

# Argument Analysis #4

PHI 375/SPM 375

Due September 26, 2013

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

At this point it might be worth considering why we are so sure that there is such person-level reasoning. Or, to put the matter differently, why are we so sure that all reasoning cannot be fully captured by something along the lines of the jogging model?

A reasonable first response is simply that it is obvious that there we are able to engage in reasoning in which we are active all the way from premises to conclusion.

But I think there is a stronger point in the offing, one that is elusive but important: and that is that our ability to think of ourselves as rational agents depends upon there being the sort of reasoning that I am trying to describe.

Suppose some reasoning was such that, having rehearsed the premises, some conclusion simply came to you (accompanied perhaps by the feeling that it is 'right'), but not accompanied by any awareness of the process leading up to it. Full rationality would require that one ask oneself whether to endorse the conclusion that has simply come to you in this way. And this in turn would require that you lay bare the reasoning process by which the premises are supposed to have led to the conclusion.

In other words, full rationality requires that a self-aware process of reasoning, one with no blind spots in it, vet the deliverances of a System 1 process and rule on their correctness. And it is that sort of reasoning that I am trying to capture. *Boghossian, "What is Inference", pg. 16*

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?