

NOTES ON ARGUMENTATION

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Notes on Argument Basics

Definition of an Argument

An argument is a set of claims that include a (final) conclusion, one or more premises, and an inference (Elements, 6).

Definition of a Claim

A claim is a statement of alleged fact.

Definition of a Conclusion

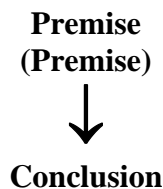
A conclusion is a claim supported by one or more premises in the argument (6).

Definition of a Premise

A premise is a claim offered as a reason for a conclusion. It answers the critical question “why” about the conclusion (7).

Definition of Inference

Every argument will have one inference (6). The inference means “leads to.” Without the sense that one claim “leads to” another, as a reader or listener, you are not sensing argument.

The Structure of an Argument

The parentheses () around the word “premise” mean implied, suggesting that both stated and unstated or implied premises may “lead to” a conclusion (p. 9).

(Note: Basic terminology in this unit comes from an introductory book on argumentation entitled *The Elements of Reasoning* by Conway and Munson. Other materials include a book review from *Insight* magazine and *I, Rigoberta Menchu*.)

Verbal Indicators

The use of certain words in texts often indicate an argument. Some are markers for premises, others for conclusions.

Some Premise Indicators

since, because, on account of, given that, if . . . then, either . . . or, etc.

Some Conclusion Indicators

therefore, as a result, in conclusion, hence, (you) can expect that, etc.

Of course, in everyday speech, we use informal markers as well:

Some Informal Premise Indicators

Mama! She said . . . !

Now, look a'here!

Because I said so!

Some Informal Conclusion Indicators

Let met tell you som'thin', son!

Would you believer

Hello!

What did I say?!!

Here is one example of the appearance of verbal markers in arguments:

Since it is wrong to kill a human being, it stands to reason that capital punishment is wrong because it takes the life of a human being.

In this complex sentence, the words “since” and “because” function as premise markers while the phrase “it stands to reason that” signals a conclusion. Note that three different claims are contained in the framework of this single sentence. An important step in analyzing texts in arguments will be the analysis and isolation of each discrete claim within a text.

Arguments without Verbal Indicators

While many texts contain both standard and more familiar, or informal verbal markers, many do not. It will be necessary for you to sense that one claim “leads to” another without the crutches of such markers. Read the following two claims: do you sense an argument?

Claim 1: The train derailed in Albuquerque.

Claim 2: The price of eggs will increase in Dallas.

Well? Probably not. But let's add an additional claim:

Claim 1: The train derailed in Albuquerque.

Claim 2: The train that derailed in Albuquerque was carrying

a month's supply of eggs for Dallas.

Claim 3: The price of eggs will increase in Dallas.

Well? Probably yes. You probably sense that claims 1 and 2 “lead to” claim 3. If that's the case, you are sensing argumentation in which claims 1 and 2 are premises for claim 3, the conclusion.

Notice something else: The only way for you “to get that” these claims are, in fact, an argument is if two other unstated, implied claims are operating in your mind:

Claim 4: When supply decreases, prices increase.

And

Claim 5: When the train carrying a month's supply of eggs for Dallas derailed in Albuquerque, the supply of eggs in Dallas decreased.

In other words, you remember something, at least, from high school economics: “the law of supply and demand.” If the principle of the “law of supply and demand” were not operating in your consciousness, you would never sense that claims 1 and 2 “lead to” claim 3.

Here is an example, then, of an argument that includes both stated and implied claims. That's not uncommon in arguments. In fact, your greatest challenge will be to identify the unstated or implied claims that must be operating in the mind of the author as you read for argument in texts.

Two Structural Types of Arguments: Simple and Complex

For purposes of this course, we will rely on classifying arguments as either “simple” or “complex.” A “simple argument” is any argument that has one-and only one-conclusion, the *final conclusion*. A “complex argument” is any argument that has more than one conclusion; that is, it will have a final conclusion and one/more than *one intermediate conclusions*. An intermediate conclusion reflects a “sub argument” within the main argument. In each case, an intermediate conclusion will be the premise of yet another sub argument or a premise for the final conclusion (12-13).

Below is a graphic illustrating the structure of simple and complex arguments:

Premise: Turner Falls is a popular campsite.
Premise: People sleep outside at campsites.

Premise: The motel rooms are full.
Premise: We'll get a discount if we sleep outside.
Conclusion: We'll sleep outside.

Note that in the argument above, the premises “lead to” the conclusion; that is, they make the conclusion “likely” or “probable”—well, at least more likely than unlikely, more probable than improbable, no? (I like the “discount” option!) Nevertheless, the premises *do not guarantee* that “we’ll sleep outside.” We still have choices, perhaps.

Deductive Arguments

Deductive arguments are arguments the premises of which guarantee the conclusion—*word for word* (synonymous words or phrases acceptable) (33-38).

Here is an example of a deductive argument:

Premise: If it is cold, we'll sleep outside.
Premise: It will be cold.
Conclusion: We'll sleep outside.

Notice the difference between the “semantics” of the two arguments. The first argument derives its meaning (conclusion) from premises that make the conclusion likely or probable. The latter, however, derives its meaning (conclusion) from premises that actually guarantee the conclusion; note that the two premises give us no choice. If the condition of the first premise is fulfilled, “we’ll sleep outside.” The condition is fulfilled, in fact, by the second premise. Therefore, “we’ll sleep outside.”

Okay, all right! I know it’s a stupid argument, already! But stupidity (one text calls it “worthlessness”) has nothing to do with the argument’s semantic type. Stupid or not—even false or not—if the premises of an argument guarantee the conclusion (your scruples aside!)—the argument is deductive. The same thing for “truth”! It doesn’t matter whether either the premises are true or false in determining the semantic type (it has everything to do with your evaluation of the argument). Get it? Once again—if the premises guarantee the wording of the final conclusion, the argument is deductive. Period!

Question: Which is the stronger of the two semantic types: deductive? Or non-deductive?

Of course! It’s the *deductive argument*. Now here’s a “Grimes” axiom for you:

Every non-deductive argument is a deductive “wannabe”!

Every probability argument wants to grow up some day to be a deductive argument!

All kidding aside, in a court of law, what does every prosecuting attorney’s team try to create for a jury? *Sure! A deductive argument!* One that will lock in a guilty verdict, right? Of course! At best, however, most prosecuting teams are stuck with the task of developing—as convincingly as possible—a non-deductive or probability argument.

Okay—you try itturn the page:

An exercise in stupid argumentation (with a serious intention):

Instructions:

Create a deductive argument containing two claims (premises) that will guarantee the following conclusion: *Men are women.*

Premise 1: _____

Premise 2: _____

Therefore: Men are women.

Here . . . *here's some workspace:*

DON'T TURN THE PAGE UNTIL YOU'VE FINISHED!

DON'T TURN THE PAGE!
GO BACK AND DO IT RIGHT!
(GEEZZZ!)

Okay: A Hint

Try using the word “roaches” in both of the premises. Like this:

Premise 1: _____ roaches.

Premise 2: _____ roaches.

Therefore: Men are women!

No! (Geezzz!): A Second Hint

Try placing the word “women” in the subject position of the first premise and the word “men” in the subject position of the second premise. Now, only a verb in each claim and one additional word in the first claim will guarantee the conclusion. Try it! (Like this:)

Premise 1: ___women _____ roaches.

Premise 2: Men _____ roaches.

Therefore: Men are women!

No?!

Wellall right! (By the way—“all right” is always two words! *Alright! Alright!* I know!

You’ve seen it all over the place spelled “*alright*”! It doesn’t matter. Everybody is wrong!—Signed, “English Department” Grimes). Here’s the answer—*several of them*:

Argument 1:
Premise: Only women hate roaches.
Premise: Men hate roaches.
Conclusion: Men are women.

Argument 2:
Premise: If men hate roaches, then they are women.
Premise: Men hate roaches.
Conclusion: Men are women.

Argument 3:
Premise: Either men are men, or men are women.
Premise: Men are not men.
Conclusion: Men are women.

Truth vs. Validity

What you have witnessed in the examples above is something about the relationship between truth and validity. “Validity” means “deductive.” That is, if the premises, both stated and implied (if any), guarantee the wording of the conclusion, then the argument is said to be valid or deductive (same thing).

Of course, we would prefer that each element of a deductive argument (the premises and conclusions) be true. In fact, we are moved to reject such arguments as those above because either the premises or conclusions or both are worthless, but that’s the problem of evaluation, and we’ll get to that right now.

