

3

LOGIC: THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PHILOSOPHY

The best way to understand what an argument is is to contrast it with what it is certainly not—namely an opinion. An opinion is simply a belief or attitude that is held about someone or something. We express our opinions all the time: we love or hate certain films, different types of food, other people. For the most part, however, people's opinions are based almost exclusively upon their feelings about certain matters and rarely if ever do they feel compelled to support their opinions with any kind of evidence.

An argument is something a bit different than this. It is an attempt to formulate reasons in support of one's claims in order to convince others that these claims are true. For example, compare the statements of the following individuals who have entered into an impromptu discussion about the Clinton presidency over a few beers at a local bar:

Joe: I think Clinton was a lousy President.

Pete: How can you say that? A good president is someone who keeps the country on the right track economically, who works with Congress to get important legislation passed, and who keeps the country out of messy wars. Clinton certainly did all that, didn't he?

Joe: I have the right to my opinion.

What is the basic difference between the statements of Joe and Pete regarding the legacy of the Clinton presidency? As opposed to Joe, who is simply expressing his opinion, Pete is trying to give reasons in support of his views. In other words, he is attempting to argue his position by citing facts which he believes will demonstrate the truth of his claim that Clinton was a good president.

Opinions are worthless: even the most irrational person can formulate an opinion about virtually any matter under the sun. Arguments, on the other hand, are the building blocks of philosophy, and the good philosopher is one who is able to create the best—that is, the most sound and persuasive—arguments possible.

What is an Argument?

To put it simply, an argument consists of one or more premises and a conclusion. In an argument,

the group of statements known as premises leads to another group of statements known as conclusions. Conclusions are nothing more than statements designed to be defended; premises are the statements designed to defend the conclusions.

There are two main kinds of arguments: inductive and deductive. The difference between these two lies primarily in the kinds of results that they produce. As we shall see, an inductive argument produces probable results, whereas a deductive argument produces certain results. This doesn't mean, however, that deductive arguments are superior to inductive ones. Both types of arguments can be extremely persuasive to different audiences and for different topics, and, should therefore be used deliberately when making speeches.

Inductive Arguments

An inductive argument is an argument that (1) moves from particular observations to general conclusions, (2) leads to probable conclusions, not necessary ones, and (3) can be stronger or weaker depending on the degree of probability.

Most inductive arguments are based upon experience or observation, and, for this reason, they are often referred to as empirical arguments. The most common form of inductive argument occurs when we observe a particular phenomenon (e.g., noticing that people who smoke seem to get cancer) and draw general conclusions about all such phenomena from that (that lung cancer can be avoided if one avoids smoking). This is how the inductive form of this argument would appear:

Many people who smoke seem to get lung cancer.
Thus, if you want to avoid getting lung cancer, don't smoke.

Notice how in an inductive argument like this one the conclusion makes a leap beyond what is stated in the premises. We go from observing a connection between smoking and cancer among the people in a select population (family, friends, a medical study group) to making a causal link between smoking and cancer in general.

Inductive arguments, as we have seen, can be strong or weak if the conclusion follows with a high degree of probability from the premise(s). The argument cited above would be an example of strong induction, because the connection between smoking and cancer is fairly well established. But how about the following inductive argument?

All of the philosophy professors that I have had have been uptight and rigid.
Therefore, all philosophy professors are uptight and rigid people.

Obviously, this would be an example of a weak inductive argument, because the student speaking probably has not studied with a large enough sample of philosophy professors to draw the conclusion that "all philosophy professors are uptight and rigid people."

This example shows the inherent limitations of inductive arguments. Unless one's observations are fairly exhaustive (i.e., you have done a large scale study of the characters of thousands of philosophers all around the world), the results will be conjecture at best. The more representative the evidence one presents is, the more compelling the conclusion will be.

It should be noted again, however, that at best what we have with any inductive argument is probability. This probability can be higher or lower based upon the evidence presented, but it

will never lead to absolute certainty. For this kind of result, we need to look to a different type of argument altogether—the deductive argument.

