

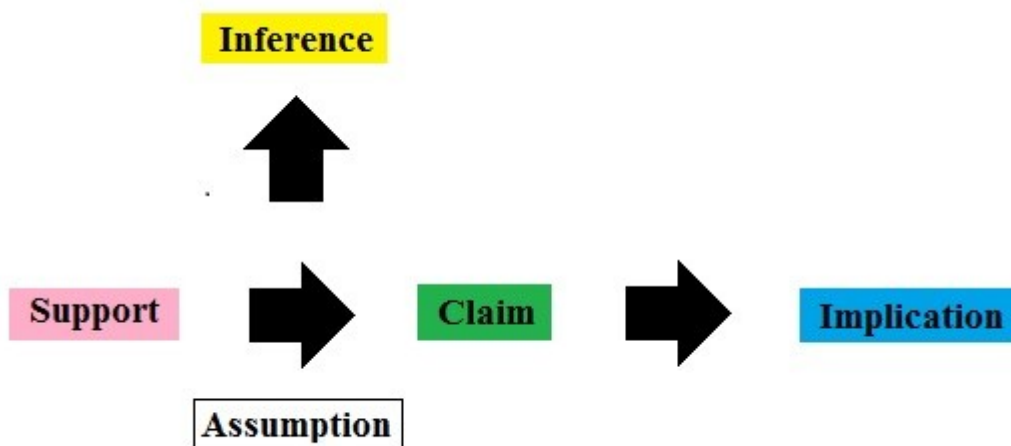
Breaking Down CARS Passages -

How to Use this Handout:

In this handout, we'll read through two argumentative passages. After each passages, we'll break-down the passage step by step, summarizing it's main points, highlighting keywords, and flagging the major components of the arguments made therein. To get the most out of this handout, follow each of the steps outlined below:

1. Read through the passage at a normal CARS pace (roughly 3 to 4 minutes).
2. After reading through the passage and without looking back to it, write a three or four sentences summary of the passage. Then set this aside.
3. Next re-read the passage and underline or highlight any keywords you see. Reference our Keywords Handout as necessary. [You can download it here.](#)
4. Reread the passage again, and this time circle any claims you believe the author makes and underline any support she provides to back these claims up. If there are competing claims made circle these claims too.
5. Finally, take your summary paragraph and marked up passage and review our breakdown of the passage. Try to identify in what ways your break down of the passage differed and was similar to ours. Doing this exercise on other passages can be useful in helping you identify claims and evidence.

The Parts of an Argument:



Passage I:

In the United States alone, there are thousands of people every year whose lives could be saved by means of a liver or kidney transplant but who die because organs are unavailable. Even the tens of thousands who obtain a transplant often have to wait years for an operation, during which time their quality of life and their post-operative prospects deteriorate. A sure way of increasing supply to meet the demand is to permit live donors to sell their organs in a competitive market. However, there is staunch opposition to permitting trade in human organs. It is objected that such trade would undermine altruism, coerce the poor, entice people to make decisions on inadequate information, increase inequality, degrade the people who engage in it, compel people to pay costs that they should not have to pay, and diminish the options available to third parties.

A competitive market in human organs would be a great improvement over the current situation in which organ sales are almost universally prohibited. It would do away with the evils of the black market. It would substantially increase the supply of organs, the quality of matches, the number of transplants and the likelihood of their success, thereby saving lives, reducing suffering and improving the quality of lives. It would permit people to trade an organ, or part of an organ, for things they value more highly. It might even bring down the cost of transplants in the long term. And it would treat people with the respect that is due to them as persons who are entitled to make their own decisions about their own bodies.

Yet despite these substantial benefits there is, in influential circles, entrenched opposition to a market in human organs. The gift argument depends upon false premises about altruistic donation and upon ignoring the substantial new supply of organs from people responding to financial incentives. The desperation argument depends upon the false claim that organ sales are made only by people in desperate circumstances; but even prohibiting organ sales in desperate circumstances would simply make the desperate worse off. The argument from weak agency would abolish all our liberties, since it uses a notion of weak agency that makes everyone a weak agent. The argument from the cost of preferences and the argument from impaired choice sets confuse the absence of a price with the absence of a cost: prohibiting sales does not abolish the cost; it obscures it and prevents people from avoiding it. Further, if the argument from reduced choice sets were valid, it would entail the general suppression of our liberties.