Evaluation vs. Classification of Arguments

Certainly, we've heard arguments many times that we reject offhand as wrongheaded or worthless. It is important to remember that whether we accept or reject an argument has nothing to do with our classification of the argument either structurally (simple or complex) or semantically (non-deductive or deductive). A general tendency is for students new to the analysis of argumentation to confuse "deductive" with "true" and "non-deductive" as "untrue." Be careful not to make this mistake. Remember: your willingness to accept or reject an argument is a function of evaluation, not classification.

Evaluation of Arguments

We will evaluate non-deductive arguments as either "successful" or "unsuccessful." We will evaluate deductive arguments as either "sound" or "unsound." Don't confuse these sets of terms!

Evaluation of Non-deductive Arguments

The evaluation of non-deductive arguments rests on two factors: *1) the amount of support given in the premises, and 2) the quality of the premises.* We will evaluate *a non-deductive argument as "successful" if the premises make the conclusion more likely than unlikely, more probable than improbable.* We will evaluate *a non-deductive argument as "unsuccessful" if the premises make the conclusion more unlikely than likely, more improbable than probable.*

Adding More Support to Non-deductive Arguments

One way of strengthening a non-deductive argument is to add more premises. The more reasons you can provide a non-deductive conclusion, generally the more support you build on its behalf.

Qualifying-the Premises

One bad premise can sometimes undermine the credibility of all the others in a non-deductive argument. While integrity demands that we tell the whole story—give all the reasons, in other words—you need to remember that contradictory or otherwise unacceptable premises weaken the probability or likelihood of a non-deductive conclusion. Generally, we will seek to add premises that are *1) true, 2) acceptable, or at least 3) unquestioned.* If the premises meet one or more of these criteria, then a non-deductive argument will be strengthened. If one or more of the premises offered in support of a non-deductive argument are found to be *1) false, 2) unacceptable, or even 3) questionable,* the quality of the argument diminishes and reduces its probability or likelihood. The same criteria are applicable to deductive arguments as well.

Evaluation of Deductive Arguments

The evaluation of deductive arguments rests on the quality of the premises. While, by definition, we know that the premises guarantee the conclusion, as we have seen above, premises may serve unworthy arguments as a whole. We will find a deductive argument "sound" if the premises are *1) true, 2) acceptable, or at least 3) unquestioned.* We will find a deductive argument "unsound" if any one of the premises is determined to be *1) false, 2) unacceptable, or even 3) questioned.*

[Note: Conway and Munson, authors of *The Elements of Reasoning*, limit the definition of “sound” arguments to only those deductive arguments for which the premises are true. For our purposes, we will define any argument as “sound” for which the premises are either true, acceptable, or unquestioned—a much finer distinction, since it represents the way arguments function naturally in our everyday discourse.]

The Process of Analyzing Argument in Standard Form Analysis

Arguments are analyzed in a format called “standard form” analysis. To analyze any argument found in either short or longer texts, employ the following steps:

1) Identify a claim that sounds like it might be a conclusion.

To do that, read any claim and then ask “why?” If you find a claim that seems “to lead to” that claim, then you have identified an argument including its conclusion and at least one stated claim.

2) Then, isolate each stated claim in the passage as a simple sentence

Note that complex sentences contain more than one claim, and each must be isolated as a separate claim.

3) Number each claim starting with the first claim found in the passage through the last claim found in the passage.

4) Translate each claim into conventional (standard) English and all question forms into declarative sentences.

5) Delete any repeated claims unless their interpretation is distinctly different.

6) Clarify all vagueness and ambiguities For example, replace relative pronouns like “that” with their references (to whom or what they refer).

7) Delete any unnecessary claims (claims that do not function as either premises or conclusions) as well as any merely transitional or other unnecessary words and phrases in those claims which are part of the argument..

8) Identify and number any unstated claims operating in the argument.

To do that, after reading each claim, ask yourself, “Why?” “Why is this claim so?” “What must the author be assuming to make such a statement?”

9) Reorganize the entire argument now, renumbering each of the remaining discrete claims with the premises on top and the conclusion at the end.

10) Place at the end of each conclusion (intermediate and final) the number(s) of the claims meant to be read as premises.

11) As a last step, construct the numerical analysis.

A Sample Analysis of an Argument in Standard Form and its Numerical Analysis

Here is an example of standard form analysis and numerical analysis of our earlier “train derailment” argument as it might have appeared in a casual observation or informal text:

Text

What a mess! Can you imagine? I read in the paper today that a train derailed outside of Albuquerque. It was really some accident, the paper said. It was carrying a month’s supply of eggs for Dallas. You can bet the price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month.

Step 1: Identify any claim that sounds like a conclusion

(Note: Most conclusions in argumentative paragraphs will be found as a topic sentence for the paragraph and will usually be placed at the beginning of the paragraph. In the case of the “exploratory paragraph,” it may come at the end.)

What a mess! Can you imagine? I read in the paper today that a train derailed outside of Albuquerque. It was really some accident, the paper said. It was carrying a month’s supply of eggs for Dallas. ***You can bet the price of eggs we’ll increase in Dallas next month.***

Step 2: Isolate each stated claim as a simple sentence.

What a mess!
Can you imagine?
I read in the paper today that a train derailed outside of Albuquerque.
It was carrying a month’s supply of eggs for Dallas.
You can bet the price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month.

Step 3: Number each claim.

- 1) What a mess!
- 2) Can you imagine?
- 3) I read in the paper today that a train derailed outside of Albuquerque.
- 4) It was carrying a month’s supply of eggs for Dallas.
- 5) You can bet the price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month.

Step 4: Translate each claim into standard English and all questions into declarative sentences.

- 1) What a mess was caused when the train, carrying eggs, derailed outside of Albuquerque.
- 2) You can imagine what a mess occurred when the train derailed carrying a month’s supply of eggs for Dallas.

Step 5: Delete any repeated claims.

(There appears to be none in this passage.)

Step 6: Clarify all vagueness or ambiguities.

- 4) [*The train that derailed outside of Albuquerque*] was carrying a month's supply of eggs for Dallas.

Step 7: Delete any unnecessary claims as well as any merely transitional or other unnecessary words and phrases in those claims which are not part of the argument.

- 1) ~~What a mess was caused when the train, carrying eggs, derailed outside of Albuquerque.~~
- 2) ~~You can imagine what a mess occurred when the train derailed carrying a a month's supply of eggs for Dallas.~~
- 3) ~~I read in the paper today that a train derailed outside of Albuquerque.~~
- 4) [*The train that derailed outside of Albuquerque*] was carrying a month's supply of eggs for Dallas.
- 5) ~~You can bet~~ the price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month.

Step 8: Identify and number any unstated claims operating in the argument.

(Note: Place implied claims inside parentheses to distinguish them in standard form analysis from stated claims in the original text.)

- 6) (When the supply decreases, prices increase.)
- 7) (The train derailment outside of Albuquerque decreased the supply of eggs for Dallas next month.)

Step 9: Reorganize the entire argument now, renumbering each of the remaining discrete claims with the premises on top and the conclusion at the end.

- 1) A train derailed outside of Albuquerque.
- 2) [*The train that derailed outside of Albuquerque*] was carrying a month's supply of eggs for Dallas.
- 3) (When the supply decreases, prices increase.)
- 4) (The train derailment outside of Albuquerque decreased the supply of eggs for Dallas next month.)
- 5) The price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month

Step 10: Place at the end of each conclusion (intermediate and final) the number(s) of the claims meant to read as premises.

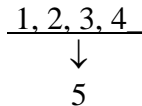
- 1) A train derailed outside of Albuquerque.
- 2) [*The train that derailed outside of Albuquerque*] was carrying a month's supply of eggs for Dallas.
- 3) (When the supply decreases, prices increase.)
- 4) (The train derailment outside of Albuquerque decreased the supply of eggs for

Dallas next month.)

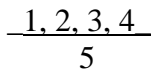
5) The price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month. **1, 2, 3, 4**

[A Note about Punctuation: The comma (,) between the numbers of the premises placed after a conclusion means that the claims can be read in any order. A plus sign (+) placed between a set of numbers means “and then.” In other words, reading from left to right, “1 + 2” would mean, “Read 1 and then 2, in that order.]

Step 11: Construct the numerical analysis of the argument.



