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Moral Problems

Mini Paper 3

Instructions: this assignment should be **printed out** and turned in **in class** on **February 4**. This paper should be under a page. I like to grade as anonymously as possible, so please **do not put your name on the top of the paper, but instead put it on the opposite side of the page (or on a second page, if you can't print double-sided).** If you have any questions about how to complete the assignment, please let me know.

> Today for class we are reading H. Tristam Engelhardt, Jr.'s article "Rights to Health Care, Social Justice, and Fairness in Health Care Allocations: Frustrations in the Face of Finitude." In the first section of the Engelhardt article, Engelhardt offers an argument for the conclusion that there is no (secular) right to health care. Reconstruct that argument in premise-conclusion form.

Here are some tips regarding reconstructing arguments to keep in mind as you try to reconstruct his argument. We talked about some of these in class, and I also have a handout regarding them that I put on the second page of this assignment sheet.

- Sometimes you need to fill in premises that the author hasn't explicitly stated in order to reconstruct their argument. It may require some creativity on your part to figure out the missing premises.

- Sometimes a passage will contain a sub-conclusion on the way to the main conclusion.

- Sometimes the text will contain a bunch of extraneous information, or keep using different words. Try to get rid of the extraneous information, and to rephrase so the wording is consistent.

Here are three things to note when reconstructing arguments:

1. Sometimes you need to fill in premises that the author hasn't explicitly stated in order to reconstruct their argument. It may require some creativity on your part to figure out the missing premises:

For example, suppose your text reads: "Even white lies are lies and therefore wrong."

The following is not a very good reconstruction of the argument:

A. White lies are lies.
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B. White lies are wrong.

The following is a better reconstruction of the argument:

A. White lies are lies.
B. All lies are wrong.
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C. White lies are wrong.

2. Sometimes a passage will contain a sub-conclusion on the way to the main conclusion.

For example, suppose your text reads: "He won't be home, so he won't be able to water the flowers and they'll die."

This would best be rendered:

A. He won't be home.
B. If he won't be home, he won't be able to water the flowers.
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C. He won't be able to water the flowers.
D. If he won't able to water the flowers, the flowers will die.

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E. The flowers will die.

3. Sometimes the text will contain a bunch of extraneous information, or keep using different words. Try to get rid of the extraneous information, and to rephrase so the wording is consistent.

For example, suppose your text reads: "A fact that many know but few think about is that a pig is smarter than a dog. So if we're to eat animals based on intelligence -- as indeed we should -- we should not eat pigs but rather dogs, the former, as we noted, being brainier and thus not as appropriate a meal."

The following is not a very good reconstruction:

A. A fact that few think about is that a pig is smarter than a dog.
B. We should judge moral worth by intelligence.
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C. We should not eat pigs but rather dogs because the former are brainier than the latter.

The following is a better reconstruction:

A. Dogs are less intelligent than pigs.
B. It is better to eat less intelligent animals than to eat more intelligent animals.
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C. It is is better to eat dogs than pigs.