generalized concept of ownership-of-persons (*G*) and his scenario *D* is irretrievably lost. The ethics of argumentation applies only to natural persons: they are the only sort of persons who can engage one another in argumentation. It does not apply to artificial persons, because these are only tools of natural persons. What those natural persons, when acting as representatives of a corporation, are entitled to say or question depends entirely on the statutory and regulatory conventions of that corporation. It does not depend on the purpose and methods of argumentation, which are defined by undeniable normative principles. A human person participating in argumentation need not be "represented." He is a natural being capable of self-presentation, not an artificial construct defined by statutory or regulatory convention.

VI. Conclusion

Andrew Young does not show much understanding of the purpose and method of the uniquely human practice of argumentation. Not only does he fail to make a dent in the cases for full self-ownership and libertarian ethics, he does not even try. Instead, he presents one more arbitrary scheme for allocating ownership of persons and asserts, without argumentation, that to argue for it does not involve him in a performative self-contradiction—even though his scheme cannot apply to the standard case of person-to-person argumentation and offers no strategy for argumentatively resolving the determination of its critical variables (n and σ).

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