

## Exercise Solutions Chapter 10:

### 1. Consider the following claims: Are they normative or descriptive?

- a) **Descriptive:** Cigarettes cause cancer and many other health problems.
- b) **Normative:** The government should ban cigarette advertising.
- c) **Descriptive:** The number of people currently living in extreme poverty (without enough money to meet basic human needs) is 1.4 billion.
- d) **Descriptive:** The gap between the richest and the poorest in Australia has increased over the last twenty years.
- e) **Normative:** People in affluent societies ought to give more of their income to aid agencies.
- f) **Normative:** The tax system in Australia needs to be reformed.

### 2. For each of the following statements, identify the *loaded term(s)* and give a neutral alternative or an alternative biased to the opposite side.

- 2.1 With the latest **invasion [immigration]** of foreign nationals coming here, we won't have any jobs left for Australians. We should close the borders!
- 2.2 If **global warming [climate change]** is real, how come we had the coldest day on record this year?
- 2.3 Breaking news: A **riot [protest/revolution]** has broken out in Melbourne CBD with thousands of people holding signs and blocking streets advocating for the release of refugees from Manus Island.
- 2.4 All these **boat people [refugees/asylum seekers]** are putting the lives of their children at risk! Those **queue jumpers** should wait their turn like everyone else.
- 2.5 The Australian government is providing **tax relief [tax reduction]** to small business owners who have been impacted by the latest economic downturn in an effort to stimulate the economy.
- 2.6 "Dumbledore's **regime [leadership]** is finally at an end." Voldemort said to his followers, "We can finally give wizards the respect they deserve."
- 2.7 The **bureaucrats [public servants]** down at RACV don't deserve a pay rise, they cause more hassle to citizens every day!

2.8 If you really cared about human suffering, you would be **pro-life** **[anti-choice/anti-abortion]**!

**3. For each of the following normative arguments, do the following:**

- a) Put the argument into standard form**
- b) Map the argument**
- c) Evaluate the argument**

*Here, we provide some notes on each argument – but this is not an exhaustive evaluation. You might additionally consider counterexamples, identify other sides in the debate, and so on. For more thoughts on individual arguments, post in the discussion forum and/or consider other people's comments.*

**3.1** There are gaps in what we know about global warming, for example how much of the rise in temperatures is due to natural causes, how fast our planet is likely to warm, and what impact some of our actions could have. Given these uncertainties, costly measures to reduce climate change, such as those required to comply with Kyoto Protocol are unjustified.

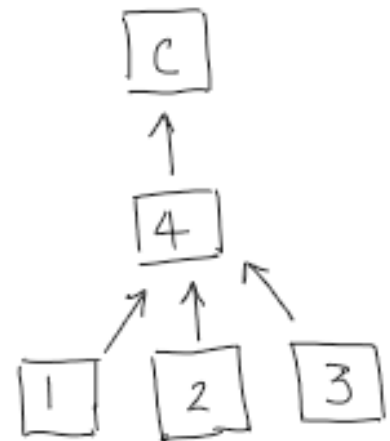
1. *We don't know enough about how much of the rise in temperature is due to natural causes.*
2. *We don't know how fast our planet is likely to warm.*
3. *We don't know what impact our actions could have.*

*Therefore,*

4. *There are gaps in what we know about global warming.*

*Therefore,*

*C: Costly measures to reduce climate change, such as those required to comply with the Kyoto Protocol, are unjustified.*



*The argument depends on an implicit assumption: for measures to reduce climate change to be justified, knowledge gaps about global warming would have to be smaller than they are or even non-existent. This assumption is implausible. Firstly, the existence of some knowledge gaps is consistent with knowing that measures to reduce climate change will likely be effective. At least, there would have to be some information about the magnitude of the knowledge gaps about global warming and why they are sufficiently large to render costly measures to reduce climate change unjustified. Secondly, the risk of not taking measures to reduce climate change needs to be taken into account.*

**3.2** There are two reasons why we should have a smoking ban in pubs and clubs. Firstly, it will benefit the industry itself, since many more people are likely to go to pubs and clubs if

they are smoke free. Secondly, it is wrong to subject people who work in pubs and clubs to the dangers of passive smoking.

