Chapter 5: Answers and Comments

Answers:

I. True or False

1. False. We have covered only 20. Hundreds have been identified and discussed by logicians.

2. True. Don’t confuse these fallacies with fallacies of Questionable Premise or Fallacies of Relevance (C4). Here it is important to understand what we learned in C3. At least the premises of these fallacies are on track. Although very weak inductions, unlike the fallacies in chapter 4, at least the right type of evidence is offered in these fallacies.


4. True. We have to have preliminary ideas. We need to generalize all the time, but do not confuse the mere creation of a general hypothesis with its being well-tested. Weak inductions do not offer good inductive evidence and the AA should always describe what type of evidence would make the conclusion stronger.

5. False. An example of common student confusion. Both involve causation, but SS has the causation claim in the premise and QC has it in the conclusion. SS provides no evidence for its controversial premise; QC provides some evidence for its causal conclusion but it is very weak.


7. False. Another hasty conclusion often made by students. Since CQ involves a question, all arguments that have a question in the premises must be CQ. No. CQ has a special type of question that is actually asking at least two questions.

8. True.


10. False. Students will think that every weak argument should be called Suppressed Evidence. No, SE has a premise that is true and looks like a good reason until we realize that a specific fact is not being mentioned. Bush said that Massachusetts lost twenty-six thousand jobs. True, but what type of jobs? The state had gained 230,000 high-tech jobs. Crest toothpaste contains fluoride and this is good. But all the other toothpastes also contain fluoride.

11. True. The conclusion that something is false (or true) is a type of generalization from premises stating that something has not been proven true (or false). Based on what we
learned in C3 much stronger evidence is needed for the conclusion.

12. False. Reverse. SE has a true premise and SP has a false premise. Students will often pick SE for an argument but then argue that new information shows the premise to be false. No, cannot be. If new information shows that Bush was exaggerating greatly when he said that Dukakis had opposed every new defense weapon since the slingshot, then Bush was guilty of a Straw Person. See the exercise below.

13. True. Students will often just hand wave in their AAs, saying there were other possible causes. Not good enough. Need to think. What else was happening at the same time?

14. True. Important to remember what is involved in establishing reliable beliefs (C3). Lots of irrationality involves the refusal to test beliefs. People seek safe beliefs for security. A critical thinker knows that all beliefs lack absolute certainty and are at-risk of being false. Honestly testing beliefs increases reliability.

15. False. Our focus is not just showing off with labeling of bad reasoning and avoiding it, but the testing of beliefs and attempting to make our arguments stronger. By recognizing and calling people out for bad reasoning, we pressure everyone to make arguments stronger. Knowing the various nuances of how arguments can be weak—reasoning (weak induction or relevance problem), premises false or unfair, suppressed evidence—also directs us how an argument could be made stronger.

II. Fallacy Identification and Analysis

1. **Conclusion**: Demonstrations and protests by college students and liberals caused us to lose the Vietnam War.

   **Premises**: Before the demonstrations and protests against the U.S. military involvement in Vietnam, we were winning the war. After they started, we began to lose.

   **Label and Description**: Questionable Cause. A causal connection in the conclusion, and only a time (before/after) sequence in the premises.

   **Argument Analysis**: Reasoning. Although the premises are relevant to the conclusion, the argument is a very weak induction and the premises are not sufficient to establish a reliable belief. That the demonstrations and protests happened at the same time is relevant to these events being the possible cause of losing the war, but many other things were happening at the same time. The Vietnam War was a civil war, and many South Vietnamese were sympathetic with North Vietnamese goals for an independent, unified Vietnam. The morale of the North Vietnamese was higher than that of the often confused U.S. soldiers and corrupt South Vietnamese army. U.S. soldiers were in a foreign country. As with Iraq and Afghanistan, very few new the culture, language, and/or terrain. Any or all of these factors could have contributed to the U.S. defeat.
Note: We do not have to prove or offer reliable evidence that these other factors were the real cause. We only need to reveal the weakness of the evidence for the proposed cause by pointing out that other possible factors could have been involved because they were also happening at the same time. We are simply showing that the same amount of evidence exists for these other factors as for the alleged causal connection asserted in the conclusion. Sad similarities, however, between Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan?

2. **Conclusion**: Don't support the program that would give sterile needles to drug addicts as a measure to control the spread of AIDS.

**Premises**: If we do support this program, then when drug addicts who have not been mainlining (because of their fear of AIDS) have access to clean needles they will try intravenous use. Once they get addicted to intravenous use, when they cannot get clean needles, they will use dirty ones and put themselves at risk for AIDS. Supporting this program will backfire, actually leading to an increase in intravenous drug use and the spread of AIDS.

