Inductive Arguments

Examine the following arguments and identify which of the three specific kinds of inductive reasoning (argument by example/inductive generalization, argument by analogy, or causal reasoning). Explain how you know the argument is the type your claim (no diagram is needed here). Then, rate the argument as good, medium, or bad and explain why it gets that rating.

1. A pet of any sort is certainly as dependent on its owner as a child is on its parents. Neither pet nor child can live and develop well without basic attention to its needs, consistency in treatment, and affection. Thus, since what’s good for a child should always be considered, so also what’s good for a pet should be considered.

2. A survey of the buying habits of residents in Franklin County showed that the most commonly purchased commodities were coffee, long underwear, and ammunition. Researchers interviewed 500 rural residents during the month of January. Franklin County consists of approximately 300 rural residents and 67,000 urban dwellers. On the basis of the survey, researchers recommended that area Franklin County retailers are looking at an exciting untapped market in long underwear and ammunition sales.
3. Dan has skied the same terrain every season for the past five years. He always sees at least one person skiing with reckless abandon. “These slopes are crawling with people who have no regard for safety—you take risks when you ski up here,” he says.

4. Caffeine does not generate an increase in the risk of heart disease, a recent study shows. Comparing caffeine users, users of decaffeinated products, and those who use neither, we see that heart disease is as low in caffeine users as it is in those who use neither. The incidence of heart disease is slightly higher for those who use decaffeinated products.

5. One way to put the argument for patients’ autonomy with regard to assisted dying is to compare a person’s life to a business: if I own a business that is making money, it makes sense to keep it open; but if the business is losing money, I would be imprudent to wait until there was no money left at all before closing. Similarly, a terminally ill patient owns his or her body and need not “stay in business” till the very end.
6. Census data show that the majority of residents in district 4 have incomes above $80,000. Our political polls show that they almost always elect the Republican candidate in their district elections. Census data also shows that district 6 is populated with high-income residents; therefore, they will probably vote Republican.

7. In a recent survey of the twenty highest-paid women in U.S. corporations, the lowest total compensation was $833,350. But 615 men earned more than the 20th woman on the list. However, to the extent that performance can be accurately measured, men and women appear to perform equally well. Independent of other factors, gender appears to play a key role in everyone’s ability to get ahead.

8. A recent study shows that, on the whole, women who work outside the home tend to have fewer chronic ailments than women who are homemakers. Specifically, the incidence of chronic ailment is lower for women employed in nonindustrial jobs with a high degree of social interaction. Those in industrial occupations have a higher incidence of chronic ailment due to physical exertion and occupational hazards. The study suggests that the absence of daily social interaction is significant factor in producing chronic ailments in women who are homemakers.