

Building A Better Argument

Directions: Underline the conclusion

1. “Since pain is a state of consciousness, a ‘mental event,’ it can never be directly observed.”

(source: Peter Singer, “Animal Liberation,” 1973)

2. “All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality.” (source: Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail,” 1963)

3. “Genes and proteins are discovered, not invented. Inventions are patentable, discoveries are not. Thus protein patents are intrinsically flawed.” (source: Daniel Alroy, “Invention vs. Discovery,” *The New York Times*, March 29, 2000)

4. A meter is longer than a yard. Therefore, since this ship is 100 meters long, it is longer than a football field.

5. “I hate books. They only teach us to talk about what we do not know.” (source: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Emile,” 1762)

6. “At any cost, we must have filters on our Ypsilanti Township library computers. Pornography is a scourge on society at every level. Our public library must not be used to channel this filth to the people of the area. (source: Rob J. and Joan D. Pelkey, letter to the editor, “The Ann Arbor News,” February 3, 2004)

7. “Democracy has at least one merit, namely, that a member of Parliament cannot be stupider than his constituents, for the more stupid he is, the more stupid they were to elect him.” (source: Bertrand Russell, “Autobiography,” 1967)

8. “Twenty-eight children in the United States were killed by falling television sets between 1990 and 1997. That is four times as many people as were killed by great white shark attacks in the twentieth century. Loosely speaking, this means that watching ‘Jaws’ on TV is more dangerous than swimming in the Pacific. (source: “The Statistical Shark,” *The New York Times*, September 6, 2001)

9. “It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts.” (source: Sherlock Holmes in Arthur Conan Doyle’s “A Scandal in Bohemia,” 1891)

10. “I think [Sen. John Kerry] was right [to vote against the Defense of Marriage Act]. I think he was right because what happened with the Defense of Marriage Act is it took away the power of states, like Vermont, to be able to do what they chose to do about civil unions, about these kinds of marriage issues.... I think these are decisions the states should have the power to make. And the Defense of Marriage Act, as I understand it...would have taken away that power. And I think that’s wrong – that power should not be taken away from the states.” (source: Sen. John Edwards, January 22, 2004)