

Midterm Exam

28970 Critical Thinking and the Art of Argumentation Dr. William Dembski, Spring 2006

This is a take-home midterm exam. It is open book. You have up to 5 minutes to read over the exam and collect your thoughts before putting pen to paper or fingers to type pad. Once you start writing, you have exactly one hour (60 minutes) to take the exam. The exam must be taken in one sitting (if this proves impossible, resume the exam as quickly as possible and attach an explanation as to why you were interrupted and for how long). The exam is due at the beginning of class Monday, March 13, 2006. It can be either written by hand or typed.

Do not scroll to or view next page unless ready to take exam.

1 hour absolute limit.

STOP

(unless ready to take exam)

*Answer the following questions **succinctly**. Percentage weight is given in brackets.*

1. a. List and briefly define the three means or modes of rhetoric/persuasion. [3]
b. Give an example of each. [3]
2. a. List and briefly define the five canons of rhetoric. [5]
b. Of the five canons of rhetoric, which two are the most important and why? [3]
c. Why do the other three canons of rhetoric assume less importance today than in times past? [2]
3. Corbett defines enthymeme in two senses. What are they? [4]
4. a. What is the difference between a contrary and a contradictory. [4]
b. Give an example to illustrate the difference. [2]
5. a. How do schemes and tropes differ as figures of speech? [2]
b. Give an example of each. [2]
6. a. What is a deductive argument? [2]
b. What does it mean to say that a deductive argument is valid? [2]
c. What does it mean to say a deductive argument is sound? [2]
d. Are any arguments other than deductive arguments capable of being valid? Explain. [4]
7. a. What is an inductive argument. Give an example. [2]
b. 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)? [4]
8. a. What is hypothetical reasoning? Describe its structure. [4]
b. From the vantage of deductive logic, why does hypothetical reasoning constitute an invalid form of inference? [4]
c. Why are hypothetical arguments also called inferences to the best explanation? [2]
9. a. What is an argument from analogy? [2]
b. Are arguments from analogy always arguments from disanalogy? Explain. [4]
c. 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? [4]
10. 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* [20]

11. a. Describe the role of the topics in the invention of arguments. [2]
b. In the Paley passage above, which common topic assumes central importance? Explain. [4]
12. a. Who was Niccolo Machiavelli? How was he the inspiration for the 48 Laws of Power? [4]
b. Should Christians be studying the laws of power? Why or why not? [4]

c. EXTRA CREDIT: Are the laws of power distortions of deeper truths, or are they so evil as to be beyond salvaging? Explain and illustrate. [5]