

Logic

Validity

- If all premises are true, the conclusion is also true
- OR The conclusion necessarily follows from the premises.
- OR The premises necessarily lead to the conclusion

Soundness

- A sound argument is a valid argument with all true premises.

I. Argument Forms

Modus Ponens P1: If p, then q. P2: p C: q	WRONG: Affirming the Consequent P1: If p, then q P2: q C: p
Modus Tollens P1: If p, then q. P2: Not q. C: Not p.	WRONG: Denying the Antecedent P1: If p, then q P2: Not p C: Not q
Hypothetical syllogism P1: If p, then q. P2: If q, then r. C: If p, then r.	
Disjunctive syllogism P1: Either p or q. P2: Not p. C: q.	
Dilemma P1: Either p or q. P2: If p, then r. P3: If q, then s. C: Either r or s.	

2. Counter-Arguments

Original argument:

P: X.

IP: If X then Y

C: Y.

Challenge explicit premise

'It is not the case that premise X of OA'.

PI: a.

C: Not X.

Challenging implicit premise

'It is not the case that implicit premise (If X, then Y) of OA.'

PI: a.

C: Not (if X, then Y)

Challenging validity

'It does not follow from premise X of OA that conclusion Y of OA.'

PI: a.

C: It does not follow from X that Y.

Counterarguments CANNOT challenge the conclusion of OA

3. Rhetoric

Rhetoric serves to **make an argumentative text or speech more persuasive**, without affecting the soundness of the reasons given.

- Not premises
- Not conclusions

When extracting arguments, remove all rhetoric and do not include them in your P-C form

Part I - Preambles, Asides and Repetition: Delete ALL of them

Preambles

found (sometimes) at the **start of an argumentative text, before the argument begins**. It is the author's way of introducing the argument, showing its relevance, setting up the context, hooking the reader etc. They can be **quotes, definitions, background information and more**.

Asides

points that the author makes that are **related to the argument, but is neither the conclusion nor a premise**.

- e.g. "By the way..."

Repetitions

repeated sentences, and can be seen as a stylistic rhetorical element. Repetitions are used for clarity and emphasis. **Each premise and conclusion should only appear once** when extracting an argument into P-C form.

Part 2 - Assurances, Hedges, Discounts: Delete ALL

Assurances

words or phrases that **indicate the author is very confident** of the claims he is making.

- e.g. *surely, certainly, of course*, undeniably

Hedges

words or phrases that **indicate the author is not 100% confident** with the claims he is making.

- e.g. *I think that, in my opinion, arguably*.

Discounts

facts or possibilities that challenge the author's conclusion or premises, to make the author sound more trustworthy

- Discount **indicators**
- e.g. *although, while it may be the case that, despite*, while it may be true that...

Part 3 - Rhetorical Questions, Commands, Metaphors: MUST convert

Rhetorical Questions

are **questions whose answers are supposed to be very obvious**; the author is not really asking a question, he is trying to make a point. To uncover the implicit statement, just **answer the question**

- Conversion
 - Rhetorical question: If you don't work hard, how are you ever going to succeed?
 - Statement: If you don't work hard, there is no way you are ever going to succeed.

Commands

are also known as imperatives in English. They can come in different tones - **an order, a plea or a request**. A command consists of a verb without a grammatical subject.

To uncover the the implicit statement, simply **add an appropriate grammatical subject, followed by "should"**.

- e.g. *Shut up! Please listen. Work hard!*
- Conversion
 - Command: Work hard!
 - Statement: You should work hard.

Metaphors

can also hide implicit premises and conclusions, but when extracting an argument into P-C form, you have to **convert the metaphors into literal statements**.

- Conversion
 - Metaphor: Mary is a ray of sunshine.
 - Literal statement: Mary brings joy to others.
- Conversion 2
 - Metaphor: Gary is an Einstein.
 - Literal statement: Gary is a science genius.

