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Legal Arguments in Interdisciplinary Argumentation¹

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ABSTRACT: Legal argumentation theorists have not predominantly so far been engaged in interdisciplinary argumentation. Instead, they have rather remained safely within their own discipline. However, when there is a need to justify a decision involving two or more disciplines, and in a contemporary world this is all the more so, a broader perspective is unavoidable. One example of such can be interdisciplinary argumentation joining law and economics.

KEYWORDS:

1. INTRODUCTION

Legal argumentation is an old, centuries-old field of law, but one that is constantly confronted with the particular challenges of the new era. Thus, traditionally, theorists of legal argumentation have not engaged substantively with other disciplines. At most, they have drawn on new insights from general argumentation theory and applied them to legal argumentation.

The contemporary interest in interdisciplinarity also brings new challenges to the field of legal argumentation. Legal argumentation has to confront arguments from other disciplines and together with them form a new whole. This can be a relatively simple integration of two disciplines or a complex interaction and integration of a large number of disciplines.

In this paper, I first discuss the meaning of interdisciplinarity, together with the advantages and challenges it brings in contemporary science as well as in more practical fields. I then discuss what interdisciplinarity actually is and how it differs from other related concepts. This is followed by a discussion of the interdisciplinary argument itself, where a legal argument is linked to an argument from another discipline, which can be simple, where two disciplines are linked (in our case law and economics), or complex, where several disciplines are linked (as illustrated in the field of trademarks). After this, I discuss the importance of critical questions, which are important to further test the premises when it comes to informal argumentation, as this necessarily leaves room for further reflection on the premises.

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2. THE IMPORTANCE OF INTERDISCIPLINARITY, ITS ADVANTAGES, AND CHALLENGES

Interdisciplinarity is a quite popular word today. In the area of scientific research, it is often maintained that different sciences have gone too far with their specialization in the past so scientists from different disciplines are no longer able to understand one another because they speak very different languages. Thus, interdisciplinarity comes as a promise to connect them, coming from different disciplines, to look at a problem from different angles but trying to provide common (holistic) solutions, instead of their findings being merely fragmented and kept “safely” within the ivory towers of their own disciplines. The same logic of interdisciplinarity would also apply to practical problems, where, e.g., engineers and other specialists in practice with different backgrounds would study the potential impacts of constructing a new road (involving at least construction, transportation, environmental, labor issues, etc.).

Interdisciplinary argumentation integrates arguments dealing with ideas, methodologies, and perspectives from multiple academic disciplines to address complex problems and generate innovative solutions. This approach recognizes that many real-world challenges cannot be adequately understood or solved by a single discipline alone, and therefore, requires collaboration between experts from diverse fields (Thompson Klein 1991; Thompson Klein 1996; Gibbons et al. 1994; Repko 2011).

The reasons or drivers for interdisciplinarity, in the modern world, are said to be the following: (1) the complexity of nature, society, and ourselves; (2) the complexity of the globalized workplace; (3) the need for systems thinking and contextual thinking; (4) the changing nature of university research; (5) the public world and its pressing needs; and (6) a knowledge society’s need for both disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity. The advantages of interdisciplinary approaches are allegedly to enable more comprehensive, perspective-oriented views, and broader or holistic pictures of a problem that make possible integrated solutions to the problem (Repko, Szostak, and Buchberger 2016). Moreover, it encourages a holistic understanding of problems by drawing on the strengths of different disciplines. For example, tackling climate change requires insights from environmental science, economics, sociology, and policy studies. Also, it promotes creativity and innovation as novel connections between disciplines can lead to breakthroughs. Finally, it reflects the interconnected nature of the world and supports a more comprehensive analysis of issues (Thompson Klein 1990; Thompson Klein 1996; Gibbons et al. 1994; Repko 2012).

Challenges of interdisciplinarity are usually portrayed as shallowness or relative value of its findings in contrast to more absolute values given by disciplines (Repko, Szostak, and Buchberger 2016). Communication barriers can arise due to differing terminologies and methodologies across disciplines. Additionally, maintaining rigor and depth in multiple fields can be demanding, requiring individuals to balance breadth and depth of knowledge. Moreover, power dynamics might emerge, with one discipline dominating the discussion or certain viewpoints being marginalized (Thompson Klein 1990; Thompson Klein 1996; Gibbons et al. 1994; Repko 2012).

Given that disciplinarity could be understood as intra-disciplinarity, where every scientific discipline develops its own rules to deal with a fragmented problem, what is interdisciplinarity about and how can it be defined?