People who oppose a market in organs usually do so out of a concern for human welfare and, in particular, the well-being of the poor. But a competitive market in human organs would be generally beneficial; and its prohibition makes the poor worse off. The arguments offered for prohibition are unsound, invalid, confused and often involve principles which consistently applied would result in the wholesale suppression of ordinary liberties. The absence of a cogent reason for the opposition to markets in organs, and the fact that such opposition means death, suffering and the suppression of freedom, makes the existence and obstinacy of such opposition, amongst many people who are both intelligent and educated, not only puzzling but also distressing.

Passage I:

In the United States alone, there are thousands of people every year whose lives could be saved by means of a liver or kidney transplant **but** who die **because** organs are unavailable. Even the tens of thousands who obtain a transplant often have to wait years for an operation, during which time their quality of life **and** their post-operative prospects deteriorate. A **sure** way of increasing supply to meet the demand is to permit live donors to sell their organs in a competitive market. **However**, there is **staunch** opposition to permitting trade in human organs. It is objected that such trade would undermine altruism, coerce the poor, entice people to make decisions on inadequate information, increase inequality, degrade the people who engage in it, compel people to pay costs that they should not have to pay, **and** diminish the options available to third parties.

A competitive market in human organs would be a **great improvement** over the current situation in which organ sales are almost universally prohibited. It would do away with the **evils** of the black market. It would substantially increase the supply of organs, the quality of matches, the number of transplants **and** the likelihood of their success, thereby saving lives, reducing suffering **and** improving the quality of lives. It would permit people to trade an organ, or part of an organ, for things they value more highly. It **might** even bring down the cost of transplants in the long term. **And** it would treat people with the respect that is due to them as persons who are entitled to make their own decisions about their own bodies.

Yet despite these **substantial benefits** there is, in influential circles, entrenched opposition to a market in human organs. The gift argument depends upon false premises about altruistic donation **and** upon ignoring the substantial new supply of organs from people responding to financial incentives. The desperation argument depends upon the false claim that organ sales are made only by people in desperate circumstances; **but** even prohibiting organ sales in desperate circumstances would simply make the desperate worse off. The argument from weak agency would abolish **all** our liberties, **since** it uses a notion of weak agency that makes **everyone** a weak agent. The argument from the cost of preferences **and** the argument from impaired choice sets confuse the absence of a price with the absence of a cost: prohibiting sales does not abolish the cost; it obscures it **and** prevents people from avoiding it. **Further**, if the argument from reduced choice sets were valid, it would entail the general suppression of our liberties.

People who oppose a market in organs usually do so out of a concern for human welfare **and**, in particular, the well-being of the poor. **But** a competitive market in human organs would be **generally beneficial**; **and** its prohibition makes the poor **worse off**. The arguments offered for prohibition are **unsound, invalid, confused** **and** often involve principles which consistently applied would result in the **wholesale suppression of ordinary liberties**. The absence of a cogent reason for the opposition to markets in organs, **and** the fact that such opposition means death, suffering **and** the suppression of freedom, makes the existence **and** obstinacy of such opposition, amongst many people who are both intelligent **and** educated, not only **puzzling** **but** also **distressing**.

Passage I:

Paragraph I:

In the United States alone, there are thousands of people every year whose lives could be saved by means of a liver or kidney transplant **but** who die **because** organs are unavailable.

Support 1a# - This is the author's first piece of support. There are a ton of people dying who don't have access to organs. Notice this is a fact we could Google or check in a book.

Even the tens of thousands who obtain a transplant often have to wait years for an operation, during which time their quality of life **and** their post-operative prospects deteriorate.

Support 1b# - Another piece of evidence for the author's coming argument, that even in the case of those who don't die, their lives are negatively affected by having to wait.

A **sure** way of increasing supply to meet the demand is to permit live donors to sell their organs in a competitive market.

Claim 1# - This is the author's central argument in the passage. In the previous two sentences, he's outlined a problem and here he provides a solution.

However, there is **staunch** opposition to permitting trade in human organs. It is objected that such trade would undermine altruism, coerce the poor, entice people to make decisions on inadequate information, increase inequality, degrade the people who engage in it, compel people to pay costs that they should not have to pay, **and** diminish the options available to third parties.

