

Philosophy 101

(4/7/11)

- **Quiz #3/#4 will be returned today (end of class)**
- **HW #5 due Today (end of class)**
 - **7 problems from Chapter 5**
- **Grades update. Rough Curves for HW 3 & Q 3/4:**
 - **HW #3: 85-100 (A), 78-85 (B), 68-78 (C)**
 - **Q #3: 75-100 (A), 68-75 (B), 60-68 (C)**
- **HW #6 has been posted — due 4/21.**
 - **Two passages for argument reconstruction.**
- **I will be posting Extra Credit Problems soon**
 - **In fact, there are two at the end of HW #6!**
- **I've posted 3 handouts on reconstructions:**
 - **A handout with 7 argumentative passages**
 - **My reconstructions of 5/7 of the passages**
 - **One extended reconstruction — in Detail**

Passage #4 from My “Seven Passages” Handout

The issue is not whether flag burning is offensive or even wrong. Rock music, vulgar language and punk hairstyles are offensive to many. And, infidelity, deceit, and lying are wrong. But, it is not the business of government to imprison people for offensiveness or wrongdoing of these sorts. A flag is a piece of cloth. To destroy it (assuming it's your own) harms no one. There are thousands of others and new ones are produced each day. True, that a piece of cloth has great symbolic value. But, that is precisely why publicly burning it can dramatize a point . . . Chief Justice Rehnquist argues that prohibiting this mode of expression still leaves people with plenty of others. That's true. But, it misses the point. One needn't prohibit all means of expression before one has compromised freedom. If I lock you in a room, it will be of little consolation that you can talk on the phone . . . We are genuinely free only when we can hold both the views we want and (so long as we harm no one thereby) express them as we choose.

Example Passage #3

Doctors who attend elderly people in nursing homes often prescribe tranquilizers to keep these people immobile. This practice is often unwarranted, and it often impairs the health of the patients. These tranquilizers often have damaging side effects in that they accentuate the symptoms of senility, and they increase the likelihood of a dangerous fall because they produce unsteadiness in walking. Furthermore, since these medications produce immobility, they increase the risk of bedsores. Doctors at the Center for Aging and Health say that physicians who care for the elderly are simply prescribing too much medication.

Passage #5 from My “Seven Passages” Handout

Students who come to school under the influence of drugs are disruptive and they interfere with the education of other students. Students have a right to a quality education, and the school board must not permit some students to interfere with the education of others. So, we should test students to see if they are using drugs and the drug users should not be permitted to attend school.

Passage #6 from My “Seven Passages” Handout

If you pick up a pocket watch and look at the mechanism, you will immediately come to think that someone designed the watch. The universe and all its parts also fit together like a well-crafted machine.

Passage #7 from My “Seven Passages” Handout

Sound logic is not always desirable. It is, in fact, the most dangerous of all things, if one starts with a false premise. In such a case, the more logically one reasons, the farther one gets from the truth. The only hope there is for a healthy conclusion or good thought, if a premise is false, is to make a slip somewhere in the reasoning process.

**Passage #2 from My “Seven Passages” Handout
(Has a separate “extended” handout.)**

In regard to your editorial, ‘Crime bill wastes billions,’ let me set you straight. Your paper opposes mandatory life sentences for criminals convicted of three violent crimes, and you whine about how criminals’ rights might be violated. Yet you also want to infringe on a citizen’s right to keep an bear arms. You say you oppose life sentences for three-time losers because judges couldn’t show any leniency toward the criminals no matter how trivial the crime. What is your definition of trivial, busting an innocent child’s skull with a hammer?