

Final Exam, Part I

PHREL 5373A, Critical Thinking William Dembski, Spring 2007

This is part I of your take-home final (part II is the critical review of “A War on Science”). Answer all the questions succinctly. This exam is open book and open notes, but you may not consult with other people for the answers. The weight assigned to each question is given in brackets, with weights summing up to 200. This exam is worth 20 percent of your grade. You have till noon on Wednesday, May 9, 2007 to email your answers to this exam to Jack Greenoe. His email address is JLGreene AT elearning DOT swbts DOT edu. Pt. 2 of your final (i.e., the critical review of “A War on Science”) needs to be emailed to me, also by noon of May 9th, at wdembski AT designinference DOT com.

[Each of the following ten questions is worth 10 points.]

1. List and briefly define the three means or modes of rhetoric/persuasion. Give an example of each.
2. List and briefly define the five canons of rhetoric. Which two of these are most important in our day? Why are the other three less important today than in times past?
3. What is the difference between a contrary and a contradictory? Give an example to illustrate the difference.
4. How do schemes and tropes differ as figures of speech? Give an example of each.
5. What is a deductive argument? What does it mean to say that a deductive argument is valid? What does it mean to say a deductive argument is sound? Are any arguments other than deductive arguments capable of being valid? Explain.
6. What is an inductive argument. Give an example. Hume’s “problem of induction” states that past regularities cannot guarantee future regularities. Is Hume right (i.e., is there no such thing as an infallible inductive argument)?
7. What is hypothetical reasoning? Describe its structure. From the vantage of deductive logic, why does hypothetical reasoning constitute an invalid form of inference? Why are hypothetical arguments also called inferences to the best explanation?
8. What is an argument from analogy? Are arguments from analogy always arguments from disanalogy? Explain. According to Murphy, the warrant in arguments from analogy is that

things similar in certain respects are likely to be similar in other respects. How can this warrant be strengthened?

9. In answering a simple question, one may, according to Gary Jason, give three types of responses. What are these? Give an example of each. Are these the only types of appropriate responses? Consider Matthew 21:23–27.
10. Who was Niccolo Machiavelli? How was he the inspiration for *The 48 Laws of Power*? Should Christians be studying the laws of power? Why or why not? What was your favorite law of power? What was your least favorite law of power? Explain your choices.

[Each of the following two questions is worth 25 points.]

11. Analyze the following argument using the apparatus for analyzing arguments developed by Murphy:

“In crossing a heath, suppose I pitched my foot against a stone, and were asked how the stone came to be there, I might possibly answer, that ... it had lain there forever ... but suppose I had found a watch upon the ground, and it should be inquired how the watch happened to be in that place, I should hardly think of the answer which I had before given, that, for any thing I knew, the watch might have always been there. Yet why should not this answer serve for the watch as well as for the stone? For this reason, that, when we come to inspect the watch, we perceive (what we could not discover in the stone) that its several parts are ... put together for a purpose. ... we think that the watch must have had a maker: that there must have existed, at some time, and at some place or other, an artificer or artificers who formed it for the purpose which we find it actually to answer; who comprehended its construction, and designed its use. For every indication of contrivance, every manifestation of design, which existed in the watch, there exists in the works of Nature ... there is precisely the same proof that the eye was [created] for vision.”

—William Paley, *Natural Theology*

12. In *The 48 Laws of Power*, Greene cites Tacitus as writing, “Men are more ready to repay an injury than a benefit because gratitude is a burden and revenge a pleasure.” Is Tacitus correct? Is he even partly correct? If so, what does this say about our motivation as Christians to obey God? Are we obedient to God out of gratitude? Is gratitude a sufficient ground for obedience? Or do we, as Christians, have other motivations for obedience?

[The following questions is worth 50 points. Answer it in 500 words or less.]

13. You are the head of a large public relations firm in New York. A consortium of Christian businessmen and foundations is fed up with the godlessness of our society and approaches you to run a “rhetorical campaign” to make Christianity and its moral values credible again to the wider culture. You have \$100,000,000 a year for five years to make the campaign work (i.e., half a billion dollars total over five years). What programs are you going to institute and how are you going to allocate that money to restore Christianity as a credible world view? What objectives could you realistically hope to accomplish? [Example of a zero-credit answer: give all the money to the ACLU or to the UN.]