Or you may omit the arrow, if you wish, using the underline to suggest leads to”:



Writing a One-sentence Description of the Argument

A one-sentence description of an analyzed argument will include three elements: 1) *the structural type*, 2) *the semantic type*, and 3) *your evaluation of the argument*.

For example, a one-sentence description of the argument above might read like this:

The claim that “the price of eggs will increase in Dallas next month” is the final conclusion of a simple, deductive, though unsound argument.

Following is an example of an explanation of the evaluation of the argument:

As a reader of this argument myself, I find the argument to be “unsound” in my evaluation. I find questionable and unacceptable the claim that “the train that derailed in Albuquerque was carrying a month’s supply of eggs for Dallas.” My experience in the marketplace suggests that an entire month’s supply of eggs for Dallas wouldn’t be shipped on one train. Therefore, I find the argument unsound.

Note, however, that the evaluation doesn’t effect the classification of the argument as deductive since the premises actually guarantee the conclusion.

The Evaluation of Arguments

In the previous section, you were introduced to each of the key concepts about argumentation, including the evaluation of arguments. As a point of review, note that the evaluation of arguments has no effect on the distinction of the structural or semantic types.

Structurally, an argument is either “*simple*” or “*complex*” because of the presence of only one conclusion (in the simple argument) or more than one conclusion (in the

complex argument). Your evaluation of the argument will not change the structure. Similarly, an argument is either “*non-deductive*” or “*deductive*” by virtue of the amount of support given the final conclusion by the premises. If the premises, at best, make the conclusion only likely or probable, the argument is non-deductive (by definition); your evaluation will not change that. On the other hand, if the premises actually guarantee the conclusion, the argument is said to be deductive (by definition); your evaluation will not change that either.

You will recall from the discussion, arguments will be evaluated as either “*successful/ unsuccessful*” in the case of non-deductive arguments, and as either “*sounds/unsound*” in the case of deductive arguments.

Let’s return to our “Turner Falls” example for a moment. Remember the following *deductive argument*:

Premise 1: If it is cold, we must sleep outside.
Premise 2: It will be cold.
Therefore: We’ll sleep outside.

Clearly, the premises guarantee the exact wording because the condition established in Premise 1--without an option--is fulfilled in Premise 2. The premises give us no choice.

Note the next example:

Premise 1: If the motel rooms are full, we must sleep outside.
Premise 2: The motel rooms are full.
Therefore: We’ll sleep outside.

Like the first argument above, the second argument is also a *deductive argument* since the conditional premise gives us no choice if the condition is met or fulfilled. Premise 2 announces that the condition has been met, so the conclusion is guaranteed: “*We’ll sleep outside.*”

Note, however, that the second argument, although it derives the same conclusion (“*We’ll sleep outside*”) is far superior to the first. We will find the second article “sound” while we must reject the first as “unsound.” Clearly, there’s something unacceptable about the first premise; experience teaches us that it is foolish to sleep outside if it is cold (we’ll probably get sick). That kind of information is critical to a satisfactory or acceptable evaluation of the argument. Yet that information is not available in the argument itself, it is, rather, additional information that we have brought to bear in our evaluation.

The Place of Additional Information in Evaluations of Argument

None of us lives in a vacuum. We have accumulated information throughout a lifetime,

either by default—we were in the right place at the right time, or our interests have taken us into a more extensive body of knowledge than others around us. Additionally, our experiences has prompted the development of a whole values and belief system that gives form and stability to our world view.

All of this information, in addition to our values and beliefs, are brought to bear in the evaluation of arguments. It is on the basis of this broader bank of information and data that confirms for us the relative value or relative worthlessness of a writer's or other person's argument.

The Criteria of Evaluation

Evaluations of arguments focus on the quality of the premises provided, either as stated or implied, for a conclusion. There are three criteria or standards on which we will evaluate the premises and, hence, the argument itself. These three criteria are the truth, acceptability, and questionable nature of the premises.

True or False

If we know that a premise is true, then it will lend support for the conclusion. If we know it to be false, however, it will detract from our value in the conclusion.

Acceptable or Unacceptable

For some premises, we may not be able to determine for ourselves the truthfulness or the falseness of a claim. Based on our own background and world view, however, we will be led to find the claim either acceptable or unacceptable. Acceptable premises support a conclusion; obviously, unacceptable premises detract from our value in the conclusion.

Questioned or Unquestioned

For still other premises, we may be somewhat reserved in our trust in a claim, so much so that we may be led to question it. The result will be that we suspend our toleration of the claim and may even reject it outright. On the other hand, we may find no cause for questioning the information or position of a claim, so that by default, we find it acceptable.

The Relationship between Your Evaluation and an Argument's Semantic Type

It may seem belaboring a point, but because so many students have difficulty with the concept, it's important to emphasize it one more time: *your evaluation, either positively or negatively, has no effect on the designation of the semantic type.* The argument will be either deductive or non-deductive. Note further, *whether an argument is deductive or non-deductive has no bearing on its value.* If an argument is *deductive*, you will evaluate it as either *sound* or *unsound*, depending on the quality of the support the premises bring to the conclusion. If the argument is *non-deductive*, you will evaluate it as either *successful* or *unsuccessful*, depending on the quality of the support the premises bring to the conclusion.

**An Exercise in Argumentation:
The Textual Analysis of “Wrong Claims”**

Instructions

Read the following short text; it contains one major argument. Then, after working out each stage of the analysis on scratch paper, complete each section of the standard form and numerical analyses on the front and reverse of this sheet. Return this sheet or a copy to your instructor.

Text

I don't know of any claims in my textbook that are wrong. But there must be

some. Authors are human beings just like everybody else. So I have to say, there must be some.

Standard Form Analysis in Stages

Stage 1: List and number each individual claim in the text above.

Stage 2: Paraphrase each claim into standard English (not necessary for this exercise); drop the transitional phrases and verbal indicators; delete any redundant claims; resolve any vagueness or ambiguity (replace pronouns with their noun antecedents or references); number each claim and at the end of each conclusion write the number of the premises that support (lead to) it.

Stage 3: Identify, write down, and number any implied premises that also lead to any conclusions identified above.

Stage 4: Now, reconstruct the final argument in standard form to include both the stated and implied claims. You may renumber them, if you wish, and place the final conclusion last (although this is technically unnecessary, it may make the transition to the final conclusion easier to check and reconstruct).

An Exercise in Argumentation: The Standard Form Analysis of “Wrong Claims”

Instructions

Following is the analysis of the “Wrong Claims” passage in standard form in its progressive stages.

Text

I don't know of any claims in my textbook that are wrong. But there must be some. Authors are human beings just like everybody else. So I have to say, there must be some.

Standard Form Analysis in Stages

Stage 1: List and number each individual claim in the text above.

- 1) *I don't know of any claims in my textbook that are wrong.*
- 2) *There must be some.*
- 3) *Authors are human beings just like everybody else.*
- 4) *So I have to say, there must be some.*

Stage 2: Paraphrase each claim into standard English (not necessary for this exercise); drop the transitional phrases and verbal indicators; delete any redundant claims; resolve any vagueness or ambiguity (replace pronouns with their noun antecedents or references); number each claim and at the end of each conclusion write the number of the premises that support (lead to) it.

- 1) *I don't know of any claims in my textbook that are wrong.*
- 2) *Authors are human beings just like everybody else.*
- 3) *There must be some [wrong claims in my textbook. 1, 2*

Stage 3: Identify, write down, and number any implied premises that also lead to any conclusions identified above.

- 4) *(Wrong claims are mistakes.)*
- 5) *(Everybody will always make mistakes.)*
- 6) *(Human beings will always make mistakes.)*
- 7) *(Authors will always make mistakes.)*
- 8) *(Authors will always make wrong claims.)*
- 9) *(Only authors write textbooks.)*

Stage 4: Now, reconstruct the final argument in standard form to include both the stated and implied claims. You may renumber them, if you wish, and place the final conclusion last (although this is technically unnecessary, it may make the transition to the final conclusion easier to check and reconstruct).

- 1) *Authors are human beings just like everybody else.*
- 2) *(Wrong claims are mistakes authors make.)*
- 3) *(Everybody will always make mistakes.)*
- 4) *(Human beings will always make mistakes.)*
- 5) *(Authors will always make mistakes.)*
- 6) *(Authors will always make wrong claims.) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5*
- 7) *(Only authors write textbooks.)*
- 8) *There must be some [wrong claims in my textbook]. 6, 7*

Note: The claim that “I don’t know of any wrong claims in my textbook” has been dropped since it does not lead to any other claim.

