In groups of 2-4, discuss the following arguments. Put each in standard form and then determine whether it is circular, question begging, both, or neither. Explain your choice. Be sure to put your partners’ names on the lines above.

1. **We have to accept change, because without change there is no progress.**

   P1. Without change there is no progress.
   P2(*). We must accept what is necessary for progress.
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   C. We must accept change.

   This is not circular. Furthermore, it does not beg the question – there is no obvious sense in which you might have a problem with change because of its connection with progress; as a result, there is no obvious way in which bringing up progress is going to run afoul of a natural concern you might have with change.

2. **Premarital sex is wrong, because premarital sex is fornication, and fornication is a sin.**

   P1. Premarital sex is fornication.
   P2. Fornication is a sin.
   P3(*). Something is a sin if and only if it is wrong. (?)
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   C. Premarital sex is wrong.

   Given that (premarital sex = fornication) and P3, then P2 and C are logically equivalent and this argument is circular. As such, it would beg the question in any context where it is adduced to convince someone of the truth of its conclusion.

3. **The drinking age should be lowered to eighteen, because eighteen-year olds are mature enough to drink.**

   P1. Eighteen-year olds are mature enough to drink.
   P2(*). If people of a certain age are mature enough to drink, the drinking age should be lowered to that age to allow you to drink.
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   C. The drinking age should be lowered to eighteen.
This argument is not circular, as C is not logically equivalent to either P1 or P2. It begs the question in any context where the concern one has about lowering the drinking age involves the maturity of 18-year olds, which is a natural concern to have about this kind of move. (Of course, if the problem one has with the conclusion is, say, actuarial, then this wouldn’t beg the question.)

4. **Jeffrey can’t really be insane, because he says he is.**

   P1. Jeffrey says he is insane.
   P2(*). If you say you are insane, you can’t really be insane.
   
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   C. Jeffrey can’t really be insane.

This is not a circular argument, and it doesn’t obviously beg the question. Here as with (1) above, it isn’t clear that the problem you’ll naturally have with C involves anything about what Jeffrey says. As a result, it isn’t at all clear that bringing up what Jeffrey says is going to fly in the face of criticisms that have already been advanced. (Which is not to say that the argument is compelling.)