1. *More people are likely to go to pubs and clubs if they are smoke free.*

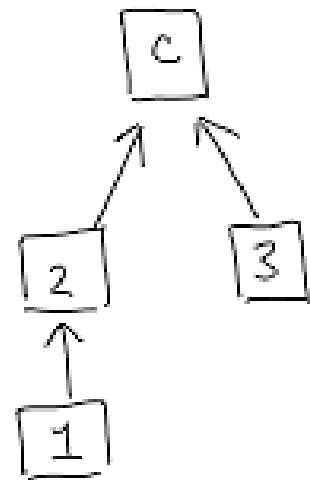
*Therefore,*

2. *Banning smoking will benefit the pub/club industry.*

3. *It is wrong to subject people in pubs and clubs to the dangers of passive smoking.*

*Therefore,*

*C: We should have a smoking ban in pubs and clubs.*



*The first main premise is descriptive, the second is normative. It seems reasonable that people working in pubs and clubs should not be subjected to potentially dangerous situations such as second-hand smoke. It is also uncontroversial that second-hand smoke is a health risk and so poses a danger. However, the first premise is questionable. It is possible that more people will go to pubs and clubs if they are smoke free, but it's also possible that a smoking ban will make pubs and clubs less attractive. The argument seems to assume that a smoking ban should be decided on the basis of popularity—but should it? Moreover, what about other reasons, such as getting smokers to smoke less, which is a possible consequence of the ban, and protecting patrons who are non-smokers from passive smoke? So while the conclusion's supported by the second premise, it would be stronger if other reasons were considered, and the first premise is shaky.*

**3.3** There should be an international criminal court of justice which would take the process of prosecution for war crimes out of the hands of victors. Without such a court, punishment for war crimes is bound to *appear* unfair, because the winning side will be seen as imposing its own values, and ignoring the point of view of the losing side. An even more serious reason is that without such a court, punishment is bound to *be* unfair, in that some guilty people will escape punishment. If punishment is in the hands of the victors, people are likely to be brought before a court for war crimes only if they are on the defeated side. (adapted from Fisher, *Critical Thinking*, #40, p. 181)

*This one is long and tricky!*

1. *Without an international court, the winning side will be seen as imposing its own values*
2. *Without an international court, the winning side will be seen as ignoring the point of view of the losing side*

***Therefore,***

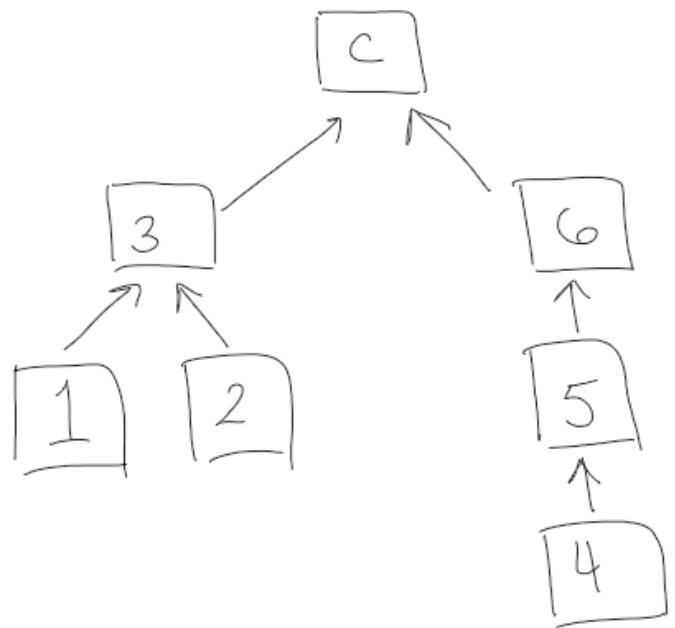
3. Without an international criminal court of justice, punishment for war crimes is bound to appear unfair.
4. If punishment is in the hands of the victors, people are likely to be brought before a court for war crimes only if they are on the defeated side.

**Therefore,**

5. Without an international court, some guilty people will escape punishment.

**Therefore,**

6. Without an international court, punishment for war crimes is bound to be unfair.



**Therefore,**

**C:** There should be an international criminal court of justice which would take the process of prosecution for war crimes out of the hands of victors.