An Exercise in Argumentation: The Analysis of “Joshua”

Instructions:

- 1) Read the following passage from Joshua 10: 12-14.
- 2) With the conclusion, “The sun stood still,” construct the argument in standard form #3 (here after referred to as “standard form analysis”). Be sure to include both stated and implied premises that support the conclusion.
- 3) Construct the numerical analysis. (See “Notes on Analysis of Arguments in Texts”)

The Passage: *Joshua 10:12-14*

Thus spoke Joshua in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man.

A Note on the Semantics of Arguments

Most arguments are non-deductive. That is, at best, their premises make the conclusions only “likely” or “probable”--sort of like the odds in a weather forecast; no meteorologist can say with certainty what precisely the weather will do. That’s why non-deductive arguments are often called “probability arguments.”

Of course, every non-deductive argument--with even a whiff of pride and self-respect--is, in disguise, a “deductive wannabe”! Every non-deductive argument would like to grow up to be a deductive argument in which the premises guarantee the conclusion. And I mean just that--the premises, by the way they are worded, *guarantee* the exact wording of the conclusion--*word for word!*

In fact, many seemingly non-deductive arguments are supported by authors’ implied premises that actually make the argument deductive. The implied premises usually lie behind the stated premises as reasons for the stated premises. In other words, what often appears to be a simple, non-deductive argument in stated form is, in reality, a complex, deductive argument once the reader has identified both the stated and the implied premises.

How do you tell which is which? It's often really a matter of correctly interpreting the author's intention. ***To get at the implied premises, you have to ask the critical question of "why?" twice***, once to discover the stated claims and then a second time to identify the unstated claims-these are the assumptions that the author must be making in order to justify, in his own mind, the reasons (premises) stated in support of the conclusion. Sometimes it's a matter of interpreting the author's strength of opinion in offering a conclusion. Ask yourself, "*Does this writer really intend a deductive argument here?*" If your answer is "yes," then it is incumbent upon you to identify both the stated and the unstated conclusions that must be leading to the conclusion in a way in which the conclusion is guaranteed-word for word.

An Exercise in Argumentation: Analysis of "Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy"

Instructions: Stage 1

Read the attached essay, "*Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy.*" Be able to identify, for your own understanding, paragraphs which reference some of the most poignant social issues in our country: *racism, affirmative action, political correctness, multiculturalism, and racial separatism.*

Following the model for analyzing the discrete claims of an argument found in a text introduced in the analysis of "Wrong Claims," complete a standard form analysis and numerical analysis for the conclusion, "*D'Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy*" (see paragraphs 21, 22, and 23).

A Note on Deductability and Implied Premises

Note that your problem for this exercise is to determine just how strongly the author, Stephen Goode, is willing to push his conclusion, "*D'Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.*" In other words, as it is written, the argument would appear to be non-deductive, *but is it really?*

The problem is to interpret his intent. Notice that he gives three paragraphs for the development of support for this one conclusion. Does he intend merely a probability argument? If you can, you must construct what may be his intended deductive argument, identifying both the stated and unstated claims (premises) he offers in support of his conclusion. You're going to have to "get inside his head and ask yourself, "*Why is he making such claims?*" "*Where is this guy coming from?*" "*What are his assumptions?*"

For this first part of the assignment, 1) isolate and number each stated claim in the three paragraphs (there are fifteen), and then 2) identify any unstated (implied) claims that must be operating in his mind in support of his conclusion, "*D'Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.*"

Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy
by Stephen Goode

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- 1) A year or so ago when Dinesh D'Souza was researching his new book, "*Illiberal Education,*" at the University of California at Berkeley, he asked an admission official a question.
- 2) What if he had an A-minus average and scores of 1200 out of 1600 on the SATs? D' Souza queried, "If I were black, would I get into Berkeley?"
- 3) "Yes," the admissions officer replied. Then D' Souza asked, "What if I had that average and those scores and were white or Asian?" His chances would be about one in 20, came the reply.
- 4) The answer struck D'Souza as patently unfair—for the Asians and whites denied admission, though qualified, and for the blacks, likely to be ill-prepared to compete in college with their white or Asian counterparts, who probably attended the best high schools and prep schools.

- 5) For the young native of India and graduate of Dartmouth University, it also symbolized much that is wrong with higher education in the United States today.
- 6) It is not simply affirmative action with which D' Souza takes issue. It is affirmative action plus all it has given birth to on college campuses: falling standards of student achievement, the loud, unceasing denunciation of Western civilization, the special consideration demanded by groups that call themselves oppressed--minorities, women, and homosexuals.
- 7) That is not new territory. Last year, Charles Sykes in "The Hollow Men" and Roger Kimball in "Tenured Radicals" showed what bizarre places American universities, particularly the most prestigious ones, have become.
- 8) But D'Souza has a great deal to add. Not yet 30 and a dark-skinned Asian to boot, D'Souza must have impressed many of his liberal and leftist sources as one of themselves. Certainly, many opened up to him in ways that they have so far never done.
- 9) At Harvard, for example, a dean in charge of "radical awareness" programs tells him that many of the classics must be rewritten before students read them so that wrong opinions on women and minorities can be removed.
- 10) An English professor at Stanford confesses an admiration for Milton and then, in the same breath, calls the great English poet an "ass" and a "sexist pig." She goes on to suggest that perhaps what faculty should be teaching is "suspicion" by letting students read Dante and other classics, then showing in class how "unprogressive" they are.
- 11) But D'Souza's conservative credentials are in order. As an undergraduate, he was an editor at the raucously conservative Dartmouth Review, which confronted left-wing faculty and administrators head-on. So moderate and conservative students (and sometimes even faculty) saw in him a kindred spirit.
- 12) As a result, "Illiberal Education" is rich in vivid anecdotes. It reads like an intimate portrait of the campuses it visits, and that is no mean achievement because D'Souza traveled to campuses as diverse as Stanford, Howard University, Harvard and the University of Michigan.
- 13) This is a disturbing book. Among many conservative and moderate (and mostly white) students, the author found a dissatisfaction so deep that it leads him to predict at the end of his penultimate chapter: "A storm is coming."
- 14) White students told him of their anger over favoritism shown minorities in getting into universities and the special efforts to keep blacks and other groups on campus once they are there. They spoke, too, of growing resentment over efforts--usually by university administrators--to make them properly sensitive to the rights of others, since few whites regarded themselves as dangerously or even mildly racist.

15) But the problems do not end there, D' Souza shows. He argues that it is wrong to bring ill-prepared minority students onto prestigious campuses where they compete with whites who have no doubt already studied calculus and foreign languages and read "Hamlet."

16) First, it creates extreme feelings of discomfort on the part of the black or Hispanic students. Then, giving in to these feelings of discomfort, D' Souza argues, the student finds some solace in saying he can't read "Hamlet" because it was written by a white male and is not part of his culture-give me something of my own kind I can understand.

17) Such students also turn to racial and ethnic organizations for security, but according to D'Souza, these African-American Centers and the like end up being a form of group therapy that reinforces notions that minority student problems stem entirely from white racism.

18) Sadly, many faculty members only add to the problem. Contemporary social and literary philosophies argue that there are no such things as real values, certainly not ones that would lead people to say democracy is better than totalitarianism, or "War and Peace" better than "The Godfather," or one form of human behavior over another.

19) In this atmosphere, it becomes difficult to Kludge student achievement: Why deem mastery of calculus as in any way more admirable than knowing the novels of Louis L'Amour? (The late author's westerns are central to a Duke University English course, D'Souza reports.)

20) D'Souza's very real talent is the telling detail: He sees the small things that give the whole show away. He captures, for example, the enormous smugness and condescension of someone such as Stanley Fish, chairman of Duke's English department, possibly the most politically correct in the country today, with anyone who does not think as he does. "His field of expertise is ferns," Fish told D'Souza about a colleague who had to be reeducated to be politically correct. "He had to be told what Third World studies is, what feminism is. But he's learned. Now he teaches seminars in 'feminism and botany.'"

21) D'Souza is also good at taking apart hypocrisy. He deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford, which saw the advent of a new course that brought in works by women and people of color for students to read for the sake of multiculturalism.

22) One of these books, "I, Rigoberta Menchu," purported to be the story of a Guatemalan Indian woman-a tale Stanford students read, according to an explanation for the course, so that they could get the views of a Third World woman, oppressed by sex, class and ethnic group.

