



Background Beliefs

Student Handout #2: **Types of Disagreement**

Instructions: Identify the kinds of agreement or disagreement – whether they're based on fact or values – exhibited by the following pairs.

1.
 - a. A stitch in time saves nine.
 - b. Better late than never.

2.
 - a. Absence makes the heart grow fonder.
 - b. Out of sight, out of mind.



3.
 - a. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.
—Ecclesiastes 9:11
 - b. But that's the way to bet.
—Jimmy the Greek, responding to Ecclesiastes

4.
 - a. War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to face it.
—Benito Mussolini, *Encyclopedia Italiana*, 1932
 - b. War crushes with bloody heel all justice, all happiness, all that is Godlike in man. In our age there can be no peace that is not honorable; there can be no war that is not dishonorable.
—Charles Sumner, *Addresses on War*, 1904

5.
 - a. While I was mayor I lowered 23 or eliminated 23 different taxes.... I lowered them, I lowered them dramatically.
—former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani
 - b. The correct nomenclature would be "We cut taxes," not "I cut taxes."
—former New York City Council Speaker Peter Vallone, responding to Giuliani

6.
 - a. Next in importance to freedom and justice is popular education, without which neither freedom nor justice can be permanently maintained.
—James A. Garfield
 - b. Education is fatal to anyone with a spark of artistic feeling. Education should be confined to clerks, and even them it drives to drink. Will the world learn that we never learn anything that we did not know before?
—George Moore, *Confessions of a Young Man*, 1888

7. a. Belief in the existence of god is as groundless as it is useless. The world will never be happy until atheism is universal.
—J.O. La Mettrie, *L'Homme Machine*, 1865
- b. Nearly all atheists on record have been men of extremely debauched and vile conduct.
—J.P. Smith, *Instructions on Christian Theology*

8. a.  b. 
9. a. The right of revolution is an inherent one. When people are oppressed by their government, it is a natural right they enjoy to relieve themselves of the oppression, if they are strong enough, either by withdrawal from it, or by overthrowing it and substituting a government more acceptable.
—Ulysses S. Grant, *Personal Memoirs*, vol. 1
- b. Inciting to revolution is treason, not only against man, but against God.
—Pope Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*, 1885
10. a. How does it become a man to behave towards the American government today? I answer, that he cannot without disgrace be associated with it.
—Henry David Thoreau, *An Essay on Civil Disobedience*, 1849
- b. With all the imperfections of our present government, it is without comparison the best existing, or that ever did exist.
—Thomas Jefferson, 1787
11. a. Civilian deaths of all categories, less natural causes, have also declined considerably, by over 45 percent Iraq-wide, since the height of the sectarian violence in December.
—Gen. David Petraeus, Congressional Testimony
- b. The reports that you provide to us really require the willing suspension of disbelief. ... If you look at all the evidence that's been presented, overall civilian deaths have risen.
—Sen. Hillary Clinton, responding to Petraeus
12. a. But if you look at the history of American or English literature, there is precious little damage you can point to as a consequence of the censorship that prevailed throughout most of that history. I doubt that many works of real literary merit ever were suppressed. Nor did I notice that hitherto suppressed masterpieces flooded the market when censorship was eased. I should say, to the contrary, that literature has lost quite a bit now that so much is permitted. It seems to me that

the cultural market in the United States today is awash in dirty books, dirty movies, dirty theater. Our cultural condition has not improved as a result of the new freedom.

—Irving Kristol, *Pornography, Obscenity, and the Case for Censorship*

b. All these people talk so eloquently about getting back to good old-fashioned values. Well, as an old poop I can remember back to when we had those old-fashioned values, and I say let's get back to the good old-fashioned First Amendment of the good old-fashioned Constitution of the United States -- and to hell with the censors! Give me knowledge or give me death!

—Kurt Vonnegut