The author is outlining the opposition to his argument. At this point he does not explain why they are wrong, but just introduces their objections. Notice the change in direction with the word "however." This clues you in that we're not on the same track we were with the first three sentences.

Paragraph II:

A competitive market in human organs would be a **great improvement** over the current situation in which organ sales are almost universally prohibited.

***Claim 2a#** - Notice the author's strong language "great improvement." This is obviously an opinion and a claim he is making, as there are many people that disagree with him. We'll look to this paragraph to see how having a competitive market in human organs would be a "great improvement." Be on the look out for support for this claim. It needs to be strong support, because the modality of his claim is very strong - "great improvement."*

It would do away with the **evils** of the black market.

***Support 2a#** - Doing away with the black market would be great, assuming this piece of support is true. It seems reasonable, but isn't air tight.*

It would substantially increase the supply of organs, the quality of matches, the number of transplants **and** the likelihood of their success, thereby saving lives, reducing suffering **and** improving the quality of lives.

***Support 2b#** - Having an open organ market would obviously increase the supply of organs, and it would seem to also increase the quality of matches since there are more organs to choose from, so likelihood of success would also increase. This is a strong piece of support.*

It would permit people to trade an organ, or part of an organ, for things they value more highly.

***Support 2c#** - This is obviously true, as someone who valued money more could trade an organ.*

It **might** even bring down the cost of transplants in the long term.

***Claim 2b** – Notice the word modal qualifier "might." This is actually another claim being made in support of claim 2a. It's unclear how or why it would bring down cost. The author does not provide any support or explanation for this claim.*

And it would treat people with the respect that is due to them as persons who are entitled to make their own decisions about their own bodies.

***Support 2d#** - It would seem to be showing more respect to people to allow them to make their own decisions instead of making decisions for them. Think of the point at which a parent starts to let their child make their own decisions.*

Paragraph III:

Yet despite these **substantial benefits** there is, in influential circles, entrenched opposition to a market in human organs.

We're returning to the final sentence in Paragraph I:

The gift argument depends upon false premises about altruistic donation **and** upon ignoring the substantial new supply of organs from people responding to financial incentives.

***Counterargument 1#** - What's the gift argument? In Paragraph I, the author says that some think having a market would undermine altruism. You wouldn't necessarily need to know this word for word or even go back to Paragraph I unless you got a question about this. The author says this argument is wrong because it misunderstands the nature of altruistic donation (how it misunderstands it is not said) and ignores the benefits of having more organs available. The author's treatment of this counterargument is somewhat weak, as he basically says, "No, you guys don't understand the nature of altruistic giving...and anyways, the benefits outweigh any downsides." One way he could have improved his argument was to explain what these "false premises" are.*

The desperation argument depends upon the false claim that organ sales are made only by people in desperate circumstances; **but** even prohibiting organ sales in desperate circumstances would simply make the desperate worse off.

Counterargument 2# - Again, we could look to the end of Paragraph I to find out in greater detail what the desperation argument is if we don't remember, but this isn't necessary unless we get a question about it. What does the author say in response to the idea that an organ market would "coerce the poor?" He says that this argument is based on the false assumption that only desperate people would sell organs which connects to a point made later in this paragraph, which is the idea that there might be some things people value more than their extra organ. Furthermore, the author says, that regardless, the poor are worse off when they cannot sell their organs, as they are limited from utilizing one of their resources.

The argument from weak agency would abolish **all** our liberties, **since** it uses a notion of weak agency that makes **everyone** a weak agent.

Counterargument 3# - Weak agency is the "entice people to make a decision based on insufficient information" argument outlined at the end of Paragraph I. The author's response is that to prohibit an action because people are incapable of making good decisions requires the logic that everyone is incapable of making good decisions, and if one is unable to make a good decision in regards to this particular thing, then in general we are incapable of making good decisions, so all decisions should be made for the masses.

This argument is sweeping in its generalizations. The author uses two modal qualifiers, "all" and "everyone." Someone might counter that when in extreme poverty, immediate concerns of food or shelter might outweigh longer term concerns such as health, thus someone might make a decision which is better in their short-term interests despite it being deleterious to their longer term health. If this is the case, is it really the case that preventing such behavior would remove "all our liberties" and that everyone must then be considered a "weak agent" in all situations? While this is a counterargument, the author does not develop it nor provide support, thus it is relatively weak.

