

CS 100 - Homework 8

Deadline:

Due by 11:59 pm on Friday, October 26

How to submit:

- Go to the course Moodle site.
 - (either log into myHumboldt and click the Moodle button in the upper right corner,
 - or get to it via learn.humboldt.edu,
 - ...and then click the "my moodle" button in the upper right under the big yellow moodle logo to get your list Moodle course sites,
 - or follow the link from the public course web site, users.humboldt.edu/smtuttle/f12cs100)
- Once you are at the course Moodle site, find the section titled "Submit your HOMEWORK FILES here",
 - and click on the link "Click HERE to submit Homework 8".
- You should see, in the middle of the page, a place where you can upload your homework file.
 - Note that I believe I set this up to permit multiple submissions. I couldn't set it to "unlimited", because the largest number available was 20, but that seems like it should be ample.
 - Also note that I will grade the latest file submitted before the deadline unless you e-mail and tell me otherwise.

Purpose:

To practice identifying some of the logical fallacies of insufficient evidence in arguments.

Important notes:

- Type:
 - your name, then
 - the problem number and your answer for each of the following questions,
 - into a file named `cs100hw8` (optionally followed by your name, including only letters and underscores -- NO blanks or other unusual characters)
 - Its format may be `.txt`, `.odt`, `.pdf`, `.doc`, `.docx`, or `.jpg`. (Please ask me before submitting files of other formats -- for example, please do not submit `.pages` documents, because our grader cannot read them.)

The Problems:

Consider Exercise 6.1 in the course textbook, on pp. 155-157. Also consider the first seven fallacies of insufficient evidence we have discussed in class:

- inappropriate appeal to authority
- appeal to ignorance
- false alternatives
- loaded question
- questionable cause
- hasty generalization
- slippery slope

(We'll save finding examples of weak analogy or inconsistency for Homework 9, after we've had a chance to discuss them in class.)

All of the arguments below contain at least one of these fallacies of insufficient evidence. For each argument specified below, put the problem number, and then give the name of the most evident fallacy of insufficient evidence that it contains.

1. Exercise 6.1, Argument 2 ("I can't believe...")
2. Exercise 6.1, Argument 3 ("Did you vote...")
3. The famous novelist Aldous Huxley, author of *Brave New World* and other great works of fiction, held that near-sightedness can be corrected by eye exercises. Given the opinion of so eminent a person as Huxley, we may be confident that near-sightedness can indeed be corrected by eye exercises.
4. Exercise 6.1, Argument 5 ("Skeptics have tried...")
5. Exercise 6.1, Argument 9 ("Either you support...")
6. No one has proved that the lost continent of Atlantis doesn't exist. Therefore, the lost continent of Atlantis probably does exist.
7. Exercise 6.1, Argument 11 ("Students have asked...")
8. Exercise 6.1, Argument 12 ("There is no information...")
9. Some people advocate lowering the drinking age from twenty-one to eighteen. I oppose that. If we lower the drinking age to eighteen, why not sixteen? And if sixteen, why not twelve? Pretty soon, we would have a roomful of drunks in third grade!
10. Exercise 6.1, Argument 15 ("You're not seriously...")
11. Exercise 6.1, Argument 20 ("The volcano erupted...")
12. It rains a lot in San Diego during the summer. I know because I spent two weekends in San Diego last summer, and both times it rained like cats and dogs.
13. Exercise 6.1, Argument 21 ("Strong measures...")

14. Exercise 6.1, Argument 23 ("Coach Phil...")
15. Legislators in Texas want to make it a criminal offense for citizens not to use seat belts when they drive. Mark my words: If they get away with this, it won't be long before they ban beer drinking and cigarette smoking. Then they will restrict our intake of cholesterol, perhaps setting up cholesterol testing sites along major highways. We must not let this infringement of our liberties get started, or there will be no stopping it.
16. Exercise 6.1, Argument 27 ("Why do you find it...")
17. Exercise 6.1, Argument 29 ("Since the 1960s...")
18. Most Hollywood movie stars believe in reincarnation. I know because I heard it on the "Jerry Springer" show.
19. Exercise 6.1, Argument 35 ("Which sport is...")
20. Exercise 6.1, Argument 36 ("I have no...")

Bonus question - up to 10 points

You can find a transcript of the first Presidential Debate between Barack Obama and Mitt Romney at:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/10/03/162258551/transcript-first-obama-romney-presidential-debate>

...of the second Presidential Debate at:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/10/16/163050988/transcript-obama-romney-2nd-presidential-debate>

...and of the Vice Presidential Debate between Joe Biden and Paul Ryan at:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/10/11/162754053/transcript-biden-ryan-vice-presidential-debate>

Find a clear cut example (based on their definitions as given in Chapter 6) of one of the fallacies of insufficient evidence (inappropriate appeal to authority, appeal to ignorance, false alternatives, loaded question, questionable cause, hasty generalization, slippery slope, weak analogy, or inconsistency) within any one of these. Then:

1. quote an excerpt including an argument with a clear cut example of one of the fallacies of insufficient evidence,
2. say which fallacy you believe it illustrates, and
3. explain why you think it is a clear-cut example of that type of fallacy.

If it is indeed that fallacy, and you have included all three parts listed above, then you will receive 10 bonus points on this homework.

Especially good examples submitted will hopefully be posted on the course Moodle site.