Exercise 1: Inductive Arguments

A. Indicate whether you think the following inductive arguments are strong or weak based upon the evidence provided:

- *The weather rarely gets cold enough for snow in New York in November. If we hold our conference on November 21st this year, we definitely won't have to worry about being snowed-out.*
- *Ruby, did you hear that old Mr Jones' house down the street was robbed last week when he was away on vacation? I'm worried that Jim had something to do with it. He's been desperate for money and was asking lots of questions about Mr. Jones lately. I happened to know that he also bought a new MP3 player this week, and where else could he have gotten the money?*
- *Polls show that 80% of all registered Republicans oppose gay marriage. Well, Sam has always been a registered Republican. So odds are he opposes gay marriage.*
- *It has been estimated that someone who graduates from college with a bachelor's degree can expect to earn about 66% more over the course of his or her working career than a non-graduate. According to a recent report, over the course of their adult work lives, high school graduates can expect to earn, on average, \$1.2 million; those with a bachelor's degree, \$2.1 million; and people with a master's degree, \$2.5 million. It would seem to be the case, then, that higher education is definitely worth the price.*
- *Santa Claus is a myth; the Easter Bunny and Tooth Fairy are myths. So wouldn't you also conclude based upon this that Jesus is a myth as well?*

B. Write your own example of a strong inductive argument.

Deductive Arguments

A deductive argument is an argument (1) from the general to the particular, (2) that leads to certain conclusions, and (3) which can be either valid or invalid. Here is an example of a deductive argument.

- P1: All men are mortal.
 P2: Socrates was a man.
 C: Therefore, Socrates was mortal.

What makes a deductive argument different from an inductive one is that the conclusion of a deductive argument should follow necessarily from the premises.

The premises in the above argument are “All men are mortal” (P1) and “Socrates was a man” (P2). Typically in a deductive argument premises are affirmed without any defense and are indicated by words such as *since*, *because*, and *for*, which often precede them. The conclusion in a deductive argument (C in the above example) is often indicated by words such as *therefore*, *thus*, *hence*, and *consequently*, which typically precede conclusions.

When we say that in a deductive argument the conclusion follows by necessity from the premises, what we mean is that if they are designed well, we are compelled to accept the conclusion that is being defended. Take the following example, for instance:

- P1: Abortion is the taking of a human life,
 P2: and the taking of a human life is murder.
 C: Therefore, it must be true that abortion is murder.

If, in fact, it is true that abortion is the taking of a human life, and if, in fact, it is also true that the taking of a human life is murder, then you are actually compelled by the force of the argument to accept the conclusion that abortion is murder. But suppose that you don't really believe that abortion is murder. Are you still obligated to accept the conclusion? The answer in short is yes, if the conclusion follows from the premises and the premises are true.

But this answer also suggests a way to challenge a deductive argument: you either must demonstrate that the conclusion doesn't follow from the premises or that at least one of the premises is false. To explain this a bit further, let's define a few more terms that are commonly used in deductive logic:

- *truth and falsity* describe the properties of statements alone (i.e., do they accord with the facts) (Note: it is possible to have valid arguments with false statements and invalid arguments with true statements).
- a *valid argument* is one in which the conclusions follow from the premises.
- an *invalid argument* is one in which the conclusions do not follow from the premises (Note: arguments can be valid or invalid).
- a *sound argument* is one with true premises and whose arguments are valid. An argument would be *unsound*, on the other hand, if either one of its premises was false or the argument itself was invalid.

With these terms in mind, let's reexamine that famous deductive argument about Socrates that we looked at just a little while ago:

- P1: All men are mortal.
 P2: Socrates was a man.
 C: Therefore, Socrates was mortal.

Based upon what we discussed above, it seems to be the case that the premises are true—all men are indeed mortal and Socrates was most certainly a man. The conclusion also appears to follow necessarily from the premises: if you accept that all men are mortal and that Socrates was a man, you are forced to also accept that Socrates was mortal. This argument, though hardly profound, is totally sound: the argument is valid and the premises are also true. The "All men are mortal" argument, therefore, achieves the gold standard for any deductive argument—logical soundness.

But very few arguments are so clearly sound as this one is. In the film *Love and Death*, the main character, Boris (played by Woody Allen) is contemplating whether or not to kill Napoleon, who has just invaded Russia. Here is the argument that goes through his mind as he is contemplating his decision:

“If I don’t kill him he’ll make war all through Europe. But murder....What would Socrates say? All those Greeks were homosexuals. Boy, they must have had some wild parties. I bet they all took a house together in Crete for the summer. A: Socrates is a man. B: All men are mortal. C: All men are Socrates. Means all men are homosexuals. Heh... I’m not a homosexual. Once, some cossacks whistled at me. I, I have the kind of body that excites both persuasions. You know, some men are heterosexual and some men are bisexual and some men don’t think about sex at all, you know... they become lawyers.”