23) D'Souza notes that the book was written by a Frenchwoman whom Menchu talked to in, of all places, in Paris, when Menchu was attending an international socialist conference. That hardly would make Menchu a typical Guatemalan, to say the least. D'

Souza writes that in the course of the book, Menchu renounces marriage and motherhood, a double denial that may not sound at all like an Indian in Central America but does sound very much like what faculty and students at Stanford want to hear (and what they hope their Third World heroes will say).

24) Indeed, the rush for victim status is the most bizarre of the current campus rites that D'Souza recorded. "Everybody races to seize the lowest rung on the ladder," he writes, whether it is to identify as a black, a woman, or homosexual. But this is self-defeating, because "the campus psychology of victim status makes it impossible for victims to be relieved of their perceived woes," else they lose their identities.

25) Oddly, it is the students at Howard University in Washington who achieve the most victimized status of all in this book-and they gain that status in search of creating a great past for blacks.

26) D'Souza traces a movement at Howard to sketch ancient Egypt as a black nation and as the source of all wisdom and science. It was a wisdom and science, however, that the adherents of this theory say was stolen by the Greeks and never acknowledged. Thus in ancient history began the white man's wanton, rapacious treatment of others, rendering the rest of the world as ultimate victim. He has fun with this too, noting that if the sources of Plato and Aristotle is black culture, then these writers can no longer be dismissed as white males.

27) D'Souza offers three proposals for change. He calls them modest, but they are not that. They would require major rethinking and restructuring.

28) One is to alter affirmative action so that only the disadvantaged (regardless of race) are considered. That way a black man's son would not win out over a poor white girl from, say, Appalachia.

29) A second is that universities permit no organization on campus that practices racial separatism, thus fostering the ill feelings D'Souza has so vividly detailed.

30) The last, and probably least likely to be implemented, is that faculties develop freshman curricula dealing with issues of "equality and human difference"-based on reading the classics.

31) Meanwhile, the nonsense goes on. D'Souza has found the perfect quote to show what is wrong with the politically correct and the properly sensitive. The speaker is Socrates in "Euthydemus."

32) "Mastery of this sort of stuff would by no means lead to increased knowledge of how things are, but only to the ability to play games with people, tripping them up and flooring them with different senses of words, just like those who derive pleasure and amusement from pulling stools from under people when they are about to sit down, and from seeing someone floundering on his back."

The Argument against the Stanford University Curriculum: An Analysis and Evaluation of a Primary Argument in an Essay

It is one thing to be able to recognize an argument and to analyze it in a formal way such as standard form and numerical analyses. It is something else to be able to evaluate it in a meaningful way. This discussion is critical to your appreciation of the power of argumentation in texts and the ability of argument to persuade us.

The Analysis of a Primary Argument: Some General Observations

Paragraphs 21, 22, and 23 of “Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy” contain one major argument and several sub- or related arguments. The major argument of this section of text supports the claim, “D Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy. “ As with many argumentative paragraphs, this claim is the topic sentence of the lead paragraph, paragraph 21. The “Because/Therefore Test” applied to this claim reveals the second sentence as the only stated premise: “[D ‘Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen students at Stanford.” Clearly, however, the discussion developed over the next two paragraphs (22 and 23) are intended, in some way, to support this argument, and it does.

Paragraphs 22 and 23 introduce *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, a book allegedly written by a Guatemalan Indian woman. We are led to believe that the book is unacceptable, that the book was written under spurious circumstances; that while it “purports” to represent a typical Guatemalan woman, clearly just the opposite is true. In fact, the author Stephen

Goode would have us understand that, because the book is “notorious,” so goes the whole course, offered for ‘the sake of multiculturalism.”

Why This Particular Text/This Particular Argument?

This argument is interesting from a number of perspectives. First, it fulfills one of the critical thinking learning outcomes of our course. This argument is developed in an essay-more precisely, a book review-that addresses some of the most perplexing social issues confronting United States citizens: racism, political correctness, multiculturalism, racial separatism, higher education, and affirmative action. This is a passionate piece of writing that is disturbing and provocative, a work that confronts real issues in our culture.

Second, the exercise illustrates factors that influence us and make us vulnerable to argumentation in all texts. Clearly, the book review is written with a bias or slant, that is to say, with a certain “spin” on the subject (the effects of affirmative action on campuses across the United States). *Illiberal Education*, itself, is written from a sharply positioned perspective as is this particular book review which favors it. In this case and all others, if we know nothing to counter that “spin,” we are vulnerable in our ignorance to the appeals placed before us. Nowhere are we more vulnerable in ignorance than when we are persuaded, in that ignorance, to accept the claims of argumentation. In our ignorance of Rigoberta Menchu herself and of her book, *I, Rigoberta Menchu* (which I assumed in the development of this assignment), we are moved as readers to adopt the author’s point of view and his attitude toward both the author and her text.

In this particular case, our very ignorance makes us complicit in nothing short of crimes against humanity-literally!

Third, then, this exercise has rich historical value which, as a still evolving social issue of genocidal significance, should grip us all as individuals who value human life and who are empathetic with the plights of others.

Some Preliminary Remarks, Then Onward to the Task at Hand!

While we will begin this exploration with the formal analysis of a text in standard form and numerical analysis, the real focus of this exercise is the evaluation of arguments. In the evaluation of arguments, as explained earlier in “Notes on Argumentation Basics,” we evaluate arguments on the basis of the quality of the premises supporting a conclusion. That is to say, we must find the premises either acceptable or unacceptable, unquestioned or questionable, or true or false. Generally, without further information or some intuition to the contrary, we must find an argument either “successful” or “sound,” depending upon the type of semantic designation we give it as either non-deductive or deductive. In the case of this particular argument, without knowing more about either Rigoberta Menchu and her book, it is almost impossible for us not to find the premises and hence the conclusion, “*D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy,*” either “*successful*” or “*sound,*” depending on the semantic type of argument the author, Goode, is intending.

Deductive or Non-Deductive: That’s the First Issue

Our first task will be to determine whether or not we have an argument, and if we sense we do (that is, we sense that at least one claim “leads to” another claim), then we have to determine whether, in fact, the argument is deductive or merely non-deductive. You will remember that an argument is deductive if the premises actually guarantee the exact wording of the conclusion. The argument will be non-deductive if the premises only make the conclusion “likely” or “probable.”

Do We Have an Argument?

To determine if we have an argument, we need to find a conclusion. We’ll “find” a conclusion when we sense that one claim “leads to another.” The claim that we discover is supported by another claim will be the conclusion of our argument.

Where Do We Look for Conclusions?

In expository (explanatory) and persuasive writing, conclusions are likely to be found as topic sentences in paragraphs. Generally, topic sentences come first--at the beginning--of a paragraph. In the “exploratory” paragraph (an inverted paragraph structure), they will come last. In paragraph 21, we don’t have to look very far; in fact, we don’t have to look past the first sentence, “*D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.*” Such a claim (an “alleged truth statement,” you’ll recall) cries out for support, just cries out for premises--additional claims--that answer as reasons “why.”

So we ask ourselves, “Why is he good at taking apart hypocrisy?” As usual, we don’t have to wander through text very far to find the answer. In fact, we don’t have to look beyond the next sentence. Goode, the author himself, has anticipated our inquiry. The answer: “[*D’Souza*] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen students at Stanford.”

The Analysis of the Argument in Standard Form

Here, then, we find a simple argument which can be analyzed in standard form like this:

- 1) *D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.* 2
- 2) [*D’Souza*] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen students at Stanford.

In the two sentences above, the number “2” after the first claim indicates that claim “2” “leads to” claim “1”; that is, claim “1” is a conclusion supported by premise “2.”

The Numerical Analysis of the Argument

The numerical analysis of our argument would look like this:

$$\frac{2}{1}$$

Testing the Results with the “Because/Therefore” Test

This analysis can be supported by the “because/therefore” test by placing the words “because” and “therefore” before what we sense are the appropriate claims, like this:

Because [D’Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum
change for freshmen at Stanford,
Therefore, D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.

We sense, then, that the “because” claim is meant to support the “therefore” claim.

Now try reversing the two claims; try switching the claims in the “because/therefore” frame like this:

Because D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy,
Therefore, [D’Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum
change for freshmen at Stanford.

Sounds strange, *no? It doesn’t work!* The “because/therefore” test will always help us to discover the appropriate sense of relationship between the claims as premises and conclusions. But the first pair above does work as an argument, and the ‘because/therefore test’ has confirmed it for us.

