

Paperling 4

Instructions: submitting this assignment requires two things. First, you should email it to me (my email address is immerman@ksu.edu ) with the subject “Paperling 4”. You should do this by **9 AM on September 22**. I will confirm with an email that I have received it. You should also print out a copy and **bring it to class on September 22**. In class, we will talk over the assignment and then you will fill out a short self-assessment before turning it in. I like to grade as anonymously as possible, so please **do not put your name on the top of the paper, but instead put it on the opposite side of the page or on a second page**. If you have any questions about how to complete the assignment, please let me know.

Today for class, among other things, we are discussing an argument from David Benatar, which appears on pages 7-8 of Elizabeth Kolbert’s article “The Case Against Kids”. I have reconstructed the argument as follows:

1. We have a moral duty not to perform actions that will lead to people being harmed in ways they wouldn’t otherwise.
2. We do not have a moral duty to perform actions that will lead to those who do not yet exist being benefitted in ways they wouldn’t otherwise.
3. Having kids is an action that will lead to those who have not yet come into existence being harmed in ways they wouldn’t otherwise. (After all, these kids will be harmed in some ways. And if they didn’t exist, they wouldn’t be harmed in those ways.)
4. We morally ought not perform an action that will violate a duty not to harm someone unless in performing the action we will be fulfilling a duty to benefit them.
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5. We morally ought not have kids.

Give what you take to be the best objection to this argument.  
(If you've forgotten what an objection is, check the worksheet on  
objections and counter-arguments.)

*Late policy: I will accept late Paperlings, but take off 3 points if they're  
between 0 and 3 days late, and 6 points if they're more than 3 days late.  
After a week, they will no longer be accepted.*

Daniel Immerman  
Introduction to Moral Philosophy

Paperling 4 Rubric

<b>Clarity and precision</b>	(3) You are quite clear and precise.	(1.5) For the most part, you are clear and precise, but at times you could be clearer or more precise.	(0) There are lots of times when you are not clear or precise.
<b>Interpretation</b>	(3) You are accurate and charitable in your interpretation.	(1.5) You are sometimes accurate and charitable in your interpretation.	(0) You regularly are inaccurate or uncharitable in your interpretation.
<b>Offering an Objection</b>	(3) You offer an objection, rather than a counter-argument. It is clear what part of the argument you are objecting to.	(1.5) You offer an objection, rather than a counter-argument, but it is unclear what part of the argument you are objecting to.	(0) You fail to offer an objection.
<b>Plausibility (Note: I'll be grading relatively easy here)</b>	(3) Your objection is fairly plausible.	(1.5) Your objection is quite implausible.	(0) Your objection is extremely implausible.
<b>Self-assessment (Note: you'll be performing this in class on the day the paper is due.)</b>	(3) You accurately self assess.	(1.5) You are somewhat accurate in how you self-assess.	(0) You are totally inaccurate in how you self-assess.