

Diagramming Arguments, Moore and Parker-Style

PHI 200
(Erion)

Diagramming arguments is quite simple, and can be a very useful way to illustrate the logical relationships between the various parts of an argument. To diagram an argument, simply follow these steps:

- (1) *read* the argument, then *bracket* and consecutively *number* its claims;
- (2) find the *premises* and *conclusions* in the passage (perhaps signaled by premise- and conclusion-indicating terms) and diagram them by using *arrows* to show support from premises to conclusions;
- (3) if there are any *premises that work together* to support a conclusion, *underline* them and join them together with a *plus sign*;
- (4) indicate any *counter-claims* with *crossed-out arrows*.

Examples:

- (A) All humans are mortal.
Socrates is a human.
Therefore, Socrates is mortal.

- (B) Since [1], [2]; and since [3], [4]. And since [2] and [4], [5]. (Assume that [2] and [4] are separate arguments for [5].)

(Moore and Parker, p. 62)

- (C) Vote for Kucinich? No way. He's too radical, and he's too inexperienced, and those two things make him dangerous. I do like his stand on trade, but I still don't think you should vote for him.

(Moore and Parker, p. 63)

- (D) They really ought to build a new Philosophy Building. Though it would be expensive, it will attract more students to the University. Plus, it will enhance the Department's national reputation.