



The Toulmin Model for Developing Spoken and Written Arguments



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What is this?

Philosopher Stephen Toulmin's (1958) adaptation and expansion of the deductive syllogism.

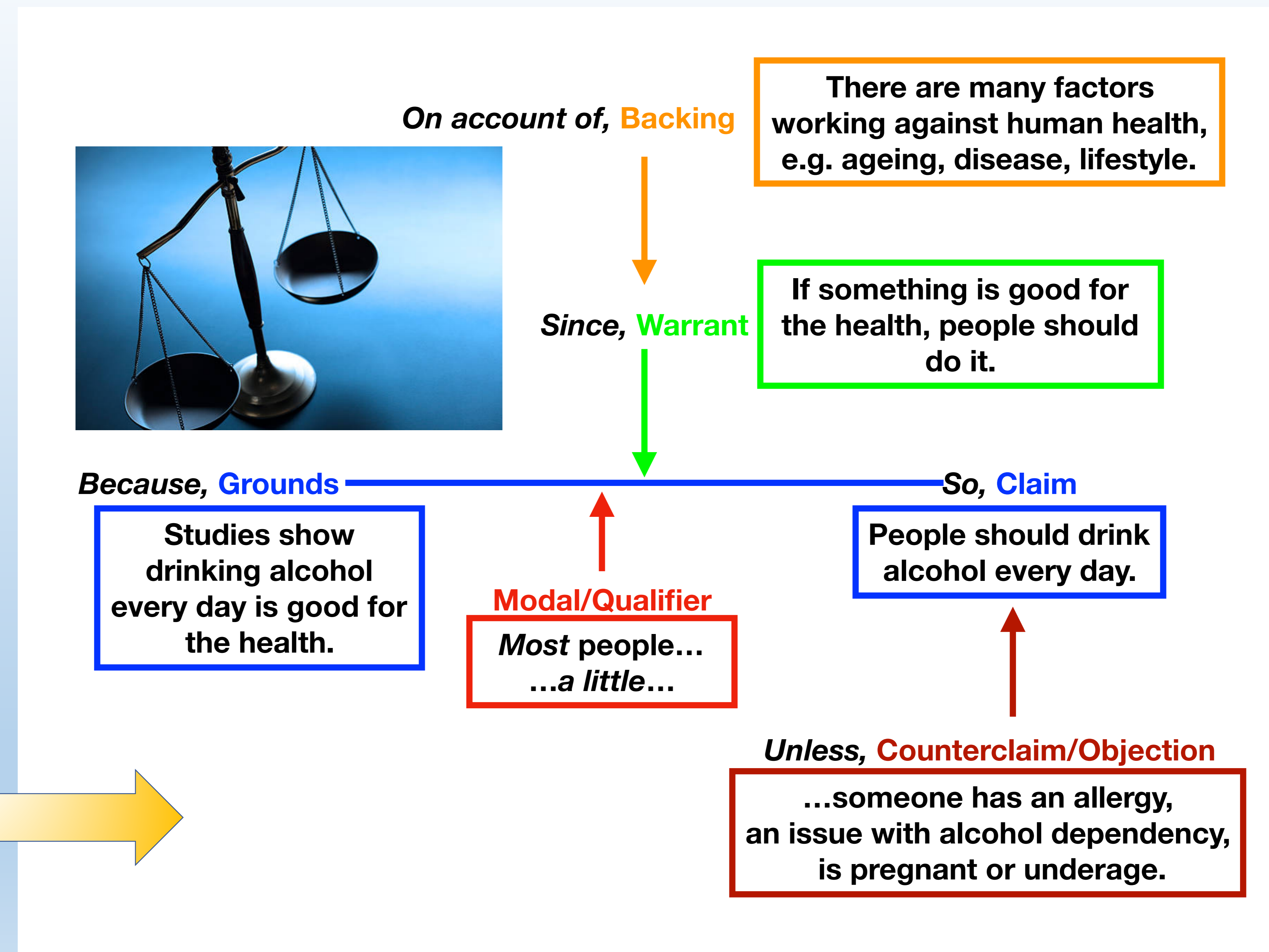
Real-world arguments (controversial, debatable proposition) have three essential components: claim, grounds and warrant.

"A general premise (the warrant) supports the specific fact (the grounds) that leads to the assertion (the claim)" (Karbach, 82, 1987).

Additional elements are added as needed: backing, qualifier and rebuttal.

Why is this important?

Learning is an engaged dialogue, a conversation, with various texts and people. This meaning-focused scalable heuristic affords a method of generating, structuring and evaluating one's own thinking as well as others.



The Toulmin model can strengthen:

- † Presentations
- † Paragraphs
- † Essays
- † Graduation papers
- † Planned discussions
- † Critical reading skills
- † Self-evaluation
- † Peer-evaluation