
Dear Professor Hoppe,

I've been meaning to write you for quite some time now, to tell you how much I enjoyed your book A Theory of Socialism and Capitalism. I think it is one of the most important books I've ever read. If I recall, in the November 1988 Hoppe symposium in Liberty, Professor Rothbard even the only one "argumentation ethics." I agreed with his comment, especially after having read the book (as well as the related articles in Free Economy and Liberty).

I am a 26-year-old postgraduate law student from Louisiana. I'm here in London for about a year, till July, getting an LL.M. in international business law at King's College London. Afterwards, I have a job, practicing corporate law, at a law firm in Houston, Texas. Living the relatively quiet student life over here, unfortunately don't have access to a word processor, hence the handwritten form of this letter.

I am also writing because I thought you might be interested in seeing a copy of this
wrote, based on the idea of egalitarianism, which is
similar in many respects to your argumentation
ethics. I had the germ for most of the ideas
therein in my first year of law school (around
1988), but, when I wrote it down finally, recently,
after having reviewed your argument, I did
use and incorporate some of your ideas, especially
in Part II of the paper, where the activity of
arguing is discussed. Also, the "universalizability"
requirement, which you so stiffly insist is so incorporated
into my Part III A.

For a quick summary of my argument, see
the Conclusion, Part IV. Also, in footnote, I
attempt to explain the difference between my approach
and yours.

I have submitted the article for publication
to several journals, magazines etc., but I do not,
frankly, expect it to be published. Thus I
decided to send a copy to you, for your own
edification.

Before I close, I would like to mention a thought
to you. Your argument seems to show why no
one could disagree, argumentatively, with the claim
that all individuals have a right to self-ownership
and a right to homestead. But it seems to
me that perhaps there is another interesting question,
concerning the source of right. I'm not so sure
if your theory attempts to explore this seemingly
separate issue of why we have right--it
instead shows that we have rights.
For example, one may show that consciousness is automatic — or so many deny his consciousness without contradicting himself. Yet this does not explain why we are conscious. Later scientific experiments might then shed light on this further question — the structure and nature of the brain, the course of evolution, etc., help us to understand the way of consciousness.

Similarly, I wonder if we could wonder why, and how, men have rights, aside from your argumentation-ethic-defense of the fact that we have rights. Well, I just wanted to call this idea to your attention. Perhaps this question I am posing may be said to have already been answered by your argumentation-argument; maybe there is no difference between showing that men have rights, and why they have them, unlike in the consciousness example shown above — perhaps because rights-talk is normative, whereas consciousness-talk is not.

I do not request a reply, as I understand how busy one's schedule can get. I did want to tell you how much I admired your work, and to mention these related ideas to you. Of course, I would be happy to discuss any of the further. In any event, good luck with your pursuits, and have a great 1992!

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]