A language dictionary defines it as “involving two or more academic, scientific, or artistic disciplines” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus 2020: 607). But that definition is only helpful to indicate that two or more disciplines are engaged in a common enterprise but nothing about the manner of their engagement. A more precise definition is provided by Repko, Szostak, and Buchberger (2016: 100): “Interdisciplinary studies is a cognitive process by which individuals or groups draw on disciplinary perspectives and integrate their insights and modes of thinking to advance their understanding of a complex problem with the goal of applying the understanding to a real-world problem.” Or, see the following definition provided by two of the same authors: “Interdisciplinarity studies a complex problem by drawing on disciplinary insights and integrating them. By employing a research process that subsumes the methods of the relevant disciplines, interdisciplinary work does not privilege any particular disciplinary method or theory.” (Repko, Szostak 2017: 75).

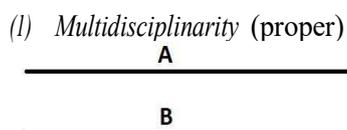
3. TERMINOLOGICAL AND CONCEPTUAL ISSUES

To better conceptually understand the meaning of interdisciplinarity, we may compare it with multidisciplinary, and transdisciplinarity,² of which the first seems to be more interesting for such comparison than the latter. “Multidisciplinary studies a topic from the perspective of several disciplines at one time but makes no attempt to integrate their insights. Multidisciplinary approaches tend to be dominated by the method and theory preferred by the home discipline.” (Repko, Szostak 2017, p. 75).

Thus, the *differentia specifica* of the above comparison between interdisciplinarity and multidisciplinary is integration (of various disciplines), and the lack of it in multidisciplinary approaches. But what precisely is meant by integration, or how intensively need two or more disciplines be merged together in order to be understood as integrated? The below text is to provide some answers to that.

The meaning of integrate is: “to form, coordinate, or blend into a functioning whole; to incorporate into a larger union” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary and Thesaurus 2020: 605). This new whole is composed of (previous) parts that need to be always present in any such interdisciplinary representation.

Below are presented elements (1) and (4) of the figure provided by Repko, Szostak, and Buchberger (2016, p. 100) added by my additional combinations (2) and (3):



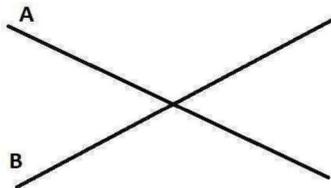
The meaning of multidisciplinary is when two, or more, disciplines (e.g. A and B) are viewed together but are never integrated, which would be the case, on the contrary,

² “Transdisciplinarity is best understood as a type of interdisciplinarity that stresses team research, a case study approach, and especially integrating not just across disciplines but also beyond the academy.” (Repko, Szostak 2017: 75).

where two distinct disciplines discuss a common problem from their different perspectives. That common problem would represent their integration.

As an example of multidisciplinary, Repko, Szostak, and Buchgerger (2016, p. 105-107) use the metaphor of a bowl of fruit where different fruits (such as apples, pears, bananas, grapes, representing disciplines A, B, C, and D) are put side by side. However, I believe that is not a good metaphor to depict that concept. In my opinion, in a bowl of fruit A, B, C, and D meet this being their common point. That seems to be more than multidisciplinary. It has some interdisciplinary elements as the bowl of fruit is to some extent their integration as, e.g., fruit nicely offered to a visitor. A clearly proper multidisciplinary would be when the fruits A-D would be randomly scattered on the table, or put in different boxes randomly placed to each other in a storage. Thus, the figure (2) below represents improper multidisciplinary.

(2) *Multidisciplinary* (improper – meeting at a common point)



(3) *Fullinterdisciplinarity*



Figure 3 above represents full interdisciplinarity, where disciplines lose their separate characteristics as distinct disciplines and are merged into a higher whole. What occurs is their fully-fledged integration. A metaphor for that used by Repko, Szostak, and Buchgerger (2016, pp. 105-107) is a smoothie that is made out of a bowl of fruit. Frankly, this kind of integration, in which scientific disciplines would lose their identity along with their basic characteristic and laws (principles and rules) is hard to imagine. Rather, in modern interdisciplinary studies, pieces of the relevant disciplines are taken together with all the basic characteristics of their own disciplines, and combined into a new whole. Examples of interdisciplinarity studies are: area studies, gerontology, cognitive studies, neuroscience, medical technology, and international relations (Repko, Szostak, Buchgerger (2016, p. 84), as well as law and real estate management, Slovene and international studies, management and law, law and technology, etc.