While (the appearance of) bias and unfairness seems plausible if war crimes are persecuted only by the victors, it is not guaranteed that an international criminal court of justice would be perceived as fair and would be free of bias. While the argument seems compelling, it would be strengthened through consideration of historical and current cases (e.g. the Nuremberg trials, which were held by the allied forces under international law, or the International Court of Justice).

**3.4** The speed limit on major highways should not be reduced. Professional drivers spend much more time driving, on average, than do other people and hence they are more competent drivers than are other, less experienced drivers. So reducing the speed limit would have the undesirable effect of forcing some people who are now both law-abiding and competent drivers to break the law.

1. Professional drivers spend much more time driving, on average than do other people.

**Therefore,**

2. Professional drivers are more competent drivers than are other, less experienced drivers.

**Therefore,**

3. Reducing the speed limit would have the undesirable effect of forcing some people who are now both law abiding and competent drivers to break the law.

**Therefore,**

**C:** The speed limit on major highways should not be reduced.



*The argument has subarguments and a number of unstated assumptions. The main conclusion is that the speed limit on major highways should not be reduced. This is supported by the claim that reducing the speed limit would force some people who are now both law-abiding and competent drivers to break the law, and that this would be undesirable and unfair. This subconclusion is supported by the claim professional drivers are more competent drivers than are other, less experienced drivers. This is in turn supported by the claim that professional drivers spend much more time driving, on average, than do other people.*

*We can start by asking: Is there any evidence that professional drivers can deal better with higher speed limits than less experienced drivers? What is the link between being a professional driver / more time spent driving and competence?*

*Then we can ask: Why would a reduction of speed limits force anyone to break the law? This seems quite implausible—why couldn't professional drivers just adhere to the new speed limits?*

*We should also consider how high are the speed limits in question, and what other considerations (such as accidents resulting from fast driving, or environmental concerns) are relevant for reducing speed limits.*

*Overall, the argument appears quite one-sided and used loaded language (“forcing some people who are now both law-abiding and competent drivers to break the law”).*

**3.5** It would be false economy for the city to cut the zoo's budget in half. The zoo's current budget equals less than one percent of the city's deficit, so withdrawing support from the zoo does little to help the city's financial situation. Furthermore, the zoo, which must close if its budget is cut, adds immeasurably to the city's cultural climate and thus it attracts tourists and tax dollars to the city.

1. *The zoo's current budget equals less than one percent of the city's deficit.*

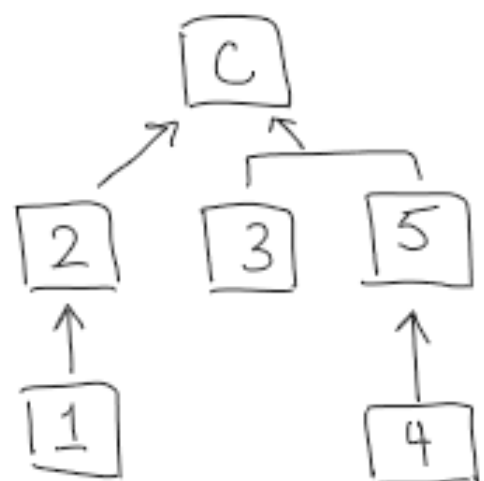
*Therefore,*

2. *Withdrawing support from the zoo does little to help the city's financial situation.*
3. *The zoo must close if its budget is cut.*
4. *The zoo adds immeasurably to the city's cultural climate.*

*Therefore,*

5. *The zoo attracts tourists and tax dollars to the city.*

*Therefore,*



*C: It would be false economy (ie. not economically beneficial, despite appearing so) for the city to cut the zoo's budget in half.*

*Note: While I think the way the reasons are functioning has a co-dependent relationship between premises 3 and 5, it would be arguably correct to have these as independent support – it would just imply more hidden assumptions, so I think it is more charitably translated as co-dependent.*

*More would need to be known on the contribution of the zoo to the cultural climate and tourism. Evidence would be visitor numbers and demographics, as well as evidence of the zoo's involvement in other cultural events, media coverage, and so on. Moreover, even if the zoo's current budget is less than 1% of the city's deficit, that might still be a large chunk compared to other ways to slash the deficit. Finally, what other possibilities might there be for funding the zoo?*

**3.6** Over the past ten years, there has been a 20% increase in the number of people killed in road accidents who are found to have illegal drugs in their bodies. This rate of increase is much greater than the number of people killed in accidents who were found with alcohol in their blood. This shows that the campaign against drink-driving has succeeded. Therefore, the government should now concentrate on targeting those people who drive whilst under the influence of illegal drugs.