4. Argument Writing

Steps

1. Determine main conclusion
2. Determine main premises
 - a. P1: The role of government is to protect citizen's rights
 - b. P2: Eminent domain violates citizen's rights
 - c. C: Eminent domain is not justified
3. Elaborate/ support premises with elaboration and (non-specific) examples
 - a. Support P1
 - i. P1: state of nature is peaceful and cooperative
 - ii. P2: No justification for govt to violate rights to improve situation
 - iii. C: Role of govt is to protect citizen's rights

Notes

- State main conclusion explicitly at the start.
- Use premise and conclusion indicators.
 - Minimise use of useless connectors: 'however', 'moreover', 'nevertheless', 'furthermore'
- Use short sentences
 - Minimise use of extenders: 'which', 'whereby'
- Do not use unnecessarily technical words

Argument Structure

Main argument framework

(1) Eminent domain is not justified because (2) role of government is to protect citizens' rights & (3) eminent domain violate citizens' rights.

Supporting main premise (2)

(2) because (4) state of nature is peaceful and cooperative -> (5) no justification for govt to violate rights to improve situation.

Supporting main premise (3)

(3) because (6) eminent domain takes away people's rights to their property.

Exemplar

(2)

Eminent domain is not justified because the main role of the government is to protect the rights of citizens, including their rights to life, liberty and property. This implies that the government itself should not violate these rights, even for a supposed greater good.

This is because in a state of nature, where there is no government, people will generally respect one another's lives, and live cooperatively and peacefully with one another. So, there is no justification for the government to violate people's rights in order to make their lives better.

(3)

Eminent domain involves the government violating citizens' rights to their property because it involves the government forcibly taking away their private property for public use without consent.

(1)

Eminent domain is thus not justified. (124 words)

Attacking validity:

(C)

It does not follow from the claim that monarchy is the system of government that can best guarantee societal order that it is the best system.

(P1) Role of govt not societal order -> Role of (best) govt protect rights

This is because the role of the government is not to ensure societal order. The role of the government is to protect the rights of people, including their rights to free speech and assembly.

(P2) Monarchy cannot protect rights

This implies that the government should allow and enable people to participate in street protests or write in to complain in the media. A monarchy might not allow these action. Furthermore, these actions might disrupt societal order.

(C) Even if monarchy can guarantee societal order -> Monarchy not best system

Therefore, even if monarchy can best guarantee societal order, it might not be the best system. (113 words)

5. Notes

- Remember to include full stop
- Don't exclude important clauses/conditionals.

Political Philosophy

1. Social Contract Theory - *Locke and Hobbs*

Social Contract Theory

P1: We would be better off with the govt having some power over us.

P2: If we would be better off with the govt having some power over us, then we would consent to governmental power

P3: We would consent to governmental power

P4: Governmental power involves violation of fundamental rights by central authority

P4: Violation of our fundamental rights is never justified, unless we consent to it.

C: Governmental power is justified

John Locke's Argument (Democracy)

(1) State of nature

P1: Humans are rational beings

P2 (P1 + IP): Thus, in state of nature, people would live peacefully according to reason

P3 (P2 + IP): Thus, people would only consent to govt authority if it preserves our rights

(2) Democracy

P4: Govt that is too strong would trample on our rights

P5 (P4 + IP): We would only consent to govt that is not too strong.

P6: Only in a democracy is the power of the government adequately checked by the people.

P7: Only when the power of the government is adequately checked by the people, would the government not be too strong.

P8 (P6 + P7): Only when the power of the government is adequately checked by the people, would the government not be too strong.

P9 (P5 + P8): We would only consent to a democracy

(3) Consent

P10: Only systems of governance that we consent to are justified

C (P9 + P10): Democracy is the only justified system of governance

John Locke's role of government

(1) Human Rights

P1: We have fundamental rights to life, liberty and property

P2: It is meaningless to claim that we have a right if we are not allowed to punish people who violate those rights.

