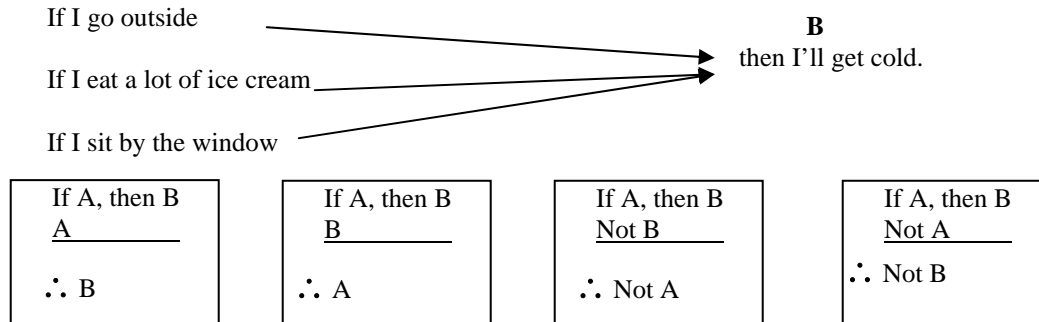


Thinking Straight Critical Reasoning Workshop 2-2, April 8, 2011

- I Some comments on Tuesday's Assignment
- II Discussion of today's assignment.
 - A. (In small group) Compare your answers; discuss any items that you found difficult.
 - B.. Plenary discussion of answers and the patterns exhibited by them.
- II Comments on why the good patterns work and faulty ones don't.

Assume these are all Alternatives for A



- III A. In a small group, read selection *Gender Tests May Not Be Worth Risk of Misuse* on the back of this page. Restate in standard form what you take to be the main argument put forth in it.
- B. Plenary discussion of the task

IV. Plenary discussion on using patterns to "fill-in" implicit premises

A

We have a choice. Unfortunately, we risk environmental catastrophe because we will not curb hydrocarbon emissions

(1) Either [_____],
or we risk environmental catastrophe.

(2) We will not curb hydrocarbon
emissions

∴ We risk environmental catastrophe.

B

Even if we act immediately to tackle the problem of climate change, coastal areas will face devastation. A growing consensus of climate scientists believes that in the best case scenario, even if we take extreme action to protect the environment, there will be a 1 to 2 meter rise in sea level.

(1) If we act immediately to tackle the problem of climate change, then there will be a 1 to 2 meter rise in sea level..

(2) If [_____],
then [_____].

∴ If we act immediately to tackle the problem of climate change, then coastal areas will face devastation.

- V A. (In a small group)
 1. Read and discuss the main point in the article *Eschewing politics a small price to pay for tax breaks churches demand* on third page. What is the main point of the author and how in general is it supported?
 2. Discuss how to fill in the blanks on the page that follow it. List the pattern.
 3. Discuss how some or all of these reconstructions could be linked into a more extensive version of the overall argument in the passage
- B. Plenary discuss the overall arguments

VI Segue to ethics class (time permitting)



Assignment for Tuesday, April 12: Read remainder of Chapter 3 **Submit Exercise 3.1** A 6,8,10
B 4,6,8,10,12,14,16 C 2,4

Gender Tests May Not Be Worth Risk of Misuse
(Excerpt from column by Ellen Goodman, with statements added in brackets for clarification in this exercise)⁹

The woman beside me pats her rounded stomach and rolls her eyes to the ceiling, exclaiming, "Is she ever active today!" The "she" in this action won't be born until March. But my pregnant companion already knows the gender of this gestation.

I have grown accustomed to the attachment of a pronoun to a fetus by now. Most women I know of her age and anxiety level have had "the test" and gotten the results.

Over the past two decades, through amniocentesis and then CVS and sonograms, a generation of parents has received a prenatal exam, a genetic checkup on their offspring. They have all been given new information and sometimes new, unhappy choices. . . .

But this test may increase the possibility of abortion for sex selection by those who regard gender—the wrong gender—as a genetic flaw. . . .

It is the rare person who defends it on the grounds of population control or pure parental choice. It is a rarer American who chooses it. Indeed, the only countries in which sex selection occurs in discernible numbers have been those such as India or Korea where daughters have long been unwanted. It is almost always female fetuses that are aborted.

