

## POPPER AND WITTGENSTEIN ON MEET THE PRESS

UHON 351U — UNCERTAINTY, SPRING 2013

### 1. WHAT IS TO BE DONE

“Meet the Press” has been a premier current events TV show for over 60 years. In the usual format, two political experts — maybe the Senate floor leaders, or a former cabinet secretary, or a party leader, or an interest group leader — from approximately opposite ideological standpoints are invited in for a joint interview. The climate can range from friendly and collegial on one end to outright rancorous on the other. The show’s web page has videos and transcripts of many episodes at <http://www.nbcnews.com/id/3032608/>.

You are to produce the transcript for the joint interview of Karl Popper and Ludwig Wittgenstein. If you are familiar with the show, or if you watch a few episodes, you will see that any of the issues of the day are fair game for the conversation — and guests sometimes use the opportunity to say things quite outside the line of questioning (after all, with the exception of the sitting President, this is the largest audience these guests are ever likely to address). Still, the focus of your interview should be on the possibilities of medical decision support, of systematic corporate risk management, or both.

Your goal is to capture, both in substance and in form, what these two men would say about these issues and how they would say it. You may well have taken sides between these two, but try to be fair to both, and try to make sure that their opinions clash in at least some points. After all, the purpose of the joint interview is to see things debated out where each one can answer the other directly. That’s no fun if they never disagree.

### 2. DUE DATE

The paper is due on March 28.

### 3. GRADING

In addition to the usual criteria, I will assess the following content questions:

- (1) Are both philosophers fairly represented? Are the views attributed to each one consonant with the views he actually expressed?
- (2) Is each of the philosophers true to his form? Do they sound like themselves? Do their opinions conflict enough for an interesting discussion?

I will also assess the following form question:

- (1) Does the paper have the form of a transcript for Meet the Press?