The argument from the cost of preferences **and** the argument from impaired choice sets confuse the absence of a price with the absence of a cost: prohibiting sales does not abolish the cost; it obscures it **and** prevents people from avoiding it. **Further** if the argument from reduced choice sets were valid, it would entail the general suppression of our liberties.

Counterargument 4# - The author deals with the cost of preferences and impaired choice sets at the same time. It isn't exactly clear what the "cost of preferences" refers to, but it most likely is in reference to the second to last argument made at the end of Paragraph I, which is the idea that causes people to pay costs they shouldn't have to pay. The author argues that just because there isn't an official legal price does not mean that there is not a cost associated with it. There is a cost associated with not having a free organ market, namely the cost of increased deaths, lower transplant success rates, and higher prices on the black market. Not having a price requires the general public to pay all these costs.

Paragraph III:

People who oppose a market in organs usually do so out of a concern for human welfare **and**, in particular, the well-being of the poor. **But** a competitive market in human organs would be **generally beneficial**; **and** its prohibition makes the poor **worse off**.

The author says here that while those opposed are good intentioned, the motivations for their position are actually the same motivations that inform the author's position. The author says that if those who oppose organ markets truly care about human welfare and the poor, they would choose the option that generally benefits them. This is a wrap up sentence and does not really add anything new, but instead references arguments already made.

The arguments offered for prohibition are **unsound, invalid, confused** **and** often involve principles which consistently applied would result in the **wholesale suppression of ordinary liberties**.

The author is restating his position that all the counterarguments are weak, and that if the assumptions therein made were applied consistently would lead to the "wholesale suppression of ordinary liberties." This is a rather significant claim to make and the author does not provide much evidence for it except his sweeping generalizations the author makes counterargument 3#. It's a weak response because it is a strong claim with weak support given.

The absence of a cogent reason for the opposition to markets in organs, and the fact that such opposition means death, suffering and the suppression of freedom, makes the existence and obstinacy of such opposition, amongst many people who are both intelligent and educated, not only puzzling but also distressing.

The word “cogent” just means convincing. The author adds nothing new in this last sentence, again slamming his opposition and saying their position makes no sense and is hurting a lot of people.

Passage II:

“I, too, dear child, have here a gift for thee,” as Helen says in Homer when she is giving Telemachus a parting gift. With these words Dionysius of Halicarnassus dedicates his treatise *On Literary Composition* to the young Rufus Metilius. Which mythological parallel could be more apt to someone who has just reached adulthood than Telemachus when about to return to Ithaca? If we look at our age, Telemachus is generally perceived as the educatee par excellence of all mythological characters. As Kipf has shown in a recent article, whenever Telemachus is the subject-matter in modern literature for the young, he is presented as a young man in search of his identity, undergoing an education under the guidance of Athena in disguise. Much of this is owed to the influential novel *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by Fénelon, the tutor of the then dauphin. Printed in 1699, it is an account of Telemachus’ travels in search of his father, accompanied by Minerva in disguise, resulting in a finally grown-up Telemachus returning to Ithaca. This novel was so obviously educative that it was part of French reading, e.g., in German high-schools for much of the 19th century. But how important was Telemachus as a prototype of an educatee in antiquity? In his review, Pontani criticizes that Kipf neglects to mention that “the ancients had already a clear sense of the paedagogical purport of Telemachus’ adventures as is certified by several scholia focusing on Telemachus’ paideia and psychology.”

The question whether the ancients perceived the character of Telemachus as useful for, or exemplary of, the education of the young, is the more significant question as Homer’s poetry was abundantly used in ancient education (as the number of school papyri and numerous literary references show), and as the educational aspect formed an important part of Homeric criticism in antiquity. Modern readers would be interested in ideas about the various steps in Telemachus’ development, that is, in the process rather than the starting point and result, and read it like a sort of manual to give some guidance to readers of Telemachus’ age. But ancient schooling appears not to have been interested in using material tailored to the age of the students, at least as we would understand it. Telemachus was, of course, the prototype of a young man coming of age, but only in a very limited way: as a comparatively short, illustrative reference.