P3 (P1+P2): We must be allowed to punish people who violate our fundamental rights

(2) State of nature

P4: There is no central judge in the state of nature

P5 (P4+IP): In state of nature, people's ability to punish others is dependent on how strong they are relative to their transgressors

P6 (P5 + IP): In state of nature, punishments would thus be very arbitrary

P7: If, in the state of nature, punishments could be very arbitrary, and we must be allowed to punish people who violate our rights, then a government is needed to ensure that punishments are fair and proportionate.

C (P3+P6+P7): A government is needed to ensure that our punishments are fair and proportionate

Thomas Hobbes' Argument (Monarchy)

(1) State of nature

P1: Humans are selfish and egoistic

P2 (P1 + IP): In state of nature, there will be widespread conflict.

P3 (P2 + IP): In state of nature, lives would be nasty, brutish and short.

P4 (P3 + IP): Thus, people would only consent to a strong government in order to seek protection from one another.

(2) Monarchy

P4: An absolute monarchy only consists of one powerful monarch

P5 (P4 + IP): Absolute monarchy is strong and decisive

P6: A strong and decisive government can grant us protection from one another.

P7 (P5 + P6): Only a monarchy with absolute power would be able to offer us protection from one another

P8 (P7 + IP): We would only consent to a monarchy

(3) Consent

P9: Only systems of governance that we consent to are justified

C (P8 + P9): Monarchy is the only justified system of governance

Thomas Hobbes' justification to disobey government

P1: We have the right to take whatever means necessary to preserve our lives.

P2: Govt power is justified only insofar as it could protect our lives.

P3: If govt power fails to protect our lives, we have the right to disobey it.

C: We have the right to disobey govt power if obeying it would threaten our lives directly or if the government fails in its duty to protect our lives

General Structure for a Government's Justification	
P1	Humans are X
P2	If humans are X, then the state of nature is Y
P3 (P1, P2)	The state of nature is Y
P4	If the state of nature is Y, we will only submit to a government which fulfils Z functions.
P5 (P3, P4)	We will only submit to a government which fulfils Z functions.
P6	Government A has certain features.
P7	If Government A has certain features, then Government A has Z functions.
P8 (P6, P7)	Government A has Z functions.
P9	If Government A has Z functions, it is best suited to fulfil Z functions.
P10 (P8, P9)	Government A is best suited to fulfil Z functions.

P11 (P5, P10)	We will only submit to Government A.
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PI2	If we will only submit to Government A, only Government A is justified.
C (PI1, PI2)	Only Government A is justified.

2. Security vs Liberty

Principles

- (1) We should minimise general inconvenience to the public
- (2) We should not infringe on citizen's privacy
- (3) We should treat every citizen as innocent until proven guilty
- (4) We should attempt to minimise pain and suffering

Without security, there is no liberty

If we are constantly facing threats to our lives and property, we will not be free to lead the life we want.

- We will not dare to move freely on the streets in a crime-infested neighbourhood.
- We will not be free to enjoy what we own if there is a high risk of our property being stolen.
- We cannot make long-term life plans in an unstable society.

Without liberty, there is no security

However, if we give up all our freedoms to the government (for example, our right to free speech or free association), then we will no longer be secure from the government itself, for we will be defenceless against a government that decides to trample on our rights.

- If we give up all our freedoms to the government, then we are powerless against a corrupt government.

Liberty and Security are tradeoffs

we have to give up some of our rights or freedoms in exchange for the government providing security in some areas.

- To keep us safe from terrorists, the government may have to infringe on our right to privacy through surveillance.
- To keep us safe from one another, the government may have to ban private citizens from bearing firearms.

- To protect us against the contingencies of life (poverty, illnesses, accidents etc.) by providing public services like healthcare and education, the government needs to rely on taxes, thereby infringing our rights to keep our full earnings.

When a company provides goods and services to its customers, this (usually) involves people freely trading with one another. So it does not normally involve the surrendering of any party's liberties.

3. Distributive Justice

A **principle of distribution** says **how resources should be distributed in a society**.

