

HEALTH, DEVELOPMENT & HUMAN RIGHTS

Understanding AIDS in Africa

Instructions

When doing the reading for this class, there are the two basic kinds of information you need to understand:

1. What are the main points or conclusions that an author accepts with respect to a particular issue?
2. What are the reasons, important considerations, and evidence that lead the author to accept that conclusion?

For our purposes, it is *information of the second sort that will be our primary concern* since our most basic task is to *evaluate the reasons and evidence* that are offered to support accepting one possible position on an issue, rather than another.

Reading

Stillwaggon, E. (2001, May 21). AIDS and Poverty in Africa: Prevention and Treatment Require a Focus on Overall Health and Development. *The Nation*, 272(20), 22–25.

Questions

1. What is the thesis of Eileen Stillwaggon's paper?
Notice that her thesis has two parts. The first part of her thesis is negative, claiming that something is *not* the case about AIDS in Africa, whereas the second part of her thesis is positive, claiming that something *actually is* the case about AIDS in Africa. Clearly distinguish between these negative and positive parts of her thesis.
2. How does Stillwaggon defend each part of her thesis? That is, what is her argument in this paper?
In responding to this, clearly distinguish between her *descriptive* claims (that is, claims based on biological and other scientific facts) and her *normative* claims (that is, claims based on moral evaluations and recommendations).
3. Why does Stillwaggon believe justifying her thesis is important?

To answer these questions you will have to reflect critically on what you have read and possibly re-read important passages.

Although I strongly suggest that you write out brief answers to these questions, you do not have to turn in written responses. You do, however, need to be prepared to speak intelligently about these issues at our next class meeting.