**Premise**: (Implied) An increase in intravenous drug use and the spread of AIDS are bad.

**Label and Description**: Slippery Slope. A slippery slope occurs in the premises.

**Argument Analysis**: Premise. Even though the argument is valid, the premises are controversial and unfair. An unsupported prediction is made in the premises regarding a possible chain of causal events. Although the slippery slope premises could be true, no support is offered for the controversial claim that drug addicts who have not been using needles will start using needles just because clean ones are now available. No studies are offered to show that in areas of the country where clean needles were given out intravenous use of drugs increased and AIDS spread. Such studies would considerably strengthen Brent's argument. It is more likely that many drug addicts already indulge in intravenous use with dirty and dangerous needles, but for those who don’t, it is unlikely that clean needles will suddenly change behavior. If someone does not like to be poked with a needle, having clean ones is not likely to change this tendency. Finally, the intention of the program is to continue to give clean needles, not introduce them, and then withdraw them, if and when more people start using them. So AIDS is likely to decrease if the program stays on track with the plan.

Note: We now know that these plans seem to work. Many studies sponsored by the National Institute of Health have shown that in cities in which clean needle programs have been tried, increase in AIDS cases has gone down dramatically.


4. **Conclusion**: Buy Lean Cuisine frozen dinners.

**Premises**: Lean Cuisine frozen dinners skimp on calories, fat, and sodium. They have less than 300 calories, controlled fat, and less than 1 gram of sodium per entree.
Label and Description: Suppressed Evidence. Although the premise is true and appears to be a good reason to accept the conclusion, an important fact is suppressed.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. New FDA regulations stipulate that "low salt" must mean "less than 140 milligrams of sodium." The advertisement claims that Lean Cuisine dinners have less than 1 gram of salt. The ad is suppressing the fact that this is 1,000 milligrams of salt! The advertisers have obviously deliberately chosen to spin their product this way; using "1 gram" within the context of low calories attempts to convey to the consumer that this is a low amount of salt also. Arguably, it is quite high.

5. **Conclusion**: Mike is mentally retarded, because he wants to have sex all the time.

   **Premises**: Mike is on automatic all the time. (He wants to have sex all the time and abnormal people want to have sex all the time.)

   Label and Description: Begging the Question. Archie's argument assumes the same belief in the premise that he uses in his conclusion.

   Argument Analysis: Presumption. Archie's premise assumes the very point that he is attempting to establish in the conclusion, that a high sex drive is an indication of mental retardation. He has argued in a circle and given us no independent reason to believe that a high sex drive is associated with mental retardation.

   For Hasty Conclusion:

   **Conclusion**: All retarded people have an abnormal sex drive.

   **Premise**: Mike is retarded and has an abnormal sex drive.

   Label and Description: Hasty Conclusion. Generalizing from one alleged example in the premise to all retarded people.

   Argument Analysis: Reasoning. Even if it is true that Mike is mentally challenged and has a high sex drive, very weak inductive argument to generalize to all mentally challenged people. Even though the premise (if true) is relevant to the conclusion, we would need a much larger sample of people with both characteristics to have a stronger inductive claim. This reasoning is like taking one apple out of a barrel.

6. **Conclusion**: The Supreme Court should not say that you have the right to (homosexual) sex within your home.

   **Premise**: If they do then you have a right to bigamy, you have the right to polygamy, you have a right to incest, you have the right to adultery. You have the right to anything.

   **Premise**: (Implied) It is wrong to have a right to anything—polygamy, incest, etc.
Label and Description: Slippery Slope. There is a slippery slope in the premise.

Argument Analysis: Premise is questionable. Although the argument is valid, the key premise is controversial, unfair, and probably false. Santorum has provided no evidence from any country that would lead us to believe that the links he makes might happen. He has provided no evidence at all for this controversial premise. There is a major reason to doubt the truth of the premise as well. People might endorse a right to privacy for what consenting adults do in their homes, but probably not endorse a forced sexual act and relationship on a child, as in incest.

7. Conclusion: Support North and the other defendants in the Iran-Contra trials.

Premise: Either we support North and people like him who champion the principles of freedom and equality, or we allow our country to be taken over by the wimp liberals, homosexuals, and Gorbachev lovers.

Premise: Allowing our country to be taken over by wimp liberals, homosexuals, and Gorbachev lovers is bad.

Label and Description: Questionable Dilemma. The first premise makes a questionable either/or claim; it restricts our choices to only two alternatives.

Argument Analysis: Premise is questionable. There was obviously a third choice other than the two extreme choices offered by the first premise. Because the key issue was whether or not North and others were guilty of breaking the law, a third possibility was to let justice take its course, generating respect for the law and not a wholesale rush to let our society be dominated by wimp liberals, etc. If North is found innocent, fine. If North broke the law, it is not likely that all of a sudden this would signal an endorsement of a liberal agenda by a majority of U.S. citizens just because he might then face a prison term.