A **criterion of distribution** is the **value that a method of distribution aims to promote**.

Consequentialism: Discerns what is right by the consequences (e.g. white lies)

Utilitarianism: Greatest good for greatest number (a type of Consequentialism)

Hedonism: Greatest good if it produces pleasure or minimises pain (a type of Consequentialism)

Deontology: Objective rules (opposite of Consequentialism)

Libertarianism: Laissez-faire philosophy which involves minimal state intervention

Egalitarianism: All people are equal and thus deserve equal rights

Central Qn: How should resources be distributed in a society?

- What role should the govt play? (Govt intervention vs free market)
- Should the govt redistribute resources from the rich to the poor?

To argue for a particular method of distribution, we consider

1. Principle of distribution
2. Whether the method of distribution really adheres to this principle.

The govt **should** tax the rich to help the poor

Reason	Criterion of distribution
(1) The poor should be given equal opportunities to succeed	Equality of opportunity
(2) The poor should be able to meet their basic needs and wellbeing // The total happiness felt by the poor will outweigh the total unhappiness felt by the rich	Utilitarianism/Utility maximisation
(3) The poor should experience the same happiness and have the same resources as the rich. // Wealth inequality is inherently unfair.	Equality of outcome
(4) The poor requires help to fulfil their basic needs	Need
(5) An unequal society will ultimately lead to societal tensions and disorder	Societal unity and peace

The govt **should not** tax the rich to help the poor

Reason	Criterion of distribution
(1) The poor are not contributing to the state and therefore should not receive help from the state.	
(2) The rich will feel resentment at their money being taken away	Utilitarianism
(3) Redistribution will discourage hard work and harm the economy in the long run	Economic growth
(4) Citizens should be taxed equally	Rights of citizens
(5) The rich deserve to keep their money since they worked hard for it	Desert

The govt should not redistribute resources at all (Libertarianism)

Reason	Criterion of distribution
(1) The govt should not influence or regulate the free market. (including healthcare, education, housing).	Economics Rights
(2) Free market should determine production and distribution of resources in society	Economic Rights

4. Rawls' argument against Desert

Desert

- What one deserves
- What one should get based on his merit/demerit

Merit based on

- Contribution / accomplishment
- Effort
- Talent
- Birth (no one believes this)

Arguments for meritocracy

- It gives people what they deserve
- It gets the best people for the job
- It encourages hard work
- It promotes equal opportunities

John Rawls' Argument ("Lottery of Life")

P1: We only deserve what we can take credit for

P2: The fruits of our labour depends on contingencies like our natural gifts and the structure of society

- [Natural gifts -> Affect how talented/how successfully we can accomplish a certain thing]
- [Structure of society -> What society values. Affects what can be considered success]

P3: We cannot take credit for these contingencies

P4: Thus, we cannot take credit for the fruits of our labour.

C: We do not deserve the fruits of our labour

Counter-Argument I (Effort credibility):

- It is not true that if we cannot take credit for these contingencies, that we cannot take credit for the fruits of our labour.
- This is since we can take credit for other things (besides contingencies like talent/society)
 - We can take credit for the effort we put in to develop and exercise those gifts
 - We can take credit in seizing the opportunities we are given
- Thus, we deserve the fruits of our labour.

Rawls' Counterargument to the argument of effort credibility:

- The effort and opportunities we choose still depend on contingencies like our natural gifts and the structure of society
- P1: Effort determined by genes, social circumstances (what is rewarded/sought after in society) and upbringing.
- P2: We cannot take credit for our genes, social circumstances or upbringing
- P3: We cannot take credit for the product of what we cannot take credit for.
- C: We cannot take credit for effort.

Rawls' perspective

- One's fortunate (or misfortune) in life depends on luck.
- Thus, the rich do not deserve their fortunate, neither do the poor deserve their misfortune.
- John Rawls' Justice: mitigating the 'luck' factors
- We should compensate the poor for losing out in the 'lottery of life'.