

PHILOSOPHY 101

FALL 2017

PHIL101.COLINMCLEAR.NET

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Argument Extraction
 - Asking Questions
 - A Sample Text
 - A Sample Extraction
 - Argument Extraction II
 - Sample Extraction II

ARGUMENT EXTRACTION

ASKING QUESTIONS

- Is there an argument being made?
- What's the conclusion of the argument?
- What support does the conclusion have?
- What material is essential to the argument and what is extraneous?
- Is the argument valid?
- Is the argument sound?

A SAMPLE TEXT

There is no reason to think that there are any absolute moral truths. We can see this when we consider different cultural outlooks concerning what is morally required. For example, indigenous Inuit culture considered infanticide to be morally permissible in some situations. But modern American culture clearly thinks infanticide is always morally wrong. So what's morally right or wrong is just a matter of opinion, which can vary from culture to culture. (James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Theory)

A SAMPLE EXTRACTION

1. If moral truths were absolute then they would not vary from culture to culture
2. What's considered morally right or wrong does vary from culture to culture
3. \therefore There are no absolute moral truths

ARGUMENT EXTRACTION II

There are, moreover, seemingly unanswerable arguments that, if they are correct, demonstrate that the existence of moral responsibility entails the existence of free will, and, therefore, if free will does not exist, moral responsibility does not exist either. It is, however, evident that moral responsibility does exist: if there were no such thing as moral responsibility nothing would be anyone's fault, and it is evident that there are states of affairs to which one can point and say, correctly, to certain people: That's your fault. (van Inwagen "How to Think")

SAMPLE EXTRACTION II

1. If there were no such thing as moral responsibility, then no one would be at fault for anything
2. But people do correctly fault others for performing certain kinds of actions
3. \therefore There must be moral responsibility
4. If there were no free will, then there would be no moral responsibility
5. There is moral responsibility
6. \therefore There is free will

1. If $\sim A$, then $\sim B$
2. B
3. $\therefore A$ (by 1, 2, modus tollens)
4. If $\sim C$ then $\sim A$
5. A (from (3))
6. $\therefore C$ (by 4,5, modus tollens)