It doesn’t take a degree in philosophy to realize that this is a seriously problematic argument. For one thing all men are certainly not Socrates, and therefore premise C is false. For another the conclusion, “all men are homosexuals” clearly does not follow from the premises. Although this example is a joke—a pretty good one too, if you watch the movie—it shows how easy it is to distort an argument and render it completely unsound.

Let’s look at a few more examples of deductive arguments to see how the questions of validity and soundness play themselves out:

The assassin of President Kennedy was either Oswald or some other party
or parties. [P 1]
It wasn't Oswald. [P 2]
Therefore, it had to have been some other party or parties. [C]

This argument is clearly an example of a valid argument, since the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises. The only question is whether this argument is also sound. In order for it to be sound the premises also have to be true. One could argue against the truthfulness of premise 1 by maintaining that Oswald could have been involved in a conspiracy that included other parties as well. One could also argue against the truthfulness of premise 2 by maintaining that the assassin was indeed Oswald. The soundness of the argument could thus be thrown into question by challenging the truthfulness of one or more of the premises.

All pigs are cats. [P 1]
Babe is a pig. [P 2]
Therefore babe is a cat. [C]

You might be tempted to jump to the conclusion that this is an invalid argument because it looks strange. It is actually a valid argument, since the conclusion follows from the premises. It is not sound, however, because premise 1 is certainly false.

If I bought a ticket on the Queen Elizabeth II, I would be broke. [P 1]
I am broke. [P 2]
Therefore I must have bought a ticket on the Queen Elizabeth II. [C]

Let's accept that both premises are true. The argument is invalid because the conclusion does not follow from the premises. The person in question could be broke for reasons other than having bought a ticket on the QE II. The argument therefore is most assuredly unsound.

Evaluating Deductive Arguments

Now that you are armed with the basics of deductive logic, we can go back and see how you might challenge the soundness of an opponent's arguments. Remember, to do this you must attack at least one of the following:

the argument is not valid (i.e., the conclusion does not follow necessarily from the premises).

or

at least one of the premises are not true (regardless of whether the argument is valid or not).

If you can demonstrate the either of these is the case, then your opponent's argument will be deemed unsound.

To illustrate this process, let's go back to the tricky argument about abortion that we had encountered earlier:

- P1: Abortion is the taking of a human life,
- P2: and the taking of a human life is murder.
- C: Therefore, it must be true that abortion is murder.

Most novices to logic immediately cave in the face of this argument and accept that it automatically must be sound. To critique it we first must assess whether the argument presented is valid. Since the conclusion does indeed follow from the premises, the argument is indeed a valid one. If abortion is, in fact, the taking of a human life, and, if the taking of a human life is murder, then by necessity one would have to accept the conclusion that abortion must be murder. You really can't challenge that part of the argument.

But what you can challenge is the truthfulness of either or both of the premises. You might begin by questioning whether abortion, indeed, is actually the taking of a human life. Is an embryo really a human being? When does human life begin? At conception? At natural birth? If the embryo is not a human being, then what is it? Something else entirely (a mere conglomeration of cells)? Simply a potential human life?

Your next step would be to examine the truthfulness of premise 2: Is the taking of a human necessarily murder? Are there other situations, in fact, where a human life could be taken, when we are taking about something quite different from the "unjustifiable, illegal, intentional taking of a human life," which is the common definition of murder? How about the taking of a human life in wartime or as an act of self-defense? Are these examples of murder?

You can probably see where all this is going. There are very few deductive arguments that are impervious to any kind of challenge. Your job when assessing an argument made by an opponent—or anyone for that matter—is to find a way to poke as many holes in the argument as possible. And you do that by challenging either the validity of the argument or the truthfulness of the premises.

