

# Philosophy 101

(4/5/11)

- **I've posted solutions to HW #3 & HW #4.**
- **Quiz #3/#4 will be returned today (end of class)**
  - **Grades were *slightly* better on the re-do**
- **HW #5 due *this Thursday***
  - **7 problems from Chapter 5**
- **I will be posting Extra Credit Problems soon**
  - **These will mainly involve *reconstructing arguments in (extended) passages*.**  
**[Plus, some questions about the text.]**
- **(Charitably) Reconstructing Arguments**
  - **Lots of *examples* of argumentative passages...**

## Example Passage #1

It is not always moral to save five lives at the cost of one life. For if it is always moral to save five lives at the cost of one life, then it is moral to remove the organs of a healthy person against his wishes and transplant them into five people who need organ transplants. But it is not moral to perform such transplants because doing so violates the rights of the healthy person.

## Example Passage #2

Although some have argued that nuclear weapons introduce nothing genuinely new into the disputes about the morality of war, I believe that nuclear weapons raise novel moral issues. First, nuclear weapons have new and undreamed-of long-term effects since the radioactive fallout pollutes the environment and alters human genes. Second, a nuclear war could destroy human civilization in its entirety. Third, in the case of nuclear war, the dust caused by the explosions would prevent the sun's rays from reaching the earth's surface. So, a nuclear war would result in a drastic lowering of the earth's temperature. In other words, a nuclear war would result in a "nuclear winter." And no human or human group has the right to gamble with the very climate on which life itself is based.

## Example Passage #3

It appears that animals may be able to predict earthquakes. Prior to a major quake in China, hundreds of snakes suddenly appeared from hibernation and froze to death in the snow, fish were seen leaping from rivers and lakes, and cows and horses refused to enter barns. Also, prior to a quake in Fremont, California, a flood of callers reported strange behavior from their pets and domestic animals.

#### Example Passage #4

Boxing is the only sport whose main purpose is to render the opponent unconscious. Indeed it is the only sport in which each player is licensed to injure the other. It must then be the most dangerous of all sports. Various solutions to this problem have been proposed – such as the use of head-guards and changing the gloves – but none of these would solve the problem of the danger of serious injury. So boxing should be banned.

#### Example Passage #5

Cigarette consumption could be easily reduced by simply outlawing tailor-made cigarettes. The manufacture of tailor-made cigarettes to American standards is a high-tech industry. It cannot be done in small illicit labs like the processing of PCP, cocaine or heroin. The availability of quality tobacco for hand-rolling would discourage the development of an illegal tailor-made market. Most people would not pay the premium prices demanded by an illicit market for a product of unknown quality. They could roll a high quality product for themselves. Truly addicted persons would continue to smoke no matter how inconvenient. But most would give it up as too much bother before it became a deeply ingrained habit.

#### Example Passage #6

The state has a right to intervene on behalf of unborn children, and this right should be implemented immediately. While it may be true that a mere fetus has no rights, surely a born child does have rights, and these rights project backward to the time it was in the womb. This is true because what happens to the child in the womb can have an impact throughout the child's life. It is well known that alcohol and drug abuse by expectant mothers cause birth defects, and 8 these defects are not correctable after birth. Granted, an expectant mother has the right to treat her own body as she chooses, but this right does not extend to her unborn child. Once a pregnant woman decides to give birth, she effectively transfers part of her rights over to her unborn child. Unfortunately, however, the unborn child is incapable of securing these rights for itself. Thus, the intervention of a higher power is justified.

#### Example Passage #7

The argument has been made that to cut down on teenage drunk driving we should increase the federal excise tax on beer. Such a measure, however, would almost certainly fail to achieve its intended result. Teenagers are notoriously insensitive to cost. They gladly accept premium prices for the latest style in clothes or the most popular record albums. And then, those who drink and drive already risk arrest and loss of driving privileges. They would not think twice about paying a little more for a six-pack. Finally, the situation is not as bleak as it has been made to appear. The fatality rate for teenage drivers is lower today than it has been in years.

### Example Passage #8

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.