He was apparently not regarded as role model material. The comparison with Achilles makes this very apparent: although the scholia take a considerable interest in this hero’s education, he first and foremost is the result of that education—a finished product, so to speak. This is what makes him more suitable as a role model than Telemachus, as becomes clear from one of the most famous formulations of this educational concept given by Plato: “The teachers ... set before them [the students] on their benches the poems of great poets and compel them to memorize them, poems in which are contained many admonitions, many narratives and praises and encomia of noble men of old, in order that the boy zealously imitate them and strive to become like them.” Heroes were chosen with a view towards the life of an adult rather than towards a young man in search of his identity, outgrowing his doubts with the help of a goddess.

Passage II:

“I, too, dear child, have here a gift for thee,” as Helen says in Homer when she is giving Telemachus a parting gift. With these words Dionysius of Halicarnassus dedicates his treatise *On Literary Composition* to the young Rufus Metilius. Which mythological parallel could be more apt to someone who has just reached adulthood than Telemachus when about to return to Ithaca? If we look at our age, Telemachus is **generally** perceived as the educatee **par excellence** of all mythological characters. As Kipf has shown in a recent article, whenever Telemachus is the subject-matter in modern literature for the young, he is presented as a young man in search of his identity, undergoing an education under the guidance of Athena in disguise. Much of this is owed to the **influential** novel *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by Fénelon, the tutor of the then dauphin. Printed in 1699, it is an account of Telemachus’ travels in search of his father, accompanied by Minerva in disguise, resulting in a finally grown-up Telemachus returning to Ithaca. This novel was so **obviously** educative that it was part of French reading, e.g., in German high-schools for much of the 19th century. **But** how important was Telemachus as a prototype of an educatee in antiquity? In his review, Pontani criticizes that Kipf neglects to mention that “the ancients had already a clear sense of the paedagogical meaning of Telemachus’ adventures as is certified by several scholia focusing on Telemachus’ paideia **and** psychology.”

The question whether the ancients **perceived** the character of Telemachus as useful for, or exemplary of, the education of the young, is the **more significant** question as Homer’s poetry was **abundantly** used in ancient education (as the number of school papyri **and** numerous literary references show), **and** as the educational aspect formed an **important** part of Homeric criticism in antiquity. Modern readers would be interested in ideas about the various steps in Telemachus’ development, that is, in the process **rather than** the starting point **and** result, **and** read it like a sort of manual to give some guidance to readers of Telemachus’ age. **But** ancient schooling appears not to have been interested in using material tailored to the age of the students, at least as we would understand it. Telemachus was, **of course**, the prototype of a young man coming of age, **but** only in a very limited way: as a comparatively short, illustrative reference.

He was apparently not regarded as role model material. The comparison with Achilles makes this very apparent: although the scholia take a considerable interest in this hero’s education, he first **and** foremost is the result of that education—a finished product, so to speak. This is what makes him more suitable as a role model than Telemachus, as becomes clear from one of the most famous formulations of this educational concept give by Plato: “The teachers ... set before them [the students] on their benches the poems of great poets **and** compel them to memorize them, poems in which are contained many admonitions, many narratives **and** praises **and** encomia of noble men of old, in order that the boy zealously imitate them **and** strive to become like them.” Heroes were chosen with a view towards the life of an adult rather than towards a young man in search of his identity, outgrowing his doubts with the help of a goddess.

Passage II:

Paragraph I:

“I, too, dear child, have here a gift for thee,” as Helen says in Homer when she is giving Telemachus a parting gift. With these words Dionysius of Halicarnassus dedicates his treatise *On Literary Composition* to the young Rufus Metilius. Which mythological parallel could be more apt to someone who has just reached adulthood than Telemachus when about to return to Ithaca? If we look at our age, Telemachus is **generally** perceived as the educatee **par excellence** of all mythological characters. As Kipf has shown in a recent article, whenever Telemachus is the subject-matter in modern literature for the young, he is presented as a young man in search of his identity, undergoing an education under the guidance of Athena in disguise.

In these first few sentences, the author is setting up and explaining the point she is going to argue against.

All that is being said here is that most modern people consider Telemachus to be an example of the way children should be educated. The author references myth as well as Kipf's article to support that this position is out there.

Much of this is owed to the **influential** novel *Les Aventures de Télémaque* by Fénelon, the tutor of the then dauphin. Printed in 1699, it is an account of Telemachus' travels in search of his father, accompanied by Minerva in disguise, resulting in a finally grown-up Telemachus returning to Ithaca. This novel was so **obviously** educative that it was part of French reading, e.g., in German high-schools for much of the 19th century.

