

# Argument Analysis 6

PHI 370/SPM 370

Due April 4th, 2014

Please write approximately 2 pages stating, in your own words, the argument contained in the following passage and critically analyzing it.

The robustness of these heuristics throws a pall of doubt over the notion that most people possess the intellectual virtues related to even rudimentary deductive and inductive reasoning. The processes used to arrive at beliefs about likelihood in no way resemble sound inferential practice; rather, people follow heuristics that treat availability and representativeness as indices of probability. My claim is that the same holds true for other heuristics, and that this creates trouble not only for the cognitive virtues related to deductive and inductive reasoning, but for many of the other cognitive virtues related to inference, such as abduction. If this is right, reliabilists face a dilemma. If they say that such heuristics are not intellectual virtues, skepticism looms: if most people use non-virtuous heuristics to arrive at their inferential beliefs, then most people have unjustified beliefs, which do not count as knowledge even when true. If, however, reliabilists say that these heuristics are intellectual virtues, then they need to explain how these dispositions are to be construed as reliable. *Alfano, Character as a Moral Fiction pg. 148-9*

You should first reconstruct the argument in the passage. Make clear what you take the conclusion of the argument to be, and what you take the premises to be, both explicit and suppressed, by setting them off from surrounding text and labeling each premise and the conclusion. Premises and conclusions should not be quotes; they should be stated in your own words. They should not be questions. It is best to do this both in prose and in standard form. Below is an example of an argument in standard form (but you needn't have only two premises).

Premise 1: Every claim with a truth-value is either analytic or empirically verifiable.

Premise 2: No moral claim is either analytic or empirically verifiable.

Conclusion: No moral claim has a truth-value.

Explicit premises are premises the author explicitly states; suppressed premises are premises that he or she is assuming to be true without explicitly stating.

Next, critically analyze the argument. What is the best objection to the argument? Is it to one of the premises? Is the argument valid? Ultimately, can the argument be successfully defended against the objection?