Where do we go from here?

Well, we have to determine three things about the argument: 1) its structural type (simple or complex), its semantic type (deductive or non-deductive), and last, its evaluation. In fact, we can identify each of these elements in a single, descriptive sentence.

A One-Sentence Description of the Argument

Here is a one-sentence description of the argument at this point:

The claim that “D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy” is the conclusion for a simple, non-deductive, successful argument.

Now, how did we know the argument is a simple, non-deductive, and successful? It’s not difficult:

“Simple”

We know structurally the argument is simple (rather than complex) because it has only one conclusion (and that’s the final conclusion).

“Non-Deductive”

We know semantically that the argument is non-deductive (rather than deductive) because the premise does not appear to guarantee the conclusion, but rather makes it likely or probable (that “D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.”) The sense of it works like

this: *If D 'Souza deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford, then he 's probably good at taking apart hypocrisy.*

“Successful”

We evaluate the argument as successful because we sense that the premise makes the conclusion more likely than unlikely, more probable than improbable. *There you have it!*

Easy, huh!*Be careful!*

A Look at the “Intentions” of the Argument

As a matter of fact, what appears to be a “simple, non-deductive, successful” argument is an interpretation borne on a most simplistic reading. What we will discover in the course of this analysis is a much more complex-literally complex-argument developed through the course of all three paragraphs. The clue to its true nature comes from speculation about the author’s intention, what your authors call “thought experimentation” (p. 45). It works in this argument something like this: *Does Stephen Goode intend only a somewhat flimsy, non-deductive (probability) argument, or does he want us to experience an argument with all the strength of a guaranteed conclusion?*

Three factors cue us: 1) *the length*, 2) *the tone of the discussion*, and 3) *the placement of the discussion.*

Length of the Discussion

Notice that this is the only section of the book review in which Goode has addressed a single claim over the course of three whole paragraphs. We have to ask ourselves as readers, “*Why would he write so much on only one claim if he meant nothing more certain that a mere probability argument?*”

Tone of the Discussion

Even the tone gives us a hint of the author’s intention. Notice the rather severe sarcasm with which Goode almost gleefully addresses Rigoberta Menchu and her book.

The Placement of the Discussion

Notice, if you will, that the discussion of multiculturalism and the text, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, is the last reference to college curriculum and studies in the section devoted to scholarship over the course of more than a dozen paragraphs beginning with paragraph 10. That’s called “periodic organization”--*saving your “biggie” until the end!* The attack on *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, comes in the periodic position of his discussion of studies on university campuses--that is, at the end, the climax of the references to course materials in the whole book review. We are to sense--that is at least feel, if not realize--*that I, Rigoberta Menchu* represents Goode’s (and perhaps D’Souza’s) strongest argument against affirmative action as a policy for placing minorities on prestigious college campuses.

These three cues--*development, tone, and placement*--force us to reconsider Goode’s intended semantics. These three cues would seem to warrant a possible deductive argument in which Goode would have us understand, unequivocally and without any

doubt, “*D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.*” If we sense the possibility of an *intended deductive argument*, then we must reconstruct the argument, identifying both *stated and unstated (implied) claims* that must be supporting the conclusion. And sure enough, such an exploration of implied premises bears positive proof of Goode’s intended deductive argument.

The Implied Premises

Goode would have us make at least two clear equations between his two claims:

1) “*D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy,*” and 2) “*[D’Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen students at Stanford.*”

Does he not wish to equate “notorious” with “hypocrisy” in the opening statement?

Clearly, “notorious” is the only possible negative term in the second sentence which might have any possible relationship with “hypocrisy” in the opening statement. Clearly, Goode intends that we should understand that “anything notorious is hypocritical.”

Secondly, Goode would have us understand that “to deal at length with” means “to be good at taking apart.” Including these two “equations of definitions” to indicate synonymous meanings reveals, then, a startling new perception of Goode’s real intentions for the reader:

- 1) (*Anything notorious is hypocritical.*)
- 2) (*To “deal at length with” anything is a sign of being “good at taking apart.”*)

These two claims, joined to our two earlier stated claims, reveal Goode’s intended deductive argument. At last, we can reconstruct the entire argument, revealing quite clearly Stephen Goode’s intended deductive argument:

- 1) (*Anything notorious is hypocritical.*)
- 2) (*To “deal at length with” anything is a sign of being “good at taking apart.”*)
- 3) (*[D’ Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford.*)
- 4) (*D’ Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy. 1, 2, 3*)

Our Revised Description of the Argument: The Structural Type and the Semantic Type

Structurally, the argument above is a simple argument because there is one and only one primary conclusion. *Semantically*, it can be seen that Goode’s intended argument is deductive; Goode wants us to understand that to “deal at length with” is meant to be

understood as being “good at taking apart hypocrisy,” and that “notoriety” means the same thing as being “hypocritical.”

Toward a Revision of the Argument’s Evaluation

To counter what may well appear to be a clearly acceptable argument for the conclusion, “[D’ Souza] is good at taking apart hypocrisy,” we simply need more information. Additional data included in this unit will, in fact, give you nothing short of a case statement about both Rigoberta Menchu and the Republic of Guatemala.

Where to Begin in a Reassessment of Evaluation of Arguments

Stage 1: Identifying the Discrete Claims

In developing an evaluation of any argument, it is necessary to construct a full, standard form analysis. We begin by isolating each discrete stated claim in text. That is, we will “translate” each stated claim into a unique sentence, resolve any ambiguities (like pronoun references), and delete any redundancies and superfluous wording (like verbal indicators, transitional expressions, irrelevant claims). See Steps 1-7 in “Unit 3: Notes on Argument Basics.” Here’s the result:

Stated Claims in Paragraphs 21, 22, and 23

- 1) D’ Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.
- 2) [D’ Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford.
- 3) [The notorious curriculum change] saw the advent of a new course .
- 4) [The new course] brought in works by women and people of color for students to read for the sake of multiculturalism.
- 5) One of the books is *I, Rigoberta Menchu*.
- 6) [*I, Rigoberta Menchu*] purported to be the story of a Guatemalan Indian woman.
- 7) Stanford students read [*I, Rigoberta Menchu*] so that they can get the views of a Third World woman, oppressed by sex, class and ethnic group.
- 8) [*I, Rigoberta Menchu*] was written by a Frenchwoman.
- 9) Menchu talked to the Frenchwoman in Paris.
- 10) Menchu was attending an international socialist conference.
- 11) [Attending an international socialist conference] would hardly make Menchu a typical Guatemalan.
- 12) In the course of [*I, Rigoberta Menchu*], Menchu renounces marriage and motherhood.
- 13) [Renouncing marriage and motherhood] may not sound at all like an Indian in Central America.
- 14) [Renouncing marriage and motherhood] does sound very much like what faculty and students at Stanford want to hear.

15) [Renouncing marriage and motherhood] sounds very much like what [faculty and students at Stanford] hope their Third World heroes will say.

Stage 2: Identifying the Author's Implied Claims

Sometimes referred to as “warrants” in argumentation, *implied claims* reflect certain assumptions that, while unstated, nevertheless are operating in ‘the back of the mind’ of the writer. Implied claims represent where the author is “coming from.” Often, these *implied claims* are *unstated* because they represent the obvious to a reader, and the writer doesn’t wish to patronize the reader by belaboring the obvious. So, these assumptions are left unstated, though clearly implied or intended.

Here’s a partial list of implied claims in our passage:

Implied Claims in Paragraph 21

16) (To “deal at length with” means being “good at taking apart.”)

17) (Anything “notorious” is “hypocritical.”)

These two claims, along with the first two stated claims above, reflect a deductive argument (an argument in which the premises actually guarantee the exact wording of the conclusion, “D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.” The following claims, however, are implied in reference both to the book, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, and to the “notoriety” of the course.

Some Additional Implied Claims in Paragraphs 21, 22, and 23

18) (Anything that purports is a lie.)

19) (*I, Rigoberta Menchu* purports.)

20) (*I, Rigoberta Menchu* is a lie.)

21) (Anything that lies is notorious.)

22) (*I, Rigoberta Menchu* is notorious.)

23) (Any course that teaches notorious texts is notorious.)

24) (The multicultural course for freshmen at Stanford teaches a notorious text.)

25) (The multicultural course for freshmen at Stanford is notorious.)

26) (Any multicultural curriculum that contains a notorious course is notorious.)

27) (Paris is notorious.)

28) (International socialist conferences are notorious.)

