

# CRITICAL THINKING

Lecture #3

## *Parsing Arguments*

Professor David Emmanuel Gray



# Inference Indicator Words

## Common Premise Indicators

because

in view of the fact

assuming that

since

given that

for the reason that

for

seeing that

inasmuch as

as

due to the fact that

as indicated by

follows from

being that

the reason being

## Common Conclusion Indicators

therefore

which implies that

it must be that

thus

consequently

as a result

hence

it follows that

which means that

so

we can conclude that

ergo

# Argument Parsing: *Instructions*

Parsing an argument for its logical content works as follows:

1. Underline and denote with a CI any conclusion indicators,
2. Circle and denote with a PI any premise indicators,
3. Circle and denote with a C the argument's main conclusion, and
4. Underline and number each premise.

# Argument #1

Parse the following argument:

I will only submit well-written articles that are fact-checked given that articles that are not fact-checked may contain libelous material. In addition, well-written articles have a good chance of actually being published.

## Argument #1: *Conclusion Indicators Underlined*

I will only submit well-written articles that are fact-checked given that articles that are not fact-checked may contain libelous material. In addition, well-written articles have a good chance of actually being published.

## Argument #1: *Premise Indicators Circled*

I will only submit well-written articles that are fact-checked <sup>PI</sup> given  
that articles that are not fact-checked may contain libelous  
material. In addition, well-written articles have a good chance  
of actually being published.

## Argument #1: *Main Conclusion Circled*

**C****PI**

I will only submit well-written articles that are fact-checked **given**

**that** articles that are not fact-checked may contain libelous material. In addition, well-written articles have a good chance of actually being published.

# Argument #1: *Fully Parsed*

**C****PI**

I will only submit well-written articles that are fact-checked **given**

**that** articles that are not fact-checked may contain libelous

material. In addition, well-written articles have a good chance  
of actually being published.



## Argument #2

Parse the following argument:

If I sell games people want to play then people will buy games from me, but no one is buying games from me. Thus I am not selling games people want to play.

## Argument #2: *Conclusion Indicators Underlined*

If I sell games people want to play then people will buy games from me, but no one is buying games from me. Thus I am not selling games people want to play.  
**CI**

## Argument #2: *Premise Indicators Circled*

If I sell games people want to play then people will buy games from me, but no one is buying games from me. Thus I am not selling games people want to play.  
**CI**

## Argument #2: *Main Conclusion Circled*

If I sell games people want to play then people will buy games from me, but no one is buying games from me. Thus I am not selling games people want to play.

CI  
C

## Argument #2: *Fully Parsed*

If I sell games people want to play then people will buy games  
1  
from me, but no one is buying games from me. Thus I am not  
2 CI C  
selling games people want to play.

**Note:** Until I tell you otherwise, break apart *conjunctive* statements (like that first sentence above) by treating each conjunct as a separate statement within the argument. However, do *not*—I repeat: do **not**—break apart *disjunctive* and *hypothetical* statements in a similar fashion.

# Argument #3

[1] Is global warming a real threat? [2] Or is it hype propagated by tree-hugging, daft environmentalists? [3] The president [George W. Bush] apparently thinks that the idea of global climate change is bunk. [4] But recently his own administration gave the lie to his bunk theory. [5] His own administration issued a report on global warming called the U.S. Climate Action Report 2002. [6] It gave no support to the idea that global warming doesn't happen and we should all go back to sleep. [7] Instead it asserted that global warming was definitely real and that it could have catastrophic consequences if ignored. [8] For example, global climate change could cause heat waves, extreme weather, and water shortages right here in the United States. [9] The report is also backed by many other reports, including a very influential one from the United Nations. [10] Yes, George, global warming is real. [11] It is as real as typhoons and ice storms.



## Argument #3: *Main Conclusion Circled*

[1] Is global warming a real threat? [2] Or is it hype propagated by tree-hugging, daft environmentalists? [3] The president [George W. Bush] apparently thinks that the idea of global climate change is bunk. [4] But recently his own administration gave the lie to his bunk theory. [5] His own administration issued a report on global warming called the U.S. Climate Action Report 2002. [6] It gave no support to the idea that global warming doesn't happen and we should all go back to sleep. [7] Instead it asserted that global warming was definitely real and that it could have catastrophic consequences if ignored. [8] For example, global climate change could cause heat waves, extreme weather, and water shortages right here in the United States. [9] The report is also backed by many other reports, including a very influential one from the United Nations. [10] Yes, George, **global warming is real.** [11] It is as real as typhoons and ice storms.

## Argument #3: *Fully Parsed*

[1] Is global warming a real threat? [2] Or is it hype propagated by tree-hugging, daft environmentalists? [3] The president [George W. Bush] apparently thinks that the idea of global climate change is bunk. [4] But recently his own administration gave the lie to his bunk theory. [5] His own administration issued a report on global warming called the U.S. Climate Action Report 2002. [6] It gave no support to the idea that global warming doesn't happen and we should all go back to sleep. [7] Instead it asserted that global warming was definitely real and that it could have catastrophic consequences if ignored. [8] For example, global climate change could cause heat waves, extreme weather, and water shortages right here in the United States. [9] The report is also backed by many other reports, including a very influential one from the United Nations. [10] Yes, George, global warming is real. [11] It is as real as typhoons and ice storms.



# Logic & Rhetoric

If so little of this text contains premises and conclusions for its argument, then what is the point of all that extra stuff? Is it just a waste of space?

# Next Class...

We will have a workshop on parsing arguments.