The author explains one likely reason (Claim 1#) for this position having arisen. She says that Fénelon's novel popularized Telemachus's educational development and journey. She backs this claim up (Support 1#) by referencing that the novel was required reading in German high-schools.

But how important was Telemachus as a prototype of an educatee in antiquity?

Claim 2# - Notice the word “But.” We've been moving along for the last six or seven sentences in the direction that Telemachus is the prototype for education in antiquity, but is this true? This will be the author's central claim and thesis in the passage. It's clear she is going to argue against this point.

In his review, Pontani criticizes that Kipf neglects to mention that “the ancients had already a clear sense of the paedagogical meaning of Telemachus’ adventures as is certified by several scholia focusing on Telemachus’ paideia and psychology.”

Support 2# - The author references Pontanti who critictizes Kipf because he neglects to mention that the ancients already had a particular understanding of the meaning of Telemachus' adventures. It's not clear what this understanding is yet, or how it contradicts Kipf's understanding. We'll have to read on.

Paragraph II:

The question whether the ancients perceived the character of Telemachus as useful for, or exemplary of, the education of the young, is the more significant question as Homer’s poetry was abundantly used in ancient education (as the number of school papyri and numerous literary references show), and as the educational aspect formed an important part of Homeric criticism in antiquity.

This is more or less a restatement of Claim 2#. The author explains why this is such an important question, as Homer's poetry was used significantly in educational contexts and has continued to play a central role in Homeric criticism. This can be summarized as “This question is important, because education was important.”

Modern readers would be interested in ideas about the various steps in Telemachus’ development, that is, in the process rather than the starting point and result, and read it like a sort of manual to give some guidance to readers of Telemachus’ age.

Support 2a# - This is a critical sentence as the author is making a comparison between modern readers and the readers of antiquity. Notice the words “rather than.” This comparison would likely be used in a question (it would if I were writing the questions.) What's the nature of the comparison? Well, modern readers would be interested in Telemachus' development or the process, “rather than” just referencing the starting and end points. Who do you suppose are going to be interested in the starting and end points? Well...

But ancient schooling appears not to have been interested in using material tailored to the age of the students, at least as we would understand it. Telemachus was, **of course**, the prototype of a young man coming of age, **but** only in a very limited way: as a comparatively short, illustrative reference.

Support 2a# cont. - The ancients! They were not interested in tailoring material to the ages of the students. Despite Telemachus being their age and more or less in their same situation, he was not used in the way he is used Moderns = Process whereas Ancients = Starting and End Points.

Paragraph III:

He was apparently not regarded as role model material. The comparison with Achilles makes this very apparent: although the scholia take a considerable interest in this hero's education, he first **and** foremost is the result of that education—a finished product, so to speak. This is what makes him more suitable as a role model than Telemachus,

Support 2b# - The author continues on a somewhat similar track but dives deeper into this point that the modern emphasis on process was not the emphasis of the ancients, who were more concerned with the end point. Why is Achilles a better role model than Telemachus? Because Achilles is a finished product, he started here and ended here. The emphasis of Telemachus' story is one of process and journey, which while being emphasized by moderns, was not of great interest to the ancients.

as becomes clear from one of the most famous formulations of this educational concept give by Plato: “The teachers ... set before them [the students] on their benches the poems of great poets **and** compel them to memorize them, poems in which are contained many admonitions, many narratives **and** praises **and** encomia of noble men of old, in order that the boy zealously imitate them **and** strive to become like them.” Heroes were chosen with a view towards the life of an adult rather than towards a young man in search of his identity, outgrowing his doubts with the help of a goddess.

Support 2c# - Here the author is offering more support for this thesis by quoting Plato. The emphasis is that the educational process of antiquity was focused on the lives of noble men who the boys should imitate. The focus was not one of imitating a boy who like them is still is still learning and in process. Th final sentence is just a summary returning to the main point that educational examples and role models were selected in antiquity by where the ended, not due to similarity of age or situation in life as some moderns believe.

References:

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Passage I -

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<http://libertarianpapers.org/article/27-frederick-a-competitive-market-in-human-organs/>

Passage II -

Athena's "Unreasonable Advice": The Education of Telemachus in Ancient Interpretations of Homer. (2009) – Wissman, Jessica. <http://grbs.library.duke.edu/article/view/1241/1321>