Thus, the below figure (4) seems to better reflect what should proceed in academic disciplinarity, where disciplines must retain their essential properties when they are as such integrated into a higher whole. For example, law remains law even when joined with management or technology. What is usually done in such studies is that a part of law being relevant for another discipline is taken and joined with some basic postulates of the other discipline.

(4) *Partial interdisciplinarity*



Moreover, a genuine interdisciplinary argument presupposes relative equality between different disciplines' arguments without some of them being dominant in relation to other disciplines. This implies, first, an inductive relation between two or more different premises, with each of the disciplines represented by such premises, where the premises of, e.g., two distinct disciplines more or less equally lead to a common conclusion being their integration. In such, there should be no dominant discipline. For example, if we want to launch a new trademark, both economic and legal arguments are considered, which means that the trademark should at the same time be profitable and lawful. To keep with the concept of a genuine interdisciplinary argument, second, in a deductive argument, the arguments from all the disciplines must appear at the same level (e.g. being part of the upper premise), as it follows in the continuation of this paper with the examples of both types of interdisciplinary arguments.

However, if one of the disciplines is subordinated to the other, we deal with a quasi interdisciplinary argument. This would be the case in an inductive argument, in which the argument of one discipline will be way more important for the conclusion than the argument of the other discipline. The same would appear in a deductive argument, where the argument from one discipline would appear in the upper premise, while the argument from the other discipline in the lower premise.

4. LEGAL ARGUMENTS IN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARGUMENTATION (TRADEMARK LAW)

4.1 *Generally on interdisciplinary argumentation*

Interdisciplinary argumentation can be defined as argumentation in which arguments from at least two disciplines are simultaneously invoked to support (integrated) standpoints concerning a common point. Thus, interdisciplinary arguments can be simple, consisting of only two different disciplines, or complex, including a number of different disciplines. In the framework of such, disciplinary perspectives in the form of their major goals need to be simultaneously accommodated, these being either general (values or principles) or specific (specific tasks).

In this paper, I deal with the area of trademarks, which is the interdisciplinary common point. At the beginning, I present an analysis of simple interdisciplinary argumentation, in which marketing and law as different disciplines are joined with their major goals being engaging customers (by the effective advertising of a trademark) and lawfulness (following various legal requirements), with placing a trademark on the market being the specific task in this framework. In the continuation, we will see how interdisciplinary argumentation, where disciplines appear as "tribes with their own language and context" (Repko, Szostak 2017), differs in this situation from (intra-) disciplinary argumentation.

4.2 (Intra-)disciplinary arguments

Interdisciplinarity is about a common project, not the disciplines per se. Still, it builds on the disciplines and does not supersede them. What is taken from the ambit of a discipline, should fall into its “perspective,” this being specific elements that are typical for the discipline, such as its particular principles, goals, rules, methods, procedures, etc. (Repko, Szostak 2017). In this project, I picked the most specific goals of the disciplines as their typical perspectives and applied them to their specific task of launching a new trademark. What is understood as a task in this project, can also be called a common project from the interdisciplinary terminology.

Now I turn to the problems associated with the task of this project, and how can be discussed within specific disciplines of marketing and law concerning their most typical goals. I begin with the marketing argument.

In the relevant literature, marketing is defined in the following manner: “engaging customers and managing profitable customer relationships,” as well as “creating value for customers to capture value from customers in return” (Kotler, Armstrong 2017, p. 26). Moreover, it could also be defined as “the management process which identifies, anticipates, and supplies customer requirements efficiently and profitably” (Blythe 2006, p. 2). What seems to be important from the above definitions, which I extract for the purpose of the major general of marketing, is engaging customers effectively.

We need to use the above-mentioned for our specific task which is placing the trademark on the market. Thus, what follows below is the general structure of the marketing argument with a specific task in our case.

Diagram1: The general structure of a marketing argument

- MP: Effective TMs are successful with customers.
- Mp: A is effective.
 - Mp1: Evina TM very much resembles Evian TM.
 - Mp2: Everyone loves Evian.
- C: A is successful* with customers.

*Successful = persuasive

This argument could also be presented in a very rough multimodal³-visual-only form. See below Figure 1.

Figure 1: A visual argument demonstrating that the left TM is quite effective from the view of marketing but is potentially unlawful

³ No matter how rhetorically powerful such argument may be, it is not my intention in this paper to argue about its multimodal dimensions.



