

**Due Date: Tuesday, December 5<sup>th</sup> (the final day of class – essay is due IN-CLASS on December 5<sup>th</sup> – No late essays will be accepted)**

The primary objective of this class is to improve students’ critical abilities. In such, during the second half of this class we have investigated common errors in reasoning called logical fallacies, we have reviewed the nature of proper argumentation (both deductive and, to be completed, inductive reasoning) how to evaluate propositional arguments using truth tables and we will look at how to evaluate categorical arguments using Venn Diagrams. With this said, the simple truth is that the majority of arguments that we encounter in the *non-classroom world* are not so easy to identify and evaluate as those we have looked at in class. Your second essay will expand on the discussed topics and focus on identifying arguments embedded within larger writing.

Assignment Details:

For this “essay assignment” you will be provided with an essay and you will be asked to identify argument components and argument forms and to *partially* evaluate the argument by answering the following questions (the essay is attached below). **All answers are to be written on the accompanying “Writing Assignment #3 Template” below.** There is no additional essay that you must write. The “essay” is the worksheet! You should print out the template and hand-write your answers (you may type them in if you choose). Make sure you write neatly. If I cannot read it, I will not grade it. **It must be completed in pen.** This assignment is worth a total of 80 possible points.

Complete each of the sections on the worksheet below (NOTE: NO additional essay must be written)

- 1) **Section I:** Identify the following in the article provided:
  - a. What is the article about – what is the general topic of the essay (here I do not mean the author’s position but what the author will be addressing - not the author’s specific topic but the general topic)
  - b. The Author’s Position on the topic (What is the author’s thesis – here you should state what the author is going to argue about the topic)
  - c. The **Three** arguments used to support the author’s position (using the included worksheet, restate these arguments in your own words).
- 2) **Section II:** *At least one* of the three arguments can be understood/treated as a Truth-Functional argument (Propositional Logic). You must identify which of the three arguments can be understood as a truth-functional argument, provide the symbolic notation, and you **MUST** provide a truth table and *identify* if it is valid or invalid. (Again: Please be sure to answer each section on the worksheet)
- 3) **Section III:** One of the arguments can also be *re-stated* as a categorical syllogism. Note, unlike the propositional argument from Section II, this categorical argument will need to be reformatted. Thus, you must re-format the argument in order to do this according to the *principle of fidelity* (I give you part of it). You must provide the categorical syllogism, you must provide the symbolic form, and you must provide a Venn Diagram for the argument that demonstrates whether it is a valid or invalid argument. Hint: You will need to reformat the argument so that it is a **PROPER CATEGORICAL SYLLOGISM** using *A, E, I, or O* categorical propositions.

All questions should be directed to me IN or AFTER class or, preferably, during my office hours – Emails, at this point, will be answered but considering the high number of emails I will be continuing to receive over the next two weeks, the previous methods are preferred. However, my email address is:

[joshua.carboni@csus.edu](mailto:joshua.carboni@csus.edu)

### Section I: Essay Details

- 1) General Topic (3 Points):
- 2) Author's Position (3 Points):
- 3) Three arguments (use boxes below):

Argument #1:  
(8 Points)

Argument #2:  
(8 Points)

Argument #3:  
(8 Points)

Preferences are discovered not chosen.  
I choose chocolate over vanilla.  
I do not choose to prefer chocolate over vanilla.

Note: You need to format this as a Proper categorical syllogism (A, E, I, O type claims)

### Section II:

- 1) Argument # \_\_\_\_ above is a conditional argument. (7 P)
- 2) Argument Form (Use  $p$  and  $q$  as claim variables):  $\rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow$
- 3a) Complete the Truth Table below – Long Method: (8 Points)

P Q \_\_\_\_\_

- 3b) Circle One: **Valid or Invalid**

### Section II: Symbolic Form (8 Points)

### Section III (Three Parts):

- 1) Argument # 3 = The Categorical Syllogism (re-formatted): (7 P)

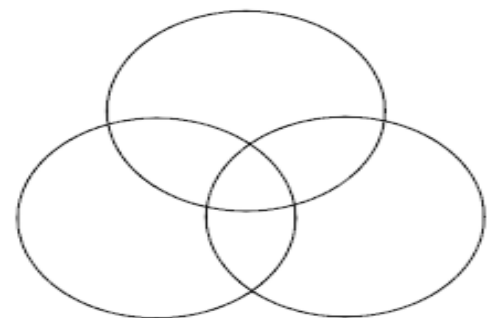
Major Premise 1: All \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.

Minor Premise 2: No one chooses a \_\_\_\_\_.

Conclusion: No one chooses \_\_\_\_\_.

- 2) Argument #3 Categorical Form (Symbolic Form & Mood/Figure)  
(Use  $P$ ,  $M$ ,  $S$  as term-variables): (7 Points)

### 3) Venn Diagram: (8 Points)



Circle One: **Valid / Invalid**

## HETERO BY CHOICE?

A radio commentary by Richard Parker

For a while there, everybody who could get near a microphone was claiming that only he or she and his or her group, party, faction, religion, or militia stood for real American family values.

Now, it was seldom made clear just what those values were supposed to be. I have a notion that if [my son] Alex and I were to go out and knock

over a few gas stations and convenience stores, the mere fact that we did it together would make it count as somebody's family values.

For some, the phrase "family values" never amounted to more than a euphemism for gay-bashing. I remember a [few] years ago, during the loudest squawking about values, when a reporter asked Dan Quayle whether he believed that a gay person's homosexuality was a matter of his or her psychological makeup or whether it was a matter of choice. He answered that he believed it was mainly a matter of choice. Two weeks later, Barbara Bush was quoted as saying that sexual orientation is mainly a matter of choice. Since then, it's turned up frequently.

It seems to me that people who make such a remark are either being remarkably cynical (if they don't really believe it themselves) or remarkably fatuous (if they do believe it).

If it were *true* that a person's sexual preference were a matter of choice, then it must have happened that each of us, somewhere back along the way, *decided* what our sexual preference would be. Now, if we'd made such decisions, you'd think that somebody would remember doing it, but nobody does.

In my case, I just woke up one morning when I was a kid and discovered that girls were important to me in a way that boys were not. I certainly didn't sit down and *decide* that it was girls who were going to make me anxious, excited, terror-struck, panicky, and inclined to act like an idiot.

Now, if the people who claim to hold the "choice" view were right, it must mean that gay people have always chosen—they've *decided*—to have the sexual orientation they have. Can you imagine a person, back in the '50s, say, who would *choose* to have to put up with all the stuff gay people had to put up with back then? It's bad enough now, but only the mad or the criminally uninformed would have *chosen* such a life back then.

(Actually, it seems clear to me that the whole idea of a preference rules out the notion of choice. I choose to eat chocolate rather than vanilla, but I don't choose to *prefer* chocolate to vanilla. One simply discovers what one prefers.)

If it's clear that people don't consciously choose their sexual preferences, why would anybody make such claims? I can think of a cynical reason: It only makes sense to condemn someone for something they choose, not for things they can't do anything about.

Is it just a coincidence that people who claim we choose our sexual preferences are often the same people who demonize homosexuals? No, of course not. In fact, their cart comes before their horse: They are damned sure going to condemn gay people, and so, since you can only condemn someone for voluntary actions, it *must* be that one's sexuality is a voluntary choice. Bingo! Consistent logic. Mean, vicious, and mistaken. But consistent.