

Introduction to Logical Reasoning

Workshop on Argument Parsing

Part I: For each argument below (i) circle and denote with a C the argument's main conclusion; (ii) underline and number each premise and sub-conclusion (if any); (iii) underline any conclusion indicators; and (iv) circle any premise indicators. These ones should be fairly straightforward.

1. Campaign finance reform is needed because many contributions to political campaigns are morally equivalent to bribes.

2. In spite of the fact that electrons are physical entities, they cannot be seen. For electrons are too small to deflect photons.

3. The defendant is guilty. The reasons being he confessed to stealing the jewels, he was present at the scene of the crime, and his fingerprints are on the safe.

4. If Qatar wins the Asian Cup bid, then the fans from Bahrain will shout obscenities. So you should leave your children at home because Qatar is going to win it!

5. Either Jones fired a shot at the mayor, or he was at home talking a bath. Clearly Jones was not at home taking a bath, so he must have fired a shot at the mayor.

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Part II: For each argument below (i) circle and denote with a C the argument's main conclusion; (ii) underline and number each premise and sub-conclusion (if any); (iii) underline any conclusion indicators; and (iv) circle any premise indicators. Some of these may require a little more thought.

1. Married people are healthier and more economically stable than single people, and children of married people do better on a variety of indicators. Marriage is also a socially responsible act. Thus, there ought to be some way of spreading the principle of support for marriage throughout the tax code.
2. Either the Internet is killing journalism or journalists are adapting. But the Internet has widened the audience of news consumers and put more news at people's fingertips, and if these two things are true, then the Internet is not killing journalism. So, the Internet is not killing journalism; journalists are adapting.
3. The newest news dispenser, the runaway Internet, makes a journalist out of anybody who has a modem. It values speed and sensation above accuracy. New media will not accept our standards. We are foolish to treat them as if they have. This is a grim time for newspapers.

—Sandra Mims Rowe, Editor, *Portland Oregonian*,
Keynote Address to the American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1 April 1998

4. It is the non-Internet media that have made the most notorious journalistic errors of late: the bogus eyewitness account of a Monica-Clinton tryst, the incrimination of Richard Jewell [falsely accused by the media for bombing the 1996 Summer Olympics], the digital capping of [septuplets father] Bobbi McCaughey's teeth, the serial publication of plagiarized and fictional stories in *The New Republic* and, just three days after the Drudge speech, [American comedian] Bob Hope's "death." It's past time to retire the Internet as a scapegoat for journalistic ills. It's a medium, not a message, and it can be used as irresponsibly or as honorably as a printing press or a TV network can.

—Frank Rich, Opinion, *New York Times*, 10 June 1998