Source: https://www.facebook.com/evinavoda/?locale=sl_SI
Source: <https://trgovina.mercator.si/market/izdelek/863895/negazirana-izvirna-voda-evian-0-5-l>

We can see above a hypothetical argument, or it could actually (have) be(en) a real argument at some point, when the North Macedonian producer of Evina, mineral water, was considering its new trademark that very much resembled Evian, the famous French mineral water.⁴ It is obvious that the Evina trademark, a figurative trademark with word elements, is very likely to be confusing for customers, who would definitely know Evian as a world-famous trademark. However, from the marketing point of view, mistaking Evina for Evian would in the short run be effective as the company would sell more Evina bottles to customers who would buy them happily by thinking they are buying Evian.

But from the legal point of view, that could be problematic, even unlawful because new trademarks must not confuse customers with previous ones. But that is another type of argument, which can have different goals than arguments from another discipline. Such different, often diverging, goals, in this case, effectiveness versus lawfulness, can only be accommodated in an interdisciplinary argument, which we will see in the continuation. But now let us see, the following (intra-disciplinary) legal argument in our case:

Diagram 2: The general structure of a legal argument

- MP: TMs that confuse customers are legally invalid.
 - MP1: Identical or too similar (the Sabel test: visual, aural + conceptual analysis)
- Mp: A confuses customers.
- C: A is not a legally valid TM.

Suppose the creators of the Evina TM realized the legal problem with the TM's words being written in Latin, because that would too much resemble Evian and be unlawful. Therefore, they decided to write the name Evian in Cyrillic, which as a matter of fact is also the official script in (predominantly Orthodox) North Macedonia. That could perhaps be legally valid as it is hardly imagined that customers would confuse Evina written in Cyrillic with Evian (in Latin). People from outside the Orthodox countries would

⁴ I would like to thank Siniša Zarić, a professor from the University of Belgrade, for drawing my attention to this trademark.

generally not understand it, the only problem could be with customers from these countries thinking that Evian was transcribed into their script (i.e. Cyrillic). However, that is not the way the trademark system works.

See below, in Figure 2, a very similar visual argument to the one in Figure 1 but changed a bit but perhaps enough to pass the legality muster.

Figure 2: A visual argument demonstrating that the left TM is less effective than the one in Figure 1, but is, on the other hand, potentially lawful



Source: https://www.facebook.com/evinavoda/?locale=sl_SI

Source: <https://trgovina.mercator.si/market/izdelek/863895/negazirana-izvirna-voda-evian-0-5-l>

The idea in the background of this analysis is that in interdisciplinary argumentation, we need to accommodate the goals of distinct disciplines if they appear to be divergent concerning specific tasks. It is likely that the persuasive strength of Evina TM is now in Cyrillic weaker than before, but it is more likely that it would be lawful. Thereby, I enter a discussion about the logical structure of interdisciplinary arguments.

5. INTERDISCIPLINARY ARGUMENTS

5.1 *Simple interdisciplinary arguments*

In interdisciplinary arguments, we need to accommodate the goals of (at least two) different disciplines, which can often be diverging, as we saw above in our case of the trademark following the goals of the two disciplines: marketing and law. To have an interdisciplinary argument, their goals must continue to be presented all the time. One discipline('s goals) should not be superior to another discipline('s goals). Therefore, the logical relationship between the goals should be conjunctive – meaning that both goals must simultaneously be satisfied, regardless of the extent of their satisfaction. The level of achieving a particular goal might be different for a specific discipline – we saw before that the marketing goal needed to be accommodated with the legal goal, and it thus became less effective than before.

Below we can see the structure of a simple interdisciplinary argument concerning a trademark, in which the goals of both marketing and law are jointly considered.

Diagram3: The general structure of a simple interdisciplinary argument

- MP: From the interdisciplinary perspective of marketing and law, a TM must be both effective with customers and lawful to be successful.
- Mp: B is both effective with customers and lawful.
- C: B is a successful TM, from the interdisciplinary perspective of marketing and law.

When we join more than two disciplines in interdisciplinary arguments, the argument becomes a complex one. The major problem of complexity in this regard brings a greater problem for the accommodation of often diverging goals of the disciplines with the ambition to join them in a complex interdisciplinary argument. See an example of such below.