8. Conclusion: Don't support Dukakis for president.

Premises: He is weak on military defense issues; he has opposed every new weapons system since the slingshot.

Label and Description: Straw Person. The premises involve a distortion of Dukakis's position on military spending.

Argument Analysis: Premise is questionable (false). Bush has obviously distorted Dukakis's support of military procurement. Although Dukakis was against some big ticket items such as the Star Wars nuclear shield, he supported the other big ticket items mentioned in the note. A single Trident II submarine holds enough nuclear bombs and delivery rockets to destroy over 200 enemy cities and a billion people or more. A lot more deadly than a slingshot.
Note: Common for students to argue that this is Suppressed Evidence. No, we would have to argue that the premise is true. Easy to argue that the premise is an exaggerated false statement.


10. Conclusion: Evolution is false or a very poorly supported belief, and any scientist who accepts it as true is doing so on faith alone.

**Premise:** Because science cannot prove categorically that the theory of evolution is true.

**Label and Description:** Appeal to Ignorance. Concluding that since evolution theory cannot be proved true (premise), it therefore must be false (conclusion).

**Argument Analysis:** Reasoning. This is a type of hasty conclusion and a weak induction. The premise that evolution theory cannot be proved absolutely true, that there is always a possibility that any well-supported scientific theory may be false, is relevant to the conclusion. However, that there is doubt—that all scientific theories have risk and only support for high probability—is not sufficient to generalize that no evidence exists for evolution theory or that it is false. This generalization is typical of those who do not understand the nature of scientific reasoning and the nature of reliable beliefs. Massive amounts of evidence exist for the theory of natural selection. A more convincing case could be made for this conclusion, if it could be shown that there are aspects of life's development or origin that are inconsistent with the standard theory of evolution. Inconsistencies in the fossil record, weaknesses in dating techniques, and so on, if they could be demonstrated, would be much more forceful evidence.

Note: When doing the AA for weak inductions it is important to apply what we learned in C3.

11. Conclusion: Attacking Iraq and the war with Iraq were justified.

**Premises:** It is just like a baseball game except with the tables reversed. We would rather play this as an away game instead of a home game. If we are not going to fight terrorism there, we are going to have to fight it here at home.

**Label and Description:** Questionable Analogy. There is a questionable analogy in the premise. Questionable Dilemma is also possible here. See below.

**Argument Analysis:** Presumption. The analogy used in the premise can help us understand those who believed that attacking Iraq was essential for the fight against terrorism. Militarily it is better to attack the enemy in their country instead of waiting until they attack us. But this analogy provides no evidence for the very controversial belief that Iraq had anything to do with 9/11 and that it was any part of fighting bin Laden and Al Qaeda. Critics claimed that the real fight and threat were in Afghanistan, and that
by attacking Iraq, we not only diverted needed military resources for Afghanistan, significantly hurt our economy and investment in our country, but actually made hatred and terrorism worse by invading another Muslim country. Important issues such as these do not compare to a baseball game. Key issue: were there good reasons to attack a country that did not attack us when we had already invaded another country? Should the United States have been involved in two wars against two Muslim countries, and at the same time?

Note: Since the second premise can be interpreted to mean “Either we fight terrorism in Iraq or we are going to have to fight it at home,” using this premise will work with a Questionable Dilemma fallacy. Critics would make a case that the premise is false. These are not the only choices. If Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11, then the real fight was not in Iraq. Fight in Afghanistan only. Plus, another third choice was to not barge into Muslim countries, but to fight terrorism covertly via the CIA, special operation forces, and drone airplanes. Literally over a trillion dollars could have been saved for our economy.

12. Conclusion: President Bush's domestic agenda is weak.

Premise: His domestic agenda amounts to no more than mingling with the millionaires, raising campaign funds, calling the recession no big deal, and referring to unemployment benefits as garbage.

Label and Description: Straw Person. The premise is a distortion of Bush's remarks and policies.

Argument Analysis: Premise. The premise is a distortion and exaggeration of what Bush actually said and his related policies. Bush did not call the need to help people with unemployment benefits 'garbage.' He called the Democrats' approach garbage. He did not refer to the recession as "no big deal." He believed that it was almost over and that the cost of the bill ($6.1 billion) was much too high given the goal of or restraining the growth in the budget deficit. Bush could have been wrong, but his position was not described accurately by Gephardt.

13. Conclusion: Abortion is wrong.

Premise: Wanting to have the freedom to have an abortion is like a bank robber saying, "I have freedom to break safes, and I want my freedom."

Premise: (Implied) It is wrong to rob banks and break into safes.