29) (Anyone who attends an international socialist conference is notorious.)

30) (*Rigoberta Menchu* is notorious.)

31) (Renouncing marriage and motherhood is notorious.)

32) (Teaching what faculty and students at Stanford want to hear is notorious.)

33) (Teaching what faculty and students hope their Third World heroes will say is notorious.)

Note: There are still other implied claims that I would invite you to identify in one of our exercises.

Anticipating an Evaluation of the Argument

As I reflect upon both the stated and unstated (implied) claims listed above, I sense that in the mind of the author--Stephen Goode--they are acceptable (and if not acceptable, at least unquestioned). They seem to account for three whole paragraphs devoted in support of one primary conclusion, "D'Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy." Clearly, Goode cites *I, Rigoberta Menchu* because he interprets both the text and its author, Rigoberta Menchu, as notorious elements of the Stanford University multicultural studies course.

Checking for Validity (Deductive Argumentation)

Not only are these claims apparently acceptable to the author, Stephen Goode, but in fact, he has intended not just a probability or non-deductive argument, rather, he wants us as his readers to understand, with full certainty, that "D' Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy. When we reconstruct the argument, we do indeed find a deductive argument:

- 1) (Anything that purports is a lie.)
- 2) (*I, Rigoberta Menchu* purports.)
- 3) (*I, Rigoberta Menchu* is a lie.) 1, 2
- 4) (Anything that lies is notorious.)
- 5) (*I, Rigoberta Menchu* is notorious.) 3, 4
- 6) (Any course that teaches notorious texts is notorious.)
- 7) (The multicultural course for freshmen at Stanford teaches *I, Rigoberta Menchu*.)
- 8) (The multicultural course for freshmen at Stanford is notorious.) 5, 6, 7
- 9) (Any multicultural curriculum that contains a notorious course is notorious.)
- 10) (The multicultural curriculum for freshmen at Stanford contains a notorious course.)
- 11) (The multicultural curriculum for freshmen at Stanford is notorious.) 8, 9, 10
- 12) [D'Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford.
- 13) (To "deal at length with" something means to be "good at taking apart.")
- 14) (Anything "notorious" is "hypocritical.")
- 15) D'Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy. 11, 12, 13, 14

Checking Our Standard Form Analysis: Applying the "Because/Therefore" Test to the Numerical Analysis

Now, checking for deductibility, all we have to do is to reconstruct the argument in its numerical analysis as follows:

- a) A reading of claims 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 reveals a deductive argument:

That is:

Because 11, 12, 13, 14
Therefore 15

(The multicultural curriculum for freshmen at Stanford is notorious), and

Because [D' Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum
change for freshmen at Stanford, and

Because (To “deal at length with” something means to be “good at
taking apart”), and

Because (Anything “notorious” is ‘hypocritical.’)

Therefore D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.

Performing the “Because/Therefore” test for each of the claims reveals a guaranteed-hence, deductively derived conclusion; therefore, the primary argument is *deductive*. And we can continue up the ladder of the sub-arguments in the same way (you reconstruct the claims as I did above):

8, 9, 10
11

5, 6, 7
8

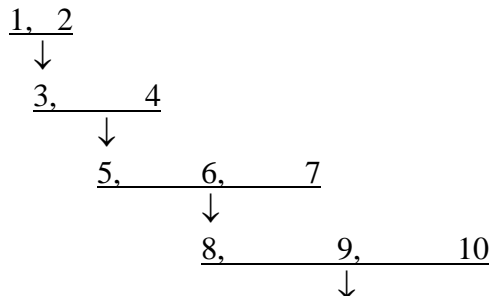
3, 4
5

1, 2
3

In fact, each reading of the sub-arguments reveals that each is deductive; because each sub-argument is deductive along with the major argument at the bottom (read from the top of the column), the whole argument is deemed as *deductive*.

The Full Numerical Analysis

Below is a reconstruction of the full numerical analysis:



required to review this information if you prefer not to. Read the summary of the materials I have provided and make your own decision.

Supplementary Materials for Analyzing “Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy”

The enclosed materials contain information directly related to the central argument in paragraphs 21, 22, and 23 of “Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy.” More specifically, it contains information about Guatemala (see the video “Guatemala”) and about Rigoberta Menchu (see the two page reading selection and the video, “Rigoberta Menchu in Oklahoma”). The purpose of this information is to provide you with additional data for evaluating the central argument of the paragraphs and the conclusion, “D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.”

Instructions

First read “*Rigoberta Menchu Tum: A Profile.*” Then read the introductions to the supplementary materials. Even if you decide not to view or read them, you can draw several additional claims from what I have written in the brief descriptions of the content below. These claims should help you to evaluate the major argument as either “successful” or “unsuccessful” in the case of a non-deductive argument; as either “sound” or “unsound” in the case you find the argument deductive.

“Guatemala” (video)

“*Guatemala*” is a short, tell-minute music video by Pete Sears, former lead guitarist for the “Jefferson Starship.” This “Watch fire” Production is his tribute to the people of Guatemala and their suffering during the period of their thirty-seven year long civil war. It contains rare footage of Guatemalan death squads caught on film in the actual seizure of victims and military attacks on civilians. This poignant video is a powerful mood piece, capturing the horrific struggle of a people caught in the machinations of endemic evil. It is meant to be a context piece for introducing the text from *I, Rigoberta Menchu.*

Selection from *I, Rigoberta Menchu* (reading)

Perhaps the climax of her autobiography Rigoberta Menchu, a Quiche Maya from the Guatemala Central Highlands, narrates the savage torture and brutal murder of her mother, following closely upon the murder of her father and extraordinary torture and death of her younger brother at the hands of the Guatemalan army who doused him with gasoline and burned him alive (pp. 198-200).

***“Rigoberta Menchu in Oklahoma”* (video)**

This six-minute long video records the pow-wow given to Rigoberta Menchu in the field house of the University of Oklahoma on the evening of May 8, 1993, a tribute to her receiving the 1992 “Nobel Peace Prize.” (Note: There is no violent footage recorded in this production.)

***“Rigoberta Menchu: Some Observations by Raul Molina”* (video)**

Dr. Raul Molina, former Acting Chancellor of the National University of San Carlos, recalls his long friendship with Rigoberta Menchu, beginning when he first met her at the university and his efforts later supporting her nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize. Dr. Molina himself was forced to flee after serving only seventeen days at his post as acting chancellor. During that time, five of his professors and dozens of students were murdered by the Guatemalan army. Fearing for the lives of his family members, he was forced into exile himself. (Note: There is no violent footage recorded in this production.)

Rigoberta Menchu Tum: A Profile

Rigoberta Menchu Tum is an indigenous Mayan woman from the Republic of Guatemala. She was born in the tiny village of Chimel in the central Guatemalan state of El Quiche in 1961. With her brothers and sisters, Rigoberta lived with her mother and *campesino* (peasant) father, Vincente Menchu. Unlike other Mayan children, however, Rigoberta was encouraged by her father to get an education, to learn to read and write Spanish as well as her native language of Quiche.

Vincente Menchu was an active community leader who took a wide interest in what was happening in the highlands in the late 1960s. After the discovery of rich mineral deposits and pockets of oil and natural gas, wealthy landowners conspired with the Guatemalan army-often in their hire-to seize the lands from the indigenous populations which, at more than seventy percent of the population, constituted by far the very poorest sectors of Guatemalan society.

Vincente Menchu began to organize the members of his community to protest attempts to drive them from their homes. In January, 1980, he organized the first indigenous protest, leading hundreds of Mayan farmers for a march on the Guatemalan National Palace in Guatemala City. By the time their small party reached the Plaza Major in front of the Palace, their ranks had swelled to almost 10,000 supporters. The government and army had seen nothing like it. On the last day of the protest, Rigoberta's father, along with about thirty others, took their protest to the Spanish Embassy. Once inside the gates, the protestors and all others, including staff and visitors, were firebombed and brutally murdered by the Guatemalan security forces.

After the death of her father, Rigoberta's family came under ruthless repression by the military. Her sixteen year-old brother was kidnapped by the army, accused of being a communist, brutally tortured, and then burned alive before the horrified citizens of a neighboring community who were forced to watch the assassination. Her mother was

then seized, similarly tortured, and finally killed by the army. Rigoberta herself became a target, and she fled for safety in Guatemala City. But even there, the military intelligence were able to track her, and after narrowly escaping an attempt to grab her off the streets, she fled to Mexico.

