

# The Examined Life

September 1, 2015

# Section 1

## Why Philosophy?

## Red Pill or Blue Pill?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zE7PKRjrid4>

## Discuss

- Could you live an authentic life in the Matrix? Give reasons for your answer.
- Which pill would you take? Why?

## Section 2

# Philosophy Pays

## George Soros



## Carly Fiorina: HP CEO





## Peter Thiel: Founder of PayPal





## Salaries

`http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/  
info-Degrees_that_Pay_you_Back-sort.html`

## Section 3

# Philosophy Makes You Smart

# GMAT

`http://www.nmu.edu/sites/DrupalPhilosophy/files/  
UserFiles/Files/Pre-Drupal/SiteSections/Resources/  
GMAT_by_Intended_Major.pdf`

# GRE

## THE POWER OF PHILOSOPHY

GRE SCORES BY INTENDED GRADUATE MAJOR, 2011-12

### Verbal

(Average score out of 170)

<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>160</b>
English	157
Political Science	156
Physics	156
Economics	154
Biology	153
Chemistry	153
Psychology	152
Education	151
Communications	151
Business	150
Computer Science	149

### Quantitative

(Average score out of 170)

<b>Physics</b>	<b>161</b>
Economics	159
Computer Science	158
Chemistry	157
<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>153</b>
Biology	153
Business	152
Political Science	151
English	148
Education	148
Psychology	148
Communications	147

### Analytical Writing

(Average score out of 6)

<b>Philosophy</b>	<b>4.4</b>
English	4.3
Political Science	4.2
Physics	4.0
Psychology	4.0
Economics	4.0
Biology	3.9
Chemistry	3.9
Education	3.9
Communications	3.9
Business	3.7
Computer Science	3.4

Source: Educational Testing Service; data available at [http://www.ets.org/s/gre/score\\_guide\\_tablet.pdf](http://www.ets.org/s/gre/score_guide_tablet.pdf)

# LSAT

`http://www.potsdam.edu/academics/AAS/Phil/upload/LSAT-Scores-of-Majors.pdf`

## Section 4

### How Philosophy Helps

### 3 Important Skills

1. The ability to think logically, critically, and independently.
2. The ability to communicate clearly and effectively.
3. The ability to reason with abstract concepts and apply abstract concepts to particular cases.

## Logic: The Math of Critical Thinking

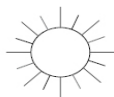
- $\exists x(Fx \wedge \forall y(Fy \implies x = y))$
- $\exists x \exists y((Fx \wedge Gy) \wedge \neg(x = y)) \wedge \forall z(Fz \implies ((z = x \vee z = y)))$



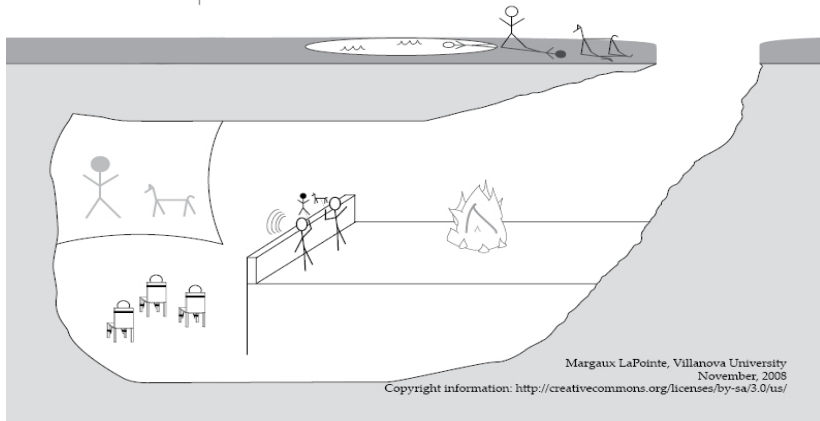
## Section 5

# The Intrinsic Value of Philosophy: Liberation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=69F7GhAS0dM>



## Plato's Cave, Republic 514b



Margaux LaPointe, Villanova University  
November, 2008

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1. My life has meaning only if God exists.
2. Suicide is never the best choice.
3. Knowing that I would live just one more day would not undermine my ability to enjoy that day.
4. God exists and watches over me.
5. There is a heaven.
6. It is wrong to criticize other cultures.
7. It is wrong to judge other people's actions.
8. The moral principles that I was raised to believe are the right ones.
9. I make free choices; all my choices are up to me.
10. My future is completely determined by my past.

## Fundamental vs. Non-Fundamental Beliefs

- Your fundamental beliefs are the ones that you use to support other non-fundamental beliefs.
- Let us consider two examples, one about health, the other about relationships.

## Reflection Time

- List down some of your fundamental beliefs and how they support some of your non-fundamental beliefs.

## Where did these beliefs come from?

- Can you recall acquiring these beliefs from serious reflection?
- Are these beliefs really your own?
- Would you have chosen these beliefs if you had been given a choice before they were imposed upon you?
- Why do you want to hold on to them?

## Liberation

- Philosophy teaches us 1) how to investigate the compatibility between our non-fundamental and fundamental beliefs, that is, it teaches us how to identify what our fundamental beliefs require of us. 2) It teaches us how to investigate our fundamental beliefs.
- As such, philosophy frees us from a sort of dogmatism that would otherwise overtake our minds by passively holding beliefs that we have never examined.
- As a result, we become freed from the beliefs that have been forced upon us and come to possess beliefs that we can truly call our own.