Exercise 2: Premises and Conclusions

A. Identify the premises and conclusions in the following arguments:

- *All spiders have six legs. All six-legged creatures have wings. It follows, then, that all spiders have wings.*
- *If Bacon wrote Hamlet, then Bacon was a great writer. Bacon was a great writer. Therefore Bacon wrote Hamlet.*
- *Government-funded efforts to save the whooping crane from extinction are paying off. Therefore, government funding of programs to preserve endangered species should be continued.*
- *One should be extremely cautious to judge another human beings, since we are all sinners.*
- *Almost every known carcinogen causes cancer in animals. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that compounds that cause cancer in animals are also potential human carcinogens.*
- *Since happiness consists in peace of mind, and since durable peace of mind depends on the confidence we have in the future, and since that confidence is based on the science we should have of the nature of God and the soul, it follows that science is necessary for happiness.*
- *All rational beings are responsible for their actions, and since all human beings are rational, it follows that all human beings are responsible for their actions.*
- *Old man Brown claims that he saw a flying saucer land on his farm. But old man Brown never got beyond the fourth grade in school and can hardly read or write. He is completely ignorant of what scientists have written on the subject, so his report cannot possibly be true.*
- *It is immoral to use rabbits in cosmetic experiments, because causing pain is immoral, and animals such as rabbits are capable of feeling pain*
- *It seems that mercy cannot be attributed to God. For mercy is a kind of sorrow. But there is no sorrow in God; and so there can be no mercy in Him either.*

B. Fill in the blank spaces with the appropriate premises or conclusions.

Premise 1: *If President Bush had any integrity he would have resigned from office after failing to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.*

Premise 2: *President Bush did not resign from office after failing to find weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.*

Conclusion:

Premise 1: *If God were a deceiver, we could have no certain knowledge about the world around us.*

Premise 2:

Conclusion: *Therefore, God is not a deceiver.*

Premise 1: *Anyone who kills and steals to earn a living is evil.*

Premise 2:

Conclusion: *Therefore, Bonnie and Clyde were evil.*

Premise 1: We should not commit acts which break the law.
Premise 2: Acts of civil disobedience break the law.
Conclusion:

Premise 1: It is always wrong to treat people as a means to my own personal ends.
Premise 2: Engaging in sexual activity with a prostitute is to use him or her as a means to my own ends—e.g., physical pleasure.
Conclusion:

C. Write your own example of an argument.

Four Common Argument Forms

At times it's possible to intuitively recognize when an argument is valid or invalid. Fortunately, however, logicians have a simpler way to determine when an argument is automatically going to be true, which is a bit of a help for those of us who are not quite so innately logical.

What logicians as far back as ancient times discovered is that there are a few distinct argument forms that will always be valid. The most common of these forms go by the names modus ponens, modus tollens, the hypothetical syllogism, and the disjunctive syllogism. Naturally, we could spend pages just discussing these four basic argument forms, but we can simplify things for the sake of brevity:

Modus Ponens

If P, then Q.	When the Dow Jones shows a decline for two months, we are in a recession.
P.	The Dow Jones has showed a decline for the past three months.
Therefore, Q.	Therefore, we must be in a recession.

Modus Tollens

If P, then Q.	If I owned property in Manhattan today, I would be rich.
- Q.	I'm not rich.
Therefore, -P.	Therefore, I don't own property in Manhattan today.

Hypothetical Syllogism

If P, then Q.	If I get an A on my calculus final, I will get an A in the course.
If Q, then R.	If I get an A in the course, I will have a 3.5 average for the semester.
Therefore, if P then R	Therefore, if I get an A on the final, I will get a 3.5 average for the semester.

Disjunctive Syllogism

P or Q.	Either we should fight the Spartans or retreat until help comes.
- Q.	We cannot afford to retreat.
Therefore, P.	Therefore, we should fight the Spartans.

Remember, if an argument takes any of the above forms, it will automatically be valid. But you also have to be very careful that arguments you are making (or investigating) actually follow these forms rather strictly. For example, there are invalid forms of modus ponens and modus tollens that are always invalid:

Invalid form of Modus Ponens [Affirming the Consequent]

If P, then Q.	If you win the lottery, you will have a lot of money.
Q.	You have a lot of money.
Therefore, P.	Therefore, you won the lottery.

Invalid Form of Modus Tollens [Denying the Antecedent]

If P, then Q.	If you win the lottery, you will have a lot of money.
-P.	You didn't win the lottery.
Therefore, - Q	Therefore, you don't have a lot of money.

Why are these two arguments invalid? Quite simply, because of the invalid argument form, the conclusion must certainly does not follow from the premises. Reexamine these arguments carefully, and you'll see that this is the case. Make sure to be on guard against these invalid argument forms, and try to avoid using them by accident in your own attempts at persuasion. You may not ever be caught making an invalid argument, but if you are, it will most certainly damage the case you are trying to make with the audience.

Naturally, there are many other argument forms, both valid and invalid, but to do justice to them would require an entire course in logic. For now, it's enough to be able to recognize the four most common argument forms and to be able to spot their illegitimate counterfeits.