In Mexico, members of the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission heard her story and encouraged her to attend an international woman's conference in Paris. With the help of friends, the twenty-three year old Mayan woman was able to do so. A French-speaking citizen from Latin America heard her incredible story and urged her to dictate her autobiography while taking lodging in her newfound friend's apartment in Paris. After her book's publication, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, Rigoberta became increasingly sought after around the world. In 1992, the "International Year of the Indigenous," Rigoberta Menchu was selected for the Nobel Peace Prize, much to the embarrassment of the government and the hardliners in the Guatemalan army. From her exalted position now as an international leader and spokesperson for indigenous populations world wide, Rigoberta has returned to Guatemala after many years of exile. She has played a very active role in the development of the United Nations-brokered peace accords that were signed this December 29th, 1996.

From I, Rigoberta Menchu

My mother was kidnapped. And from the very beginning she was raped by the town's high-ranking army officers. And I want to say in advance that I have in my hands details of every step of the rape and torture suffered by my mother. I don't want to reveal too many things because it will implicate some *companeros* who are still doing their work very well. My mother was raped by her kidnappers, and after that they took her down to the camp—a camp called Chajup which means “under the cliff.” They have a lot of pits there where my little brother was tortured as well. They took my mother to the same place. There she was raped by the officers commanding the troops. After that she was subjected to terrible tortures. The first day they shaved her head, put a uniform on her and then they said: “If you're a guerrilla why don't you fight us here.” But my mother said nothing. While they beat her, they asked her where we were, and said that if she made a confession, they'd let her go. But my mother knew very well that they did that so that they could torture her other children and would never let her go. She pretended she knew nothing. She defended every one of us until told. On the third day of her torture, they cut off her ears. They cut her whole body bit by bit. They began with small tortures, small beatings and worked up to terrible tortures. The first tortures she's received became infected. It was her turn to suffer the terrible pain her son had suffered too. They tortured her the whole time and didn't give her any food for many days. From the pain, from the torture all over her body, disfigured and starving, my mother began to lose consciousness and was in her death throes. Then the officer in charge sent for the medical team they have in the army and they gave her injections and enough serum to revive her, to bring her back to life again. They gave her medicine, they looked after her well, and found a place for her where she was treated well. When she was a little better, well, of course, she asked for food. They gave her food. Then they started raping her again. She was disfigured by those same officers. She endured a great deal, but she didn't die.

When my mother was on the point of dying again, they sent us messages by all sorts of methods. They took my mother's clothes to the town hall in Uspantan. They exhibited it to prove to us that she was in their hands. We sent certain people to investigate what was happening to her and they said she should go, that my mother was

still alive, that she was in their hands and they were torturing her. She needed to see one of her children. It was like that, the whole time. We'd lost my brother, but I didn't know if my little sister had been captured with my mother or if she was doing other things. No-one knew. It was very painful for me to accept that my mother was being tortured and not to know anything about the rest of the family. None of us presented ourselves. Least of all my brothers. I was able to contact one of my brothers and he told me not to put my life in danger, that they were going to kill my mother anyway and would kill us too. We have to keep this grief as a testimony to them because they never exposed their lives even when their grief was great too. And so we had to accept that my mother was going to die anyway.

When they saw that none of her children were coming down to collect my mother's clothes, the army took her to a place near the town where it is very hilly. It was my hope that my mother would die surrounded by the nature she so loved. They put her under a tree and left her there, alive but dying. They didn't let my mother turn over, and her face was so disfigured, cut and infected; she could barely make any movement by herself. They left her there dying for four or five days, enduring the sun, the rain and the night. My mother was covered in worms, because in the mountains there is a fly which gets straight into any wound, and if the wound isn't tended in two days, there are worms where the fly has been. Since all my mother's wounds were open, there were worms in all of them. She was still alive. My mother died in terrible agony. When my mother died, the soldiers stood over her and urinated in her mouth; even after she was dead! They left a permanent sentry there to guard her body so that no-one could take it away, not even what was left of it. The soldiers were there right by her body, and they could smell my mother when she started to smell very strongly. They were there right by her, they ate near her, and, if the animals will excuse me, I believe not even animals act like that, like those savages in the army. After that, my mother was eaten by animals; by dogs, by all the zopilotes there are around the Stand other animals helped too. They stayed for four months, until they saw that not a bit of my mother was left, not even her bones, and then they went away.

Of course, it was dreadful for us when we knew my mother was dying in agony. But afterwards, when she was dead . . . naturally we weren't pleased because no human being is happy about that . . . but all the same, we were relieved to know my mother wasn't suffering any longer. She'd gone through so much torment that the one thing we wanted most was for them to kill her quickly, that she should live no longer.

(Pages 198-200)

An Exercise in Argumentation: Writing the Argumentative Essay

Instructions

Read, if you will, the “Supplementary Materials for Analyzing “Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy” and the “Guatemala Case Statement” including both texts and video programs (the “Guatemala Case Statement” is optional).

Then read “A Sample Essay Analyzing an Argument in Stephen Goode’s ‘Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy.’” This sample paper represents the exact format that I wish you to follow. Each of the units identified in the left margin of the sample essay should be included in your essay in the same order.

After you are comfortable with the flow of plan for your paper, then select one of the following three claims as the conclusion of an argument found in paragraphs 21, 22, and/or 23. Note that the premises may be either stated and/or implied in Goode’s discussion in these paragraphs.

Choose only one of the following claims as the conclusion of the argument you will analyze in your essay:

- 1) Menchu is not a typical Guatemalan woman.*
- 2) Students and staff at Stanford don ‘t want to hear the truth.*
- 3) Typical Central American women don ‘t renounce marriage and motherhood.*

A Sample Essay Analyzing an Argument in Stephen Goode’s “Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy”

In his essay, “Author Affirms Campus Hypocrisy,” in the April 22, 1991, issue of *Insight*, Stephen Goode reviews Dinesh D’Souza’s *Illiberal Education: The Politics of Race and Sex on Campus*. The book, notes Goode, addresses the negative effects on higher education of “affirmative action plus all it has given birth to on college campuses: falling standards of student achievement, the loud, unceasing denunciation of Western civilization, the special consideration demanded by groups that call themselves oppressed—minorities, women, and homosexuals.” Goode’s review is sympathetic to D’Souza’s attack on the “politically correct” movement in American universities, and he argues on behalf of D’Souza’s thesis.

Among his claims, Goode states that D’Souza is “good at taking apart hypocrisy.” As his premise, Goode cites D’Souza’s analysis of “the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford, which saw the advent of a new course that brought in works by women and people of color for students to read for the sake of multiculturalism.” As developed, Goode’s claim that “D’Souza is . . . good at taking apart hypocrisy” is a simple, deductive, though unsound conclusion.

As stated, Goode’s argument appears at first to be non-deductive and can be outlined as follows:

- 1 . [D’Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for freshmen at Stanford.
2. D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy.

Unstated premises, however, are essential to his support in premise I for conclusion 2. These unstated premises may be defined as follows:

3. (Anything notorious is hypocritical.)

4. (To “deal at length with” means to be “good at taking apart.”)

Restructured, the argument can be outlined again:

1. (Anything notorious is hypocritical.)
2. (To “deal at length with” means to be “good at taking apart.”)
3. [D’Souza] deals at length with the notorious curriculum change for students at Stanford.

4. D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy. 1, 2, 3

Or, in its numerical analysis:

$$\frac{1, 2, 3}{4}$$

As such, the conclusion, “D’Souza is good at taking apart hypocrisy,” becomes deductive since it is guaranteed by both stated and implied claims.

An examination reveals, additionally, that, although conclusion 4 is deductive, the argument itself is unsound. In his following discussion in the article, Goode’s premises—both stated and implied—lack credibility. His analysis of the text, *I, Rigoberta Menchu*, is superficial and fails to justify adequately his dismissal of the Guatemalan woman as “atypical” or that selection of texts “for the sake of multiculturalism” is an insignificant criterion for text adoption. He fails to mention, for instance, that during the times addressed by the book, Guatemala was a brutal land in which her mother, father, and younger brother had been tortured and murdered by the military; that she was in Paris, having fled for her life from the Guatemalan highlands with the support of human rights groups sympathetic to her cause. If she is atypical, she may be only in that she was one of the few fortunate survivors to escape. Goode’s rather flippant—though unsupported—rejection of multicultural studies seems prejudiced by his concerns for other issues raised in the article, sarcasm alone won’t satisfy the demands of sound reasoning.