

Religion and Society, Winter 2010
Critical Reasoning Section
Homework due 16 February

Write a discussion of 1-3 paragraphs on a term in Hitchens, Harris or Dawkins that is both **central** to the line of argument in the book and **contentious** in its definition. Obvious examples are “God,” “atheist,” and “extremist,” but there are many others. In your discussion: (1) say how the author defines the term (this may be explicit, in which case you need to quote the definition, or implicit, in which case you need to show how other passages imply this definition), (2) show how the author makes use of the term in his argument, and (3) critique the definition by using the concepts from chapter 7 as well as from the class discussion today (e.g., slant, tone, cognitive and emotive meaning, denotation and connotation). Draw an overall conclusion as to whether the author’s definition is a fair one.