

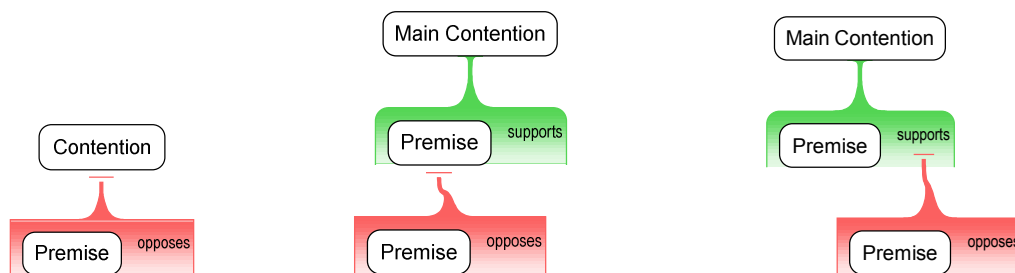
## Inference objection

Generally, objections are directed upon *claims*; they provide evidence that the claim is false. Sometimes those claims are themselves premises of other arguments. In such cases the objection says, effectively, "that argument is no good, because a premise is not true." In other cases, objections appear to be targeted not at any premise, but at the move from the premise(s) to the main contention. Consider:

*Radichio*: Things are terrible! The economy is going to pieces. It must be President Artfulwaffle's fault. Things were fine last year before he was elected. *Fennel*: Why blame Artfulwaffle? Lots of other things could have caused the economy to go bad.

Fennel is not objecting to Radichio's premise that the economy was fine before Artfulwaffle was elected. Rather, she thinks that the premise (though perhaps true) doesn't show that President Artfulwaffle is ruining the economy.

**An inference objection is an objection to the evidential link between the premises and the conclusion of a simple argument.**



*A standard objection*

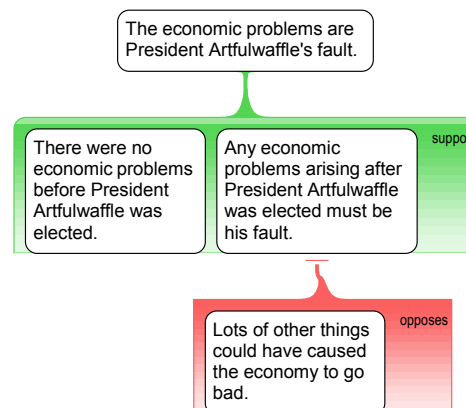
*An objection to a premise*

*An inference objection*

### Converting to premise objections

How can we reconcile the general definition of an objection as a reason to think a claim is false, with the notion of an inference objection as an objection to an evidential link (i.e., not a claim)? By realising that every inference objection is equivalent to an objection to an as-yet-unstated premise. If we properly articulate *all* the premises of the first argument, we will find that the inference objection finds a natural place objecting to one of those added premises.

In the example above, Radichio's argument has the unstated assumption that Artfulwaffle must have caused the change in the economy. Fennel's objection is targeted on this assumption.



### Genuine inference objections

An genuine inference objection must do more than assert that the conclusion doesn't follow from the premises. It must give some reason to believe that the conclusion doesn't follow.

Argument: Soccer must be the best sport - more people around the world play soccer than any other sport. Objection: The best sport doesn't have to be the one played the most.

In this example, the objection turns out to be merely denying the unstated co-premise that the best sport is the one played the most around the world. A genuine objection would provide some substantial evidence – e.g., that "Historical and cultural factors, rather than just quality of the sport, strongly influence the number of people who play it."