Label and Description: Questionable Analogy. A questionable analogy is used in one of the premises.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. It should not be presumed that Falwell has offered any evidence yet for his conclusion that abortion is wrong. The analogy helps us understand
his position: He believes that abortion is immoral and ought to be illegal, and that of course in one sense people are free to break the law but this does not mean that such actions are good. However, he has not introduced any evidence to persuade us that abortion is an illegal action. Furthermore, we can question the analogy itself. There is a major difference between bank robbing and abortion. In the latter case, the Supreme Court ruled in Roe vs. Wade that States could allow for many types of abortions. The Supreme Court has never ruled, and is of course never likely to rule, that some types of bank robberies are permissible. Our society may be unsure of the morality of abortion, but it is not unsure of the morality of bank robbing.

14. **Conclusion**: Archie is being honest about his approach to taking the history exam. (The use of concealed notes.)

**Premise**: Archie asked himself an honest question as to whether he could pass this exam without using these notes. And he gave himself an honest answer that he could not.

**Label and Description**: Equivocation. The word 'honest' is being used in two different senses in the premise and the conclusion.

**Argument Analysis**: Presumption. Archie has attempted to create the illusion of evidence for his conclusion, but has actually provided no justification at all for his claim of honesty. The sense of honesty referred to in the premise has to do with his being honest with himself about his ability and readiness for the exam. The sense of honesty referred to in the conclusion has to do with the issue of appropriate behavior on an exam.

15. **Conclusion**: There is evidence that Saddam has developed or is very close to developing nuclear weapons.

**Premise**: We can't wait until we see the results (smoke) of his development of nuclear weapons.

**Label and Description**: Begging the question. The argument assumes in the premise a position we are being asked to accept in the conclusion.

**Argument Analysis**: Presumption. The premise that nuclear weapons are being developed is the same point made in the conclusion. They are or have been developed and we cannot wait until we see them used, so there is evidence that they are being or have been developed! Rumsfeld did not answer the original question—is there any evidence that Saddam Hussein was in the process of developing or had completed developing nuclear weapons?

Note: Let’s be clear. Within the context of the surprise and tragedy of 9/11, the Bush administration was able to scare the American people into believing that a war with Iraq was necessary because Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction and it would just be a matter of time before he let those weapons be used against us. At the time, United Nations weapons inspectors warned that it was unlikely Saddam has weapons of
mass destruction.

16. **Conclusion**: The negro chauffeur was drunk.

   **Premises**: "What time did you get dropped off by the drunken negro chauffeur?" "About 11:30."

   **Label and Description**: Complex Question. One of the premises involves a complex question.

   **Argument Analysis**: Presumption. It would be unfair to accept this conclusion when no evidence has been introduced to establish that the chauffeur was drunk. The complex question premise involves two questions: Was the chauffeur drunk? What time did the boyfriend get dropped off? The question needs to be divided and each aspect dealt with independently.

   Notice that establishing that the chauffeur was black and drunk obviously was a successful attempt on the part of the prosecutor to persuade an all-white jury (without evidence) that the chauffeur was the murderer.

17. **Conclusion**: It must be true that marijuana is safe to use (less harmful than alcohol).

   **Premise**: It has not been proven false (demonstrated) that marijuana is not safe to use.

   **Label and Description**: Appeal to Ignorance. Concluding that something is true because it has not yet been demonstrated false.

   **Argument Analysis**: The reasoning is weak. As a type of hasty conclusion, even though it was relevant that there was not yet reliable evidence that marijuana was harmful, it was a very weak induction to conclude that it was known to be safe. In the 1970s scientists had not yet conducted randomized controlled studies to begin to understand marijuana's effects. A better argument would involve citing controlled studies that show the relative effects of marijuana and alcohol.

18. **Conclusion**: Abortion should be legal.

   **Premises**: Removing a fetus is just like removing a parasite growing in your body. A person has a right to control her own body in this sense and the government has no right to prevent a person from having such a medical procedure.

   **Label and Description**: Questionable Analogy. A questionable analogy is used in the premises.

   **Argument Analysis**: Presumption. We should not presume evidence has been offered yet in favor of legalizing abortion. This analogy helps us understand this person's position on abortion: Abortion is simply a medical procedure to remove something from one's body.
that might be dangerous or unwanted. But the major issue in the abortion question is whether the fetus is a person and deserves protection by the government. Is the fetus comparable to a parasite? A parasite is not something that will become a human being if left alone.

19. **Conclusion**: The U.S. role in Vietnam is justified; we must stay in Vietnam.

**Premise**: If we don't stay, the Communists would have the whole thing (the rest of Southeast Asia), and it wouldn't be long until we'd be looking off the coast of Santa Monica (California). In other words, Communists would eventually invade California and the United States.

**Premise**: (Implied) It would be very bad to have the Communists off the coast of Santa Monica ready to invade California and the United States.

**Label and Description**: Slippery Slope. One of the premises is an unsupported slippery slope. One of the premises claims that once a first step is taken a number of other steps are inevitable.