5.2 *Complex interdisciplinary arguments*

For a complex interdisciplinary argument, I use the same example of the Evina trademark. This time, I want to analyze it not only from the perspectives of marketing and law but also from some other disciplines, such as economics, management, and design (art). The advantage of adding three additional disciplines contributes to a more comprehensive dealing with a specific problem, the result of such analysis promises a more holistic response to the initial question of which trademark is (more) successful. The problem that such complexity brings obviously deals with a potentially greater problem to mutually accommodate different goals that these additional disciplines bring.

Before building the structure of such a complex interdisciplinary argument, I need to shortly introduce the (major) goals of the additional disciplines of economics, management, and design.

First, one of the main goals of economic analysis is surely profit maximization (Eatwell, Milgate, Newman 1987, p. 1.5). In the context of our trademark, this would be whether such a trademark will sell the products represented by it well. Further, one of the definitions of management is “a process of getting things done, effectively and efficiently, with and through other people” (Robbins, Coulter, et al. 2019, p. 32). Generally, it deals with the coordination and administration of tasks to be done. Finally, one of the design’s goals is also aesthetic, apart from its philosophical, sensory, emotional, or political goals (Ambrose, Harris, Ball 2019, p. 9).

Below we can see what would be the structure of a complex interdisciplinary argument, in which several goals of the disciplines joined must be followed that often diverge. Its framework, marketing and legal main goals are joined with the (additional) main goals of economics, management, and design. Thus, we deal with effectiveness with customers, lawfulness, profitability, (good) administration, and aesthetics,

Diagram4: The general structure of a complex interdisciplinary argument

- MP: A TM is successful if it is effective with customers, lawful, profitable, well- managed, and aesthetic.
- Mp: B is effective with customers, lawful, profitable, well-managed, and aesthetic e.
- C: The TM is successful.

6. CRITICAL QUESTIONS AND EVALUATION OF THE INTERDISCIPLINARY ARGUMENT: ADDING DISCIPLINARY ADEQUACY, MINIMAL-SCOPE, AND OPTIMIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Critical questions have a “heuristic role in the dialectical evaluation of arguments.” They ensure the acceptability of a schematic argument in the sense that all the questions with respect to that argument are satisfactorily answered (Walton 2003, p. 31). They provide the justificatory role of argumentation schemes (Walton, Godden 2005, pp. 476-478), which can be defined as “stereotypical patterns of defeasible reasoning that typically occur in common, everyday arguments” (Walton 1990). The diagrams used in this paper could be understood as argumentation schemes, however, for the reason of simplicity, I use the critical questions only with respect to the last argumentation scheme of a complex interdisciplinary argument. Critical questions are important because answering them enables not only acceptable⁵ but also better dialectical arguments. In my view, critical questions in fact represent a kind of “sub-premises” to the main premises, the role of which is to fill in the blank space between the premises. If the main premises are supplemented with critical questions’ replies as sub-premises to the main premises, the argument will become more transparent and comprehensible. That seems to be specifically important in law, where we typically deal with deductive syllogistic arguments that can be particularly unclear.

Concerning critical questions, I invoke those dealing with the requirements of a relevant discipline, the adequacy (minimum scope) of a discipline joined in the interdisciplinary argument, to what extent the disciplines are presented in the interdisciplinary argument, the disciplines’ integration, their common ground (Repko, Szostak 2017), and the level of optimization for the disciplines joined that needs to be ensured to have a good interdisciplinary argument. Below I initially discuss the first four requirements as conditions for an acceptable interdisciplinary argument, and then also the optimization requirement as a condition for a strong(er) interdisciplinary argument. After that, what follows is the presentation of the structure of a comprehensive interdisciplinary argumentation scheme again, this time accompanied with the critical questions.

In order to have an acceptable interdisciplinary argument, the problem or issue or intellectual question, in our terminology the “task,” must be addressed by a (i) relevant discipline or such disciplines if we want to have an interdisciplinary argument. The launching of a trademark definitely includes marketing as a relevant discipline, which does not apply to, e.g. biology that has nothing to do with the trademark, all the more if the products sold under that trademark are skies. Furthermore, (ii) the adequacy (or minimum

⁵ Following the (informal-logic's) rules of acceptability, relevance, and sufficiency (Groarke, Tindale 2013).

scope) of a discipline to be presented signifies the minimal level of the disciplinary perspectives involved in an interdisciplinary argument such that, in a predominant part, we still deal with that particular discipline. Then, (iii) the requirement of integration entails that the substance of an interdisciplinary argument should be something integrative, beyond the content of the mere disciplines. Finally, such interdisciplinary argument must have a (iv) common ground, like a red thread for all the disciplines like, in our case, the project of launching a trademark on the market.