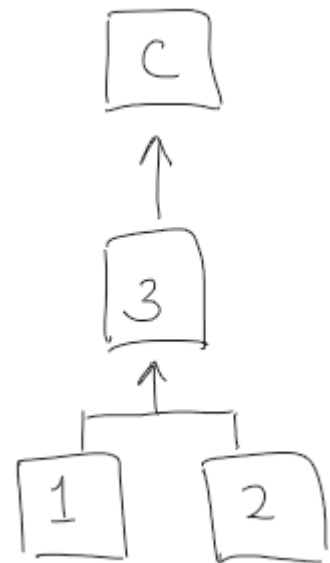
- 1. In the last 10 years, there has been a 20% increase in the number of people killed in road accidents who are found to have illegal drugs in their bodies.*
- 2. This increase is greater than the number of people killed in accidents with alcohol in their blood.*

*Therefore,*

- 3. The campaign against drink-driving has succeeded.*

*Therefore,*

*C: The government should now concentrate on targeting those people who drive whilst under the influence of illegal drugs.*



*We have a subargument. The conclusion that the government should now concentrate on targeting those people who drive whilst under the influence of illegal drugs is supported by the claim that the campaign against drinkdriving has succeeded. This is in turns supported by the claim that the rate of increase in people killed in road accidents who are found to have illegal drugs in their bodies is much greater than the number of people killed in accidents who were found with alcohol in their blood.*

*This raises a number of questions. How high is the number of people killed in accidents with high levels of blood alcohol compared to the number of people killed in accidents following*

*illegal drug consumption? Surely, the rise in drug-related accidents is a concern, but we need to know how high the overall numbers are compared to alcohol-related accidents. Even without an increase, the number of alcohol-related accidents may still be much higher. Moreover, what is the evidence the drunk-driving campaign has actually had an effect? What other reasons might there be for the increase in deaths related to illegal drug use? We also need to know what it means that the government should “concentrate” on illegal drugs; does that mean the campaign against drunk driving will end? Specifically, might the number of people killed from drunk driving increase if the government stops its current campaign?*

**3.7** Since many chemicals useful for agriculture and medicine derive from rare or endangered plant species, it is likely that many plant species that are now extinct could have provided us with substances that would have been a boon to humanity. Therefore, if we want to ensure that chemicals from plants are available for use in the future, we must make more serious efforts to preserve for all time our natural resources.

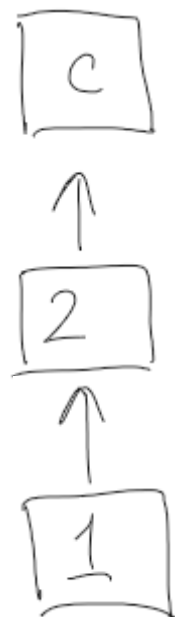
1. *Many chemicals useful for agriculture and medicine derive from rare or endangered plant species.*

*Therefore,*

2. *It is likely that many plant species that are now extinct could have provided us with substances that would have been a boon to humanity.*

*Therefore,*

*C: If we want to ensure that chemicals from plants are available for use in the future, we must make more serious efforts to preserve for all time our natural resources.*



*Surely, the main conclusion that we must make more serious efforts to preserve for all time our natural resources is plausible. It is also likely that this will ensure that chemicals from plants will be available in the future, given that many of these plants are rare or endangered. Even if those chemicals could be derived from other sources, this is a compelling argument. However, it is less clear how the fact that many chemicals useful for agriculture and medicine derive from rare or endangered plant species supports the claim that other plant species that are now extinct could have provided us with substances that would have been a boon to humanity. To support this claim, more background about the causes for extinction both of plants that provide such chemicals and other plant species would need to be provided.*