**Argument Analysis**: Premise. The premise is questionable and unfair. Although the reasoning is valid, an unsupported and controversial prediction is made in the premises regarding a possible chain of causal events. Without some evidence presented to support the connections asserted in the premise, the mere assertion of a possible chain of events cannot support the conclusion. Hope has provided no reason for us to believe that even if the U.S. pulled out of Vietnam, all the other countries in Southeast Asia would be taken over by communism as well. There is more than adequate reason to doubt that pulling out of Vietnam would have resulted eventually in communists invading the United States. Numerous Southeast Asian countries would have to fall to communism, countries with unique conditions and histories different from that of North Korea and North Vietnam. The Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Japan were not likely to have been susceptible to a communist takeover. Plus, the United States had a huge military presence in Japan and South Korea.

**Conclusion**: We should oppose giving homosexuals the same Constitutional protection against discrimination as that of other minorities.

**Premise**: If we don't oppose it and give homosexuals the civil rights issue, then next year we will have to give it to prostitutes. Then it will be for child molesters, then bestiality, then necrophilia.

**Premise**: (Implied) Necrophilia is horrible.

**Label and Description**: Slippery Slope. There is a slippery slope in one of the premises. One of the premises claims that once a first step is taken a number of other steps are inevitable.
Argument Analysis: Premise. The premise is questionable and unfair. Although the reasoning is valid, an unsupported and controversial prediction is made in the premises regarding a possible chain of causal events. Without some evidence presented to support the connections asserted in the premise, the mere assertion of a possible chain of events cannot support the conclusion. Bryant has provided no reason to believe that endorsing gay rights will lead to the promotion of equal protection for necrophiles. To dismiss an award winning high school history teacher because he is gay is one thing. To dismiss an admitted necrophile is another. Bryant has not offered any independent studies or referred to any other areas of the country or world, in which gay rights are promoted, that might provide some reason that this chain may occur.

Conclusion: We should not repeal the “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy for gay service men and women in our military.

Premises: If we do, it will lead to a decadent atmosphere brimming with alcohol use, adultery, fraternization, and body art. It will just be a matter of time before we have an explosion of homosexual assaults in which sleeping soldiers would be the victims of fondling and fellatio by gay predators. It will weaken our ability to fight our enemies and destroy our military.

Premise: (Implied) Destroying our military is very bad.

Label and Description: Slippery Slope. There is a slippery slope in one of the premises. One of the premises claims that once a first step is taken a number of other steps are inevitable.

Argument Analysis: Premise. The premise is questionable and unfair. Although the reasoning is valid, an unsupported and controversial prediction is made in the premises regarding a possible chain of causal events. Without some evidence presented to support the connections asserted in the premise, the mere assertion of a possible chain of events cannot support the conclusion. No evidence has been provided that any of these terrible things will happen to the military. Most important the evidence from other countries (Canada, Britain, and Israel) indicates that these behaviors are not likely to happen.

20. Conclusion: Buy Pepperidge Farm’s Flaky Crust Pot Pies.

Premises: Each pie has moderate calories and fat. With only 450 calories and eight grams of fat a little indulgence is worth the price for great taste. Pepperidge Farm’s Flaky Crust Chicken Pot Pies—an oven baked taste just like Grandma made for our modern microwave life styles.

Label and Description: Suppressed Evidence. Although the premise about calories and fat is true and appears to be a good reason to accept the conclusion, an important fact is suppressed.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. Although the claims about the calorie and fat content
discussed in the premises are true, suppressed is the very important fact that these figures are only for half a pie! Since most people eat a whole pie, the combined fat (saturated and trans-fat) is 29 grams, equal to eating two McDonald’s Quarter Pounders.

21. **Conclusion**: Our nation has forgotten God.

**Premises**: There has been an annual gay rights parade in Washington D.C., and some examples of shameless promotion of sexual immorality on the streets of our nation's capital. The president has given a public blessing to the gay and lesbian community.

**Label and Description**: Hasty Conclusion. The conclusion asserts a considerable generalization given the small amount of evidence in the premise.

**Argument Analysis**: Reasoning. Even if we were to grant that there has been some sexual immorality on the streets of our nation's capital, and that Clinton has given his "public blessing" to the gay community, and that these events are relevant to the conclusion, the conclusion is a very big generalization and the argument is a very weak induction. Clinton believes in God and only advocated that gays be treated fairly in the military. He did not give his public blessing to promiscuity. Part of the platform for gay rights is the legalization of gay marriages and protection of the family unit (gays with children) against laws and people who would break them apart. Many gay rights advocates also believe in God and believe they are acting consistent with God's wishes by advocating fair treatment of gays. There are homosexual Christian churches as well. These may be very controversial stances, but it is very hasty to conclude that the parades and Clinton's action are a clear indication that the whole nation has become secular and no longer cares about a relationship with God.