The above-said seem to be the minimum requirements for an interdisciplinary argument to be acceptable. Our next condition, i.e. (v) optimization, deals with acceptable arguments that are stronger or weaker.

In the framework of disciplinary argumentation, the goals of specific disciplines within such could also be understood as optimization requirements. For example, if in marketing we like to be effective with customers, we want to be as effective as possible. In the same vein, if we want to make a good legal (i.e. lawful) decision, we would like it to be as good as possible. That, I guess, could apply to all the disciplines and their major goals joined within an interdisciplinary argument.

In the area of legal theory, the idea of optimization requirements is associated with Dworkin's consideration of the difference between legal rules and legal principles, in which the rules work in an all-or-nothing manner whereas the principles as optimization requirements: more or less (Dworkin 1987). That corresponds to Alexy's idea that constitutional rights have a similar structure as legal principles and also work as optimization requirements (Alexy 2002 and 2000). We want them to be realized as much as possible. This is evident in the event of the argument of weight (Alexy 2002), where in the case of a conflict between two fundamental rights (or principles) we want one of them to be realized as much as possible against the other right. For example, in a freedom of expression context, we want to secure an individual's right to privacy as much as possible against the public exposure of such a person by journalists. However, with absolutely public persons, it is the other way around.

The above idea applied to legal principles or fundamental rights could also work with disciplinary goals. They seem to have a similar abstract and general structure like principles. There are many different levels at which a certain goal can be realized. When we launch a trademark we would like to make as much profit (the economic goal) as possible with the products sold under the trademark. Furthermore, from a marketing point of view, we would like to be as effective as possible with the customers. Likewise, the management of a trademark could be better or worse. So the aesthetic component and, finally, the legal aspect. Although it is often hard to maintain that some legal solutions are more lawful than others when dealing with legal rules (having the all-or-nothing structure: it is legal or it is not), it could be said that some are better than others from the view of legal principles, goals or values. Many legal solutions could be better or worse from the view of legal certainty or justice as supreme legal values.

This section concludes with the general structure of our complex interdisciplinary argument, or its argument scheme, which is joined with the five types of critical questions discussed above.

Diagram5: The general structure of a complex interdisciplinary argument with critical questions

- MP: A TM is successful if it is effective with customers, lawful, profitable, well- managed, and aesthetic.
- Mp: B is effective with customers, lawful, profitable, well-managed, and aesthetic e.
- C: The TM is successful.

- Critical questions:
 - QC1: Is the discipline (together with its major goal) relevant to the common problem in this argument?
 - QC2: Is the discipline adequately represented in the argument?
 - QC3: Does the argument represent integration in relation to the disciplines?
 - CQ4: Is the response to the common problem also a common ground of the disciplines?
 - CQ5: How optimally are the disciplines represented in the argument?

6. CONCLUSION

Given the scarcity of debates on interdisciplinary argumentation, especially those focusing on legal argumentation, the present discussion is introductory in nature. While theorists of argumentation often include different disciplines in their discussions, this is usually not schematic enough to discern the relationships between disciplines and their relevance to the final conclusion.

The general aim of the paper was to present an interdisciplinary argument, which also consists of a legal argument, and its relationship to other arguments. The main conclusions of the paper are as follows: (i) An interdisciplinary argument requires an equivalent (adapted or conjunctive) relationship between disciplines, which is often not the case when legal arguments are added to the arguments of other disciplines in order to dominate such an aggregate. But in the latter case, this would be quasi-interdisciplinarity. Whether there is a genuine interdisciplinary relationship in a particular argument is tested by asking critical questions about the relevance of the discipline involved in the interdisciplinary argument, its sufficient representation, the integration of several disciplines, their common denominator, and their optimal integration. Another important observation regarding the paper is that (ii) in an interdisciplinary argument, disciplines are present with their own characteristics and regularities and should not be relativized against other disciplines.

I hope that this debate will stimulate further research in this area. Sooner or later, this will even be necessary, because in an increasingly interconnected world, the importance of interdisciplinarity only seems set to grow. In particular, it should be explored in more detail what the additional conditions of interdisciplinarity mean in terms of the relevance of a discipline, its sufficient representation, the integration of disciplines, their common denominator, and their optimal inclusion from the general part of the debate to the specific part of the research dealing with, e.g., trademarks.

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