

PHIL 24

What is an argument?

- *Argument* =df. sequence/list of sentence, the last of which is supposed to follow from the others
 - Last sentence is called the *conclusion*
 - All others are called *premises*
 - *Arguments* are the basic units of philosophy
 - Not necessarily disputation
-

What makes an argument good?

- When the premises support the conclusion, the argument is valid and sound
 - An argument is *valid* =df. it is impossible for its premises all to be true but its conclusion false simply in virtue of its form
 - An argument is *sound* =df. it is valid and all of its premises are true
-

What is the “form” of an argument? - Validity

- Often the sentences in an argument exhibit a pattern of repeats
- The “form” of the argument is a picture or diagram of this pattern
- How to find the form of an argument
 - Erase all whole sentence, leaving the logical words alone
 - Logical words include: and, or, if, then, not, every, all, some, every
 - Replace the erased sentence with upper-case letters using the convention: new letter if and only if new sentence
 - EX: If Jill drinks too much beer, then Jill is always broke. Jill drinks too much beer. Therefore, Jill is always broke.
 - Is it valid? Find the form.
 - P: Jill drinks too much beer
 - Q: Jill is always broke
 - Form: If P, then Q. P. Therefore, Q.
 - This form is called: “modus (ponendo) ponens”

Wednesday, January 14, 2015

- Any argument in modus ponens is valid
- Order of premises doesn't matter. This is also modus ponens: P. If P, then Q. Therefore, Q.
 - If 1 is true and 2 is true, then 3 is true = valid form, valid argument
- EX: If Jack votes for Barack, then Jack wants a Democrat in the White House. Jack doesn't want a Democrat in the White house. Therefore, Jack doesn't vote for Barack.
 - P: Jack votes for Barack
 - Q: Jack wants a Democrat in the White House
 - Form: If P, then Q. Not Q. Therefore, not P.
 - Is it valid? Yes.
 - This form is called: "modus tollens"
 - Any argument in modus tollens is valid
 - Order of premises doesn't matter
 - Also: not Q. If P, then Q. Therefore, not P.
- EX: If Jack is a good fellow, then he will lend me \$100. Jack is not a good fellow. Therefore, he will not lend me \$100.
 - If P, then Q. Not P. Therefore, not Q.
 - Is it valid? No.
 - Called the "fallacy of denying the antecedent"
 - Any argument that denies to antecedent is invalid
 - Order of the premises doesn't matter, but what's a premise and what is the conclusion does.
 - How different from modus tollens?
 - Premise
- EX: Form: P. If P, then Q. If Q, then R. Therefore, R.