

Reasoning for Humans: Clear Thinking in an Uncertain World

PHIL 171

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2. Ann brought her laptop to class the first 5 lectures. So, Ann will bring her laptop to the next class.
3. The witness said that John stole the laptop. So, John stole the laptop.
4. Two independent witnesses claimed John stole the laptop. John was seen on video leaving the classroom. John confessed to stealing the laptop. So, John stole the laptop.

Arguments 3, 4 and 5 are not deductively valid

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When we *evaluate* arguments, we are interested in two things:

1. Are the premises true?
2. *Supposing* that the premises true, what sort of support do give to the conclusion?

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Arguments 3, 4 and 5 are **not** deductively valid, but *the premises do give some support to the conclusion*.

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Example

1,100 people, who are known (by some definitive means) to either be infected or not infected by the coronavirus, were given an inexpensive test to see how well it works.

I means the person is infected

P means the person tests positive

	I	P
	T	T
	T	F
	F	T
	F	F

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	I	P
80	T	T
20	T	F
100	F	T
900	F	F

Suppose the 1,100 people were drawn at random from the general population. Now you take the test and test positive. How confident are you that you're infected?