(Sample Title page)

MESA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

YOUR TITLE

PHI 103/*your section number*

By:

YOUR NAME

The due date

At Arizona State University there is a man, named brother John, who stands at different parts of campus and yells controversial statements through a speaker phone. One day on my way to class I heard him pose a particularly interesting argument. His argument was that all immigrants are criminals, and since criminals are a menace to society, consequently all immigrants are a menace to our society. In this paper I will argue that brother John's argument is a deductive argument that is valid but unsound. First, I will prove this by placing the argument in standard form, identifying the premises and conclusion. Next, I will determine whether the argument is inductive or deductive and explain why. Last, I will evaluate the argument proving that it is a valid but unsound deductive argument.

Brother John's argument simplified is: all immigrants are criminals, and criminals are a menace to society; therefore, all immigrants are a menace to our society. Brother John's argument in standard form is:

P1) All immigrants are criminals.
P2) Criminals are a menace to our society.
C) All Immigrants are a menace to our society.

By viewing brother John's argument in standard form we can clearly identify the premises and conclusion. The statements P1 and P2 provide evidence that logically supports the conclusion. Therefore, brother John's statements make up an argument with 2 premises that support a conclusion.

A deductive argument is an argument in which the conclusion must follow necessarily from the premises. Analyzing brother John's argument, we can conclude that the conclusion must necessarily follow given premises P1 and P2. Therefore, brother John's argument is a deductive argument.

Arguments can never be true or false, only the propositions or statements within them can have truth-value. Arguments are either deductive, and further classified as valid and sound, or inductive, and identified as strong and cogent. A valid deductive argument is an argument where it is impossible for the conclusion to be false given that the premises are true. In assuming that the premises, P1 and P2, in brother John's argument are true, we can note that the conclusion, all immigrants are a menace to our society, must necessarily be true. Therefore, brother John's argument can be classified as a valid deductive argument. A valid deductive argument can be further classified as either sound or unsound. A sound argument is a valid deductive argument whose premises are all true. An unsound deductive argument can either be invalid, contain one or more false premises, or both. In analyzing brother John's argument, I found P1 to be false and P2 to be true. The statement "All immigrants are criminals" can clearly be identified as an overgeneralization and stereotype towards immigrants. I myself know many immigrants who are not criminals, and since bother John used the pronoun "all", I can easily classify his statement as false. Therefore, brother John's argument is a valid but unsound deductive argument.

In this paper I have argued that brother John's argument is a deductive argument that is valid but unsound. First, I found it to be a deductive argument since the conclusion follows necessarily from the premises. By examining the form of brother John's argument it is found to be a valid deductive argument. The form is valid since it is impossible for the conclusion to be false assuming the premises, P1 and P2, are true. Following the classification of brother John's argument as a valid deductive argument, I then further categorized it as unsound. I found brother John's argument to be unsound due to the fact that one of his premises, P1, was false. If, however, brother John was to slightly change his argument and make P1 true, then his argument could be classified as a valid and sound deductive argument. This could be accomplished by

stating: P1) Some immigrants are criminals, P2) and criminals are a menace to society, C) therefore some immigrants are a menace to society. By making all the premises true the argument can be classified a valid and sound deductive argument.