22. See Textbook.

23. **Conclusion**: President Bush's war on drugs has worked; his policies of rigorous interdiction and police law enforcement efforts have caused a dramatic decrease in the use of drugs in our society.

**Premises**: Before Bush was president, the use of marijuana and cocaine were skyrocketing. Now, since he has been president, the use of both drugs has dropped dramatically.

**Label and Description**: Questionable Cause. There is a causal connection in the conclusion, and only a time sequence in the premises.

**Argument Analysis**: Reasoning. Even though the premises are relevant to the conclusion, they are insufficient to establish this conclusion. Even if marijuana and cocaine use have gone down, and even if the use of other drugs has not gone up (it had substantially), a much more thorough analysis would be needed to demonstrate that the Bush plan has worked. Times change, attitudes change, and many people may have stopped using these drugs because they no longer had the popular image that they did in the 1970s of being
progressive and revolutionary. Although not relevant to the QC focus, it is also debatable whether drug usage has gone down. Critics of the Bush policy claim that the use of much more dangerous drugs have gone up, precisely because of the Bush policy of suppressing a less harmful drug such as marijuana.

24. **Conclusion**: Don’t support the Bush immigration bill.

**Premises**: If this bill becomes law, it will provide amnesty to an estimated 12 million people who broke the law of the United States and allow them to stay in our country legally. What is next? Amnesty for sex offenders and murderers? Make no mistake about it how much this will allow us to let down our guard on protecting our borders. If this bill becomes law, it will eventually allow terrorists, gang members and sex offenders into the country.

**Premise**: (Implied) Amnesty for sex offenders and murderers and letting terrorists into the country is very bad.

**Label and Description**: Slippery Slope. There is a slippery slope in one of the premises. One of the premises claims that once a first step is taken a number of other steps are inevitable.

**Argument Analysis**: Premise. The premise is questionable and unfair. Although the reasoning is valid, an unsupported and controversial prediction is made in the premises regarding a possible chain of causal events. Without some evidence presented to support the connections asserted in the premise, the mere assertion of a possible chain of events cannot support the conclusion. In addition, it is very unlikely that the predictions made in the premises about sex offenders, murderers, and terrorists will happen. The bill provides for a rigorous process of background checks, financial penalty for being in the country illegally, an eight year wait involving demonstration of worthiness of legal status, and substantial investment in border security.

25. **Conclusion**: Evolution theory is true. Life evolved on Earth. (It would be stupid not to believe in the theory of evolution.)

**Premises**: Evolution is just like a tree. The leaves are the species of plants and animals we observe today. The trunk, branches, and stems are the extinct species of the past. It would be just as stupid to not believe in evolution as it would to believe tree leaves could miraculously come into existence without a trunk and branches.

**Label and Description**: Questionable Analogy. A questionable analogy is used in the premises.

**Argument Analysis**: Presumption. No evidence has been offered yet for evolution theory. Although this is the standard analogy used by supporters of evolution theory to help understand the theory, its use is meant to be in conjunction with the enormous fossil and genetic evidence that life has evolved on Earth. The mere analogy by itself is not
evidence. Furthermore, there are some obvious differences in a tree and evolution. The trunk of a tree along with its branches and leaves all exist at the same time, and so it would be strange to imagine a tree with just the tips of its leaves visible without also assuming that it had a trunk and branches. Evolution, on the other hand, takes millions of years and extinct species are not alive, for the most part, at the same time as their descendants.

26. **Conclusion**: We should be able to think for ourselves on whether we pay taxes this year.

   **Premise**: In a democracy we are supposed to think for ourselves.

   **Label and Description**: Equivocation. The phrase "think for ourselves" has a different meaning in the conclusion and premise.

   **Argument Analysis**: Presumption. It would be incorrect to believe that any evidence has been offered for this conclusion, because thinking for oneself in the premise refers to political, religious, and ideological freedom. It does not mean that we are free, as the conclusion proposes, to break the law or oppose a policy (taxation) that has been accepted by a constitutional, representative democracy.

27. See textbook.

28. **Conclusion**: The public is interested in the intimate details of famous personalities and the National Enquirer should not be sued for distortion or exaggeration.

   **Premises**: In a democracy a free press is in the public interest.

   **Label and Description**: Equivocation. The phrases "public interest" (conclusion) and "public . . . interested in" (premise) do not mean the same thing.

   **Argument Analysis**: Presumption. A free press is in the public interest, but the deliberate distortion of the truth is not. “Public interest” in the premise means what is good for the general welfare. The premise is referring to what may excite the majority of people, but the people reading these tabloids think that the stories are true. Even if the majority of people reading these tabloids are just interested in entertaining stories, knowing that they are exaggerated, the accepted benefit of a free press is not meant to imply that just any story can be printed without repercussions. The public interest of a free press is objective information for the purpose of informed decision-making.

29. **Conclusion**: We should not legalize marijuana for medical purposes.