Exercise 2: Identifying Valid Arguments

A. Identify the underlying basic argument form of the following, and explain whether the argument is valid or invalid.

- *Either he is a damned liar or he is completely nuts. Well, he sure as hell ain't nuts, so he must be a liar.*
- *If you spend a few hours a week taking care of your equipment, it won't get rusty. If it doesn't get rusty, you'll have it for the rest of your life. So, if you take care of your equipment, you'll have it for the rest of your life.*
- *If you like working for the Boy Scouts, then you've gotta like camping out. But you know how much you hate camping out. So the Boy Scouts isn't for you.*
- *Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury. If a person was sane, he would not go around*

killing dozens of innocent women. Theodore Bundy killed dozens of innocent women. Therefore, he can hardly be considered sane, now can he?

- *If then, it is agreed that things are either the result of coincidence or for an end, and things cannot be the result of coincidence or spontaneity, it follows that they must be for an end (Aristotle).*
- *Either wealth is an evil or a good; but wealth is not an evil; therefore wealth is a good (Sextus Empiricus).*
- *If the North Koreans are smart—and we know damn well how smart they are—they will move in the direction of reform.*
- *If each man has a definite set of rules of conduct by which he regulated his life, he would be no better than a machine. But there are no rules, so men cannot be machines.*
- *If error was something positive, God would be its cause, and by Him it would continually be procreated. But this is absurd (Spinoza).*
- *If pornography has a harmful effect on one's character, then it would certainly be best to avoid it. Many religious leaders and teachers of morality have warned us to avoid pornography. Therefore, it certainly must have a harmful effect on a person's character.*

B. Write your own examples of arguments using the four valid argument forms, modus tollens, modus ponens, hypothetical syllogism, and disjunctive syllogism.

Logical Fallacies

A fallacy is a type of argument that is psychologically persuasive but completely invalid. Very often fallacies, especially when used in the heat of debate can seem to be valid, but they are actually flawed arguments.

It is precisely because these sorts of arguments can be rhetorically persuasive that they are often used in speeches. At times the use of fallacies can actually help to demolish an opponent's position or to bolster your own flimsy one—at least if the audience is not paying much attention. The problem with using fallacies like the one we will examine, is that if you get caught, your credibility will be demolished in the eyes of your audience: they'll either think that you are ignorant or duplicitous, and being accused of either of these will certainly not help you make your case.

On the positive side, an understanding of what common logical fallacies are can help you to tear down an opponent's argument. Most audiences, even those who lack a formal knowledge of logic, will be impressed if you can challenge an opponent's argument by stating that he is guilty of committing some kind of logical fallacy that you can identify with a fancy name. Your credibility at such times soars, and your opponent's plummets.

Among the commonly used types of logical fallacies are the following:

Appeal to Force occurs when one uses or threatens to use force—whether physical, psychological or legal—in an attempt to coerce another person to accept their conclusion.

“Oh Senators, I would strongly advise you to make Claudius our next emperor. The Praetorian guard has already rallied around him, and I fear for this august body if you thwart their desires.”

“If you don't convict this murderer, one of you may be his next victim.”

Ad Hominem Attack (“against the man”): An attempt to refute another’s position by attacking the character, circumstance, or actions of the person making a claim rather than the argument itself.

“I don’t think we should accept the councilman’s arguments in favor of Sunday shopping in our town. He’s a godless communist after all.”

“You shouldn’t listen to Billy-Bob’s argument because he spent a year in prison.”

The reason why ad hominum attacks are always fallacious is because the character, circumstances, or actions of the person being attacked have absolutely nothing to do with the validity of his arguments.

Argumentum ad Populum (“Argument to the People”): this sort of fallacy occurs when one attempts to appeal to popular sentiment by arguing that everybody is doing something and therefore it must be right. This fallacy also includes appeals to patriotism or religion. Of course, the fact that everyone is doing something or believes something to be true has absolutely no bearing on the validity of the argument being proposed:

85% of consumers choose PCs rather than Macs. Therefore, the PC must be a better computer.

Real Americans eat red meat. Therefore, if you are a vegetarian, there must be something seriously wrong with you.

Argument from Ignorance: An attempt to argue that a proposition is true because it hasn’t been proven false or that a certain proposition is false because it hasn’t been proven true.

“God is clearly the creator of the moral order. Try as hard as they may, ethicists have been unable to come up with any other explanation of the source of universal moral principles or why moral principles are binding on us.”

