# Intro to Philosophy

## February 5, 2013

* **Abductive Arguments**
  + Use “adbductive” inferences that are probable but not certain.
  + We aren’t certain electrons are why lights turn on and motors spin, but it’s reasonable to believe in electrons as the most probable explanation for all these events.
  + Maybe our belief in daggers is reasonable as the most probably explanation for all our dagger-seemings
* Without (God) we can’t know for sure what the external world is like – we could be living in a matrix.
  + Decartes’ Response – “We can know with high probability that we are actually living in a matrix”
* **Inductive Arguments**
  + A weak guarantee: “If the premises are true, then the conclusion is probably true.”
  + Generalizing from a sample to other things
  + The conclusion re-uses words/concepts that were observed to be true of the sample
  + **How to make an inductive argument**
    - Find a sample that would be representative of what you want to draw a conclusion about (P1 – We randomly selected 500 voters from Florida)
    - Observe what traits things in your sample have (P2 A strong majority of our sample prefer Obama)
    - Conclude that one or more other things will have those traits too (P3 So, a strong majority of all voters in Florida probably prefer Obama too)
  + Assessing Inductive Arguments
    - How **large** is the sample?
    - How **representative** is the sample? How likely is that the things in the sample would be like the things in the conclusion?
    - Was the choice of sample-members **biased**?
* **Bostrom’s Simulation Argument**
  + P1. Technology will advance so people can make matrices (simulations containing beings with experiences like ours)
  + P2. If people can make matrices, they will make a lot of matrices.
  + C1. So, out of all the beings with experiences like ours, most will be in matrices.
  + C2. So, we’re probably in a matrix ourselves.
  + #2
    - 1a. Humans and/or aliens will develop computational power that far exceeds the computational power of our brains
    - 1b. If a computer simulation includes a detailed simulation of the computations our brains perform, then it would contain a being with experiences like ours
    - P1. Technology will advance so people can make matrices (simulations containing beings with experiences like ours)
* Reasons for making matrices