   **Premises**: If we do this for the ill, you end up with allowing marijuana use for anyone who can claim to be ill. If you give this societal nod and wink to marijuana for medical reasons, it sends a message to kids that pot is OK, and everyone knows that children are extraordinarily sensitive to signals coming from culture. Soon, because marijuana is a gateway drug, more and more of our children will be using cocaine and heroin. If you
legalize marijuana for medical use, it will be an invitation to every teenager with hangnail to come in and zone out.

Premise: (Implied) It is very wrong for children to use cocaine and heroin, and invite teenagers with a hangnail to use it for pain.

Label and Description: Slippery Slope. There is a slippery slope in one of the premises. One of the premises claims that once a first step is taken a number of other steps are inevitable.

Argument Analysis: Premise. The premise is questionable and unfair. Although the reasoning is valid, an unsupported and controversial prediction is made in the premises regarding a possible chain of causal events. Without some evidence presented to support the connections asserted in the premise, the mere assertion of a possible chain of events cannot support the conclusion. Although proper enforcement and education are important, there are many legal prescription drugs that children and teenagers know it would be wrong to use. It is now known that marijuana is medically useful for some debilitating conditions. Just because marijuana becomes an approved medicine for some conditions, it is not likely that society in general would approve and not try to control marijuana use for children and teenagers. A stronger argument would be to provide some evidence showing that in states where marijuana was legalized for approved medical conditions, children using heroin and cocaine occurred shortly after and teenagers started using it for minor ailments.

30. Conclusion: We should eliminate all tofu from our diets.

Premises: One study done with about 4,000 Japanese-American men showed that those men who ate tofu at least twice a week or more were more than 2.5 times more likely to suffer some form of senile dementia (Alzheimer's and similar brain diseases) than those men who rarely or never ate tofu. The men were part of a Honolulu Heart Study that started in the 1960s. Their diets were carefully monitored for over 30 years. In the 1990s autopsies were done on the men who died and cognitive tests were done on those still alive.

Label and Description: Hasty Conclusion. There is a considerable generalization in the conclusion, given the small amount of inductive evidence in the premise.

Argument Analysis: Reasoning. Although the study cited in the premise is relevant to the conclusion, it is insufficient to support the generalization in the conclusion. First, this was only a single study in a single country. For science to come to this general conclusion in a reliable way, many more studies are needed. Two, the controls of this study were poor. Education level and incidence of previous strokes were not examined, both of which could have an impact on brain function in very old men. Third, this result conflicts with higher-order generalizations that people in East-Asian cultures eat lots of tofu and have lower incidents of dementia compared to people in the United States.
Needed would be follow-up studies that specifically targeted testing this generalization, rather than deriving alleged secondary information from a heart study. Plus, these studies would need to be randomized and have better controls.

31. **Conclusion:** The decision by President Bush to invade Iraq was necessary.

**Premise:** Either we trust a madman (Saddam Hussein) and don't eliminate him (not learning the lessons of 9/11) or we defend America (from attacks such as 9/11) by invading Iraq and eliminating the madman.

**Premise 2:** (Implied) Trusting a madman and not learning the lessons of 9/11 and not defending America are dangerous and foolish.

**Label and Description:** Questionable Dilemma. The first premise makes a questionable either/or claim; it restricts our choices to only two alternatives.

**Argument Analysis:** Premise is questionable. There was a third choice other than the two extreme choices offered by the first premise. The third choice is to follow the evidence that Saddam Hussein and Iraq were not involved at all in 9/11, and that attacking Iraq was a foolish reallocation of resources from Afghanistan where they would be needed the most to fight the source of terrorism against the United States. There was also substantial evidence that Saddam Hussein’s weapons of mass destruction were already destroyed. The third choice was to take seriously the claim that attacking Iraq was the wrong target and would severely weaken the United States economically and militarily.

32. **Conclusion:** John Kerry is not fit to be president and commander in chief of the United States.

**Premises:** He said that he would prefer the dictatorship of Saddam Hussein to the situation in Iraq today and that although he once supported removing Saddam Hussein from power he now says it was all a mistake.

**Label and Description:** Straw Person. The premises involve a distortion of Kerry's position on Iraq.

**Argument Analysis:** Premise is questionable (false). Kerry did not say that he preferred Saddam Hussein to remain as a dictator in Iraq. He was criticizing Bush’s handling of the war and was claiming that we had traded a dictator “for chaos that has left America less secure.” Kerry was one of those as noted above that believed the real fight was in Afghanistan and that attacking Iraq had weakened the United States. His focus was not so much on it being a mistake as it was a criticism of how the war was handled by Bush.

See textbook for #2.

**Conclusion:** George W. Bush has done a terrible job leading the economy during his presidency.
Premise: More jobs were lost while George W. Bush was president than during any other presidency in recorded history.