But gender testing and the capacity for gender choosing—before and after conception—is an ethical issue in this country, too. This is the first, but hardly the last time, that the new technology will be available to produce designer babies. Today, genetic testing is valued in America because it leads to the diagnosis of diseases that cause pain and death and disability. Eventually it may lead to their cure. But in the future, we also are likely to have access to much more information about genes than we need medically. We may be able to identify the gene for height, hair color, eye color, perhaps even athletic ability or intelligence. [America's fascination with technology suggests that we will not be able to resist the temptation to use this technology for sex selection.

If gender testing and gender choosing are permitted to become widely and easily available, then we must be able to resist using it.] At the moment, the moral consensus against sex selection is holding. . . . But in the longer run, the rest of us may be called upon to ask whether our curiosity about gender is worth the risk that others will misuse that information. [Consequently, programs of gender testing and choosing should not be permitted to become more broadly accessible.] It may be wiser to learn if the baby is a "he" or a "she" the old-fashioned way.

Omaha W-H 8/30/04

Eschewing politics a small price for tax breaks churches demand

BY THE REV. BARRY W. LYNN
KNIGHT RIDDER/TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

Editor's note: Lynn, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, is executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State.

On any given weekend, millions of Americans attend services at churches, synagogues, temples and mosques. People go there to worship, to learn about their faith and to enjoy communion with like-minded believers.

It's safe to say, however, that few go to hear which candidates they should vote for in coming elections.

Yet some religious leaders insist that handing down lists of endorsements is part of their job. In this election year, some are even boldly urging churches to evade or defy tax law and jump headfirst into partisan politics.

Federal tax law simply does not allow this. Under the Internal Revenue Code, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organizations — including houses of worship — may not endorse or oppose candidates for public office.

Despite this clear legal mandate, the Rev. Jerry Falwell and his religious-right allies are urging evangelical churches to plunge into politics. He asserts that the IRS does not enforce the "no politicking" rule.

Of all people, Falwell ought to know how wrong that is. His "Old Time Gospel Hour" was found to have engaged in unlawful campaign intervention by the IRS in 1993. The ministry's

tax exemption was revoked for the years 1986 and 1987, and he was required to pay \$50,000 in back taxes.

Others have run into similar problems. In 1998, television

Church electioneering invites sectarian strife into our democracy.

preacher Pat Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network lost its tax exemption retroactively for two years and was required to pay a significant sum in back taxes.

Loss of federal tax exemption is no mere "slap on the wrist" for a religious institution. Tax-law experts say it also may cost a church its property-tax exemption or jeopardize a pastor's housing allowance.

Tax-exempt organizations, including churches, are free to speak out on pressing moral and social-justice concerns.

The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke in hundreds of churches as he advocated for civil rights, but never abused the church's role by endorsing any candidate from the pulpit.

Church resources and church personnel may not be used to advance a candidate's campaign. It's a small price to pay for the valuable privilege of a tax exemption.

There are profoundly impor-

tant reasons beyond fear of legal penalties why religious leaders should refrain from church-based electioneering.

The simple fact is that such activity invites controversy into the sanctuary. Congregations are sure to be divided when church leaders favor one candidate over another.

Church electioneering also invites sectarian strife into our diverse democracy. In some countries, the largest religious denomination assumes the power to run the government and subjects everyone to its dogma by the force of law.

These places are not free, and few Americans would want to live in them. Yet this is what many on the religious right seek. In keeping with their fundamentalist doctrines, they want to teach their religion in public schools, use tax dollars to subsidize religious schools, ban reproductive choice, deny legal equality to gays and restrict medical advances through stem-cell research.

By forging a church-based political machine, they hope to control the government. They must not succeed.

Mergers of church and state always end up hurting religion in the long run. Wedded to the machinery of partisan politics, the church surrenders its prophetic voice for the promise of favored treatment. People quickly detect when a church has sold out to political interests — and abandon it in droves.

To abide by the laws of the land and to maintain their independence and integrity, America's houses of worship must stay out of partisan politics.