

Exercise # 1
THE NATURE OF POWER

For each of the situations described below, comment briefly on the following set of questions:

- a. Is power an aspect of this situation? Why or why not?
 - B. If power is involved, who is exercising it? Why is this particular actor able to exercise power?
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1. It's Friday night, and a group of teenagers are having a party. Midway through the evening, one guest pulls a joint out of his pocket, lights up and passes it around. Two of the guests have never smoked pot before and are bothered by what is going on. One of the two takes a drag from the cigarette, the other does not.
 - a.
 - b.

 2. A woman returns home early from work one afternoon to find her husband in bed with another woman. Without waiting for an 'explanation', she storms out of the house, gets in her car, and intentionally drives the car off of a bridge. Upon hearing the news of his wife's death, the husband is overcome by grief and takes an overdose of sleeping pills.
 - a.
 - b.

 3. Members of a Senate committee are reviewing a bill which they know to be adamantly opposed by top officials in the White House. Fearing a presidential veto if the bill successfully passes Congress, they decide to table the bill.
 - a.
 - b.

4. A professor is sitting in his office when a student bursts in with a list of excuses why she cannot turn in her assigned paper on time. The professor refuses to accept any of her reasons as valid, and warns her that late work will not be graded. The student does not attend class on the day the assignment is due; instead, she places her completed paper in the professor's mailbox two days later. The professor enters an F beside the student's name in his gradebook.

a.

b.

5. An elderly man rents an inexpensive apartment in a district of the city where it is rumored that a great amount of street fighting takes place. He refuses to move--even though he could afford to do so--and instead, confines himself to his locked apartment because he fears attack by a local gang.

a.

b.

6. For over 25 years, a laboratory affiliated with a large university in Cambridge has designed and constructed guidance systems for all American-made defense missiles. After a wave of student protest, however, the laboratory was forcibly evicted from the university campus. Now it is a private corporation on Main Street.

a.

b.