***Claim: The best test of an argument is its ability to convince someone with an opposing viewpoint.***

***Reason: Only by being forced to defend an idea against the doubts and contrasting views of others does one really discover the value of that idea.***

***Mahsa Hazrati - Homework 6***

The author asserts that changing the opinion of those with dissenting opinions is the best way to evaluate an argument because it makes one to support his view, thereby discovering the value of his idea. I agree with both claim and reason as I am of the idea that convincing dissidents can be a good touchstone for an argument, but there two chief stipulations I would like to apply; the personality of the debaters and the topic of the argument.

First of all, testing an argument via convincing opponents highly hinges upon the personality of the people on both sides of the argument. While the opponents should have the same level of knowledge and background to be able to perceive the reasoning of the argument fully, the one who declares the argument should be confident about his idea and not be manipulated easily. Added to this, both sides of the argument should be open to new ideas and embrace the deficiencies of their reasoning since even the most compelling reasons and evidences would be in vain to change the opinion of obstinate and radical people, who are not willing to listen and ponder about dissenting viewpoints. In my opinion, the enumerated personalities are prerequisite for a healthy argument, eschewing any extremist opinions and partialities.

Even if we assume that the people have the abovementioned requirements, I do not conceive this method as the best approach of validating for all arguments. Convincing the opponents can be a good way, provided that the field in which the argument is being held is bounded up with logic. In other words, if the projected argument is able to be proved by adducing examples and evidence, the ability to convince dissenting ideas is of high importance. However, there are arguments that are based on intuition and not possible to be proved by documents, so that people may held different views on them. In other words, in these cases convincing a dissident is not an apt criterion to apply, for ideas differ from person to person and are all worthy.

Now, if the people on the both sides of the argument have the required personalities and if the argument revolves around a logical topic, the question is whether defending an idea is the way to discover its value. I find this a sound reasoning and I think by defending an idea one can discover its value either on the scale of the society or at a personal level. An invaluable idea for a society is the pragmatic one which can solve a problem and make it a better place to live in, evolving life standards of the people; thus convincing them to apply an idea into their lives would give a sense of effectiveness .At a personal level, it can be the earned accolade and the sense of achievement and conquering one gets through convincing people. Should one be successful at defending his ideas, assuaging the qualms, and putting his theory into practice, he will discover the value of the idea at the both levels.

To conclude, if an argument is held with peers at the same level of erudition and perception, and if the topic is able to be proved logically with evidence, defending an idea and convincing the people with opposite standpoints will uncover the value of the idea through sense of self-fulfillments and societal impact.