“The superb quality of her character can be demonstrated by the fact that I have never heard a word spoken against her.”

Appeal to (Inappropriate) Authority involves using the testimony of someone who is an expert or authority in a field other than the one under discussion, from a source that may not be reliable, or from a biased authority.

“My priest says that genetic engineering and in vitro fertilization are dangerous. Therefore, all experiments in this field should be stopped immediately.”

“All this talk about global warming is a lot of hooey. Why, I just heard Rush Limbaugh say today that we have absolutely nothing to worry about.”

Hasty Generalization occurs when one uses unusual or atypical cases to support a general point covering all cases.

“I know for a fact that drinking alcohol is evil. My father was an alcoholic and his drinking damned near ruined our family.”

“I have a friend who lives near Brookhaven National Laboratories who has just been

diagnosed with breast cancer. I think that we can safely conclude, then, that the research being done at Brookhaven is responsible for the high rate of breast cancer on Long Island.”

Begging the Question occurs when a person assumes what the argument is trying to prove. [i.e., when the conclusion and premises are rewordings of each other]

“To allow complete, unfettered freedom of speech is advantageous to the interests of the state. For it is clearly helpful to the community to have each individual freely express his or her own point of view.”

“You can’t expect eighteen-year-olds to vote intelligently, because they are too young to have good judgment about the issues.”

Straw Man: An attempt to substitute for your opponent’s argument a simplistic caricature. By defeating the caricature (the straw man), the fallacious impression is created that you have defeated your opponent’s position.

“Of course the Equal Rights Amendment must be defeated. Do you want men and women sharing the same toilet facilities?”

Exercise 3: Logical Fallacies

Identify the logical fallacies in the following passages:

- *Women are so sentimental! My mother and sister always cry at the movies. My father and I never do.*
- *No breath of scandal has ever touched the senator. Therefore he must be incorruptibly honest.*
- *How can you take Sartre's philosophical views seriously? The man, after all, led an abysmal life and was certainly no paragon of morality.*
- *After all, my views on gun control have been endorsed by some of Hollywood's most notable actors—Sylvester Stallone, Barbra Streisand, and Alec Baldwin, among others. How could you not agree with me?*
- *Gentlemen, we cannot let Honduras be ruled by a communist government. If we do then sooner or later Mexico will become communist along with the islands in the Caribbean and no doubt Canada.*
- *The governor supports tax increases for middle-income earners. This doesn't surprise me. He has always been against unions and this is just another measure designed to undermine them. If we allow for these tax increases and the undermining of unions, democracy in this country will be threatened.*
- *It is necessary to confine criminals and to lock up dangerous lunatics. Therefore, there is nothing intrinsically wrong with depriving people of their liberties.*
- *If you hold that nothing is self-evident, I will not argue with you, for it is clear that you are a quibbler and not to be convinced.*
- *God exists because the Bible tells us so, and we know what the Bible tells us is true because it is the revealed word of God.*
- *Narcotics are habit forming. Therefore, if you allow your physician to ease your pain with an opiate you will become a hopeless drug addict.*

- *You can't park here. I don't care what the sign says. If you don't drive on, I'll give you a ticket.*
- *I also admit that there are people for whom the reality of the external world constitutes a grave problem. My answer is that I do not address them, but that I presuppose a minimum of reason in my readers.*
- *She says that she loves me and she must be telling the truth, because she certainly wouldn't lie to someone that she loves.*
- *It is totally idiotic to try to prevent teens from having sexual relations. Everybody's "doing it" anyway, so what can possibly be wrong with sex before marriage?*
- *There is no proof that the secretary "leaked" the news to the papers, so it couldn't have been the secretary who did it.*
- *Gentlemen, I am sure that if you think it over you will see that my suggestion has real merit. It is only a suggestion of course, and not an order. As I mentioned at our last conference, I am planning to reorganize the whole business. I still hope, however, that it will not be necessary to curtail the operations of your department.*
- *The Rolls-Royce is a foreign made automobile and gets very few miles per gallon. Therefore all foreign made automobiles get very few miles per gallon.*
- *Two students were having a disagreement about cars. Student A said, "I can prove to you that Toyota Carolla's are faster than Honda Civic's. John owns a Carolla and he told me he beats every Civic he has ever raced." Student B asked, "How do you know John is telling the truth?" Student A replied by saying, "Someone who drives the fastest car wouldn't have to lie."*

Michael S. Russo. *The Problems of Philosophy*. New York: SophiaOmni, 2012.

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