Label and Description: Suppressed Evidence. Although the premise is true and appears to be a good reason to accept the conclusion, an important fact is suppressed.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. Although it is true that 3.3 million jobs private sector jobs were lost during the time period discussed, when population growth is taken into account and this number is presented as a percentage, the job losses were 2% and broke no record. Plus, Bush was not responsible for the economic hit of the 9/11 attack and the severe recession that was caused by the tech bubble in 2000. There was also substantial growth in “public sector” job growth during this time.

33. Conclusion: The Dunlop SP-4 tire was the best (highest rated) radial tire of all major brands in the Car and Drive tire test.

Premise: Because it had the best (the highest category) rating in the Car and Driver tire test.

Label and Description: Equivocation. The phrase “highest rating” is not used with the same meaning in the premise and the conclusion.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. We should not presume that evidence has been offered in the premise about the tire test for the conclusion that Dunlop was the best tire in the tire test. “Highest rating” in the conclusion means the best tire of all those in the competition. Whereas “highest rating” in the premise simply meant that the Dunlop tire was in the highest rated category. At the time, all the major competitors to the Dunlop tire in terms of price and category were also in the same high rated category and actually had more points than the Dunlop tire. From another point of view, the Dunlop tire actually lost in the competition with its major competitors.

34. Conclusion: You still beat your wife!

Premise 1: Have you stopped beating your wife?

Premise 2: No.

Label and Description: Complex Question. The premise involves an unfair complex question.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. We should not presume any evidence has been offered for the conclusion that this person beats his wife, because the premise involves a complex question. There are actually three questions being asked: Are you married? Did you beat your wife? Are you still beating your wife? So, the “no” answer could mean that the person is not married or that he never beat his wife.
**Conclusion:** You are not going to take care of your children!

**Premise 1:** Aren’t you going to stay home and take care of your children?

**Premise 2:** No

**Label and Description:** Complex Question. The premise involves an unfair complex question.

**Argument Analysis:** Presumption. We should not presume any evidence has been offered for the conclusion that this person does not intend to take care of her children, because the premise involves a complex question. Two questions are being asked: Are you going to stay home and not have a career? Do you intend to take care of your children? Although challenging, many contemporary women would answer no to the first question but yes to the second. So we cannot assume that a no answer to the complex question implies no intention to take care of children.

The attempt here is to pressure women not to have a career like men by making them feel guilty for wanting a career, implying that they would be selfish and hurt their children if they worked.

**Conclusion:** You do believe in God and an afterlife.

**Premise 1:** Where will your children spend eternity?

**Premise 2:** I don’t know.

**Label and Description:** Complex Question. The premise involves an unfair complex question.

**Argument Analysis:** Presumption. We should not presume any evidence has been offered for the conclusion that this person believes in God and an afterlife, because the premise involves a complex question. Several questions: Do you believe in an afterlife of eternity and that a person has a physical soul that survives the body at death? If so, where do you think they will spend it? Heaven or Hell? So, when a person says they do not know, they could mean that they are agnostic and that they are not sure God exists as well as a heaven or hell. Or, they could mean that they do believe in God and heaven and hell but are not sure where their children will end up.

The purpose of this religious advertisement was to get parents so concerned that they had better get with it and believe in God and start working hard to make sure their children did not go to hell. But no evidence was offered that God, heaven, and hell exist.

**Conclusion:** So, you do drink orange juice.
Premise 1: Have you had your orange juice today?

Premise 2: No

Label and Description: Complex Question. The premise involves an unfair complex question.

Argument Analysis: Presumption. We should not presume any evidence has been offered for the conclusion that this person usually drinks OJ, because two questions are being asked. Do you usually drink OJ? If so, have you had some today? So a no answer might mean that the person does not drink OJ at all. This complex question was from an advertisement for orange juice to make one feel strange if one did not drink orange juice, implying that anyone who does not drink OJ should start.

35. Conclusion: Obama’s foreign policy has caused huge setbacks, such as our war in Afghanistan.

Premises: Before Obama was president and announced his new approach to terrorism, we were winning the war in Afghanistan. Now, after just one year in office, we are losing the war in Afghanistan.

Label and Description: Questionable Cause. A causal connection in the conclusion, and only a time (before/after) sequence in the premises.

Argument Analysis: Reasoning. Although the premises are relevant to the conclusion, the argument is a very weak induction and the premises are not sufficient to establish a reliable belief. Although the situation in Afghanistan did deteriorate significantly shortly after Obama became president, at the same time substantial resources were being spent on Iraq and this started well before Obama became president. Terrorist attacks increased significantly against many soft targets throughout the world after Bush invaded two Muslim countries, so there is the possibility that the Bush policy increased animosity toward the United States occupation of Afghanistan at the same time resources were diverted to Iraq, allowing the Taliban in Afghanistan to make a comeback after early defeats.