

Arguments: Good, Bad & Ugly

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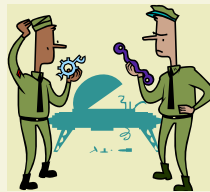
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What is an argument?




Parts of an argument

- Mark has an English accent. Everyone with an English accent is wise. Therefore Mark is wise.
- Assumption 1
 - Mark has an English accent
- Assumption 2
 - Everyone with an English accent is wise
- Conclusion
 - Mark is wise



Hidden parts

- Cats are cute because they think they are important.
- Premise 1
 - Cats think they are important
- Conclusion
 - Cats are cute
- Hidden Premise
 - Things that think they are important are cute




The good, the bad...


<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good - Valid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion follows from assumptions - Sound <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid + true assumptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad - Invalid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conclusion does not follow - Unsound <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invalid or one or more false assumptions - Also bad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circular or question begging 
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...& the ugly

- Induction
 - From evidence
 - Good & bad
- Ad hominem
 - To the person
 - Good & bad
- Analogy
 - parity of reasoning
 - Good & bad



An argument



If you prick us, do we not bleed?
 If you tickle us, do we not laugh?
 If you poison us, do we not die?
 And if you wrong us shall we not revenge?

Let's try a couple

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fido is a dog • Fido is mine <p>Therefore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fido is my dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fido is a father • Fido is mine <p>Therefore</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fido is my father
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the assumptions? • What is the conclusion? • Is this a good argument? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid or invalid • What's going on? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ambiguity

Let's try another

- Abortion is wrong because it's disgusting & immoral
 - Assumption
 - Abortion is disgusting & immoral
 - Conclusion
 - Abortion is wrong
 - Validity / soundness?
 - What's wrong here?


Naturalness

- Whatever is natural is right
- Euthanasia is wrong

Therefore

- Euthanasia is not natural

- Valid or invalid?
- Sound or unsound?




Natural - right - euthanasia

- If something's natural, then it's right
- Euthanasia is not natural

Therefore

- Euthanasia is wrong

- Valid or invalid?
- Sound or unsound?



An inductive argument

- Think about Watergate and other such scandals. History tells us that conspiracies are always uncovered.
- Pick this apart
 - Assumptions
 - Conclusions
 - Good, bad or ugly?

Remember...

- An argument may be
 - Valid or invalid
 - Sound or unsound
- Assumptions & conclusions may be
 - True or false
- Some deductively unsound are good
- Some sound arguments are bad



Don't forget
