

Philosophy 1: Short Introduction to Philosophy

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For next time read:

“Introduction,” pp. 75-77 &
Saint Anselm’s “The Ontological
Argument,” pp. 78-79

The Philosopher's Toolkit

- The practice of philosophy chiefly involves providing and critically evaluating *arguments*.
- But what is a philosophical argument?

What a Philosophical Argument Isn't



What a Philosophical Argument Is

Def. of an argument.

But what sorts of philosophical arguments are there?

- Two kinds of arguments.
- But what's the difference between a deductive and a non-deductive argument?

Deductive Arguments

- A deductive argument is an argument whose premises purport to provide support for its conclusion that is so strong that, *if* all of the premises are true, it is *impossible* for the conclusion to be false.

The Virtues of a Deductive Argument

- Two questions we ask:
 - (1) Is this argument valid?
 - Does the conclusion follow from the premises?
 - An argument is *deductively valid* (or, simply, *valid*) just in case it is such that, necessarily, *if* all of the premises are true, then the conclusion is true.
 - Validity is a property of the logical form of arguments. The logical form of an argument is constituted by the inference underpinning the relation between the premises and conclusion.

- An argument can be valid and yet have some (or even all) false premises *and* a false conclusion.
 - Some Valid Arguments with False Premises/
Conclusions:
 - P1. If Bernie Madoff is poor, then he is a model citizen.
 - P2. Bernie Madoff is poor.
 - C. Thus, he is a model citizen.

- P1. If Socrates was handsome, then he was a bad philosopher.
- P2. Socrates was handsome.
- C. Therefore, he was a bad philosopher.

Modus Ponens:

P1. If P, then Q.

P2. P.

C. Therefore, Q.

- Another example:
 - P1. If Tony Soprano is a mobster, then he is a criminal.
 - P2. Tony Soprano is not a criminal.
 - C. So, he's not a mobster.

Modus Tollens:

P1. If P, then Q.

P2. Not-Q.

C. So, Not-P.

- P1. Either Britney Spears is the greatest pop vocalist of all time or Phish is an excellent band.
- P2. Phish is *not* an excellent band.
- C. Thus, Britney Spears is the greatest pop vocalist of all time.

Disjunctive Syllogism:

P1. P or Q.

P2. Not-Q.

C. Thus, P.

- P1. If Michael Jackson is alive, then the Jonas Brothers will be unable to publicly release their next album.
- P2. If the Jonas Brothers are unable to publicly release their next album, then Larry King will be the happiest person on Earth.
- C. Thus, if Michael Jackson is alive, then Larry King will be the happiest person on Earth.

Hypothetical Syllogism:

P1. If P, then Q.

P2. If Q, then R.

C. Thus, if P, then R.

The Chief Virtue of a Deductive Argument

- Is the argument *sound*?

Def. of soundness.

Non-Deductive Arguments

- A non-deductive argument is one that does *not* purport to provide premises that, if true, *guarantee* the truth of the conclusion.
- Instead, a non-deductive argument purports to provide premises that, if true, *probabilify* the conclusion (i.e., make the truth of the conclusion probable).
- A non-deductive argument may be *strong* or *weak*, depending on the extent to which it succeeds in this.

- Example of non-deductive arguments:
inductive arguments.
- Examples of *inductive* arguments:
 - P1. All crows observed to this point have been black.
 - C. Thus, the next observed crow will be black

- P1. 80% of students at UCSB in the sample are from California.
- C. Thus, 80% of students at UCSB are from California.
- Other non-deductive arguments: *Argument by Analogy*:
 - P1. An eyeball is like a machine in that it has a very specific function.
 - P2. Machines are the products of intelligent design.
 - C. Therefore, an eyeball is the product of intelligent design.

- Argument to the Best Explanation:
 - P1. Colonel Mustard's body was found Tuesday night hanging from a noose in the library.
 - P2. Mrs. White was the only person around at that time who knew how to tie a noose.
 - P3. Colonel Mustard had been plotting to steal all of Mrs. White's money and she was aware of this.
 - C. Mrs. White murdered Colonel Mustard.