

# Offering Arguments – Introduction to Moral Philosophy

Daniel Immerman

3 February 2017

Typically, in philosophy papers, not only do you want to state your view, but you also want to offer an argument (or arguments) for it. I'll be giving two tips regarding offering arguments for views.

# Having a valid argument

The first tip is to fully spell out the reasons for your view. You want your conclusion to follow from the reasons you state. Philosophers call this having a “valid” argument.

# Having a valid argument

The first tip is to fully spell out the reasons for your view. You want your conclusion to follow from the reasons you state. Philosophers call this having a “valid” argument.

For example, suppose you want to defend the view that everyone has the right to have kids. You write: “People have the right to have kids because kids make people happy.”

# Having a valid argument

The first tip is to fully spell out the reasons for your view. You want your conclusion to follow from the reasons you state. Philosophers call this having a “valid” argument.

For example, suppose you want to defend the view that everyone has the right to have kids. You write: “People have the right to have kids because kids make people happy.”

An issue with this argument is that the connection between kids making people happy and people having the right to have kids is not fully spelled out. The following would be better: “People have the right to have kids because kids make people happy and people have the right to do the things that make them happy.”



# Being consistent in your wording

Another thing I recommend is that if you use a word to refer to something, then you keep using the same word to refer to that thing.

# Being consistent in your wording

Another thing I recommend is that if you use a word to refer to something, then you keep using the same word to refer to that thing.

For example, suppose you want to defend the view that everyone has the right to have kids. You write: “people have the right to have kids because humans enjoy having children and everyone has the right to things that make them glad.”

# Being consistent in your wording

Another thing I recommend is that if you use a word to refer to something, then you keep using the same word to refer to that thing.

For example, suppose you want to defend the view that everyone has the right to have kids. You write: “people have the right to have kids because humans enjoy having children and everyone has the right to things that make them glad.”

Better would be: “people have the right to have kids because kids make people happy and people have the right to do the things that make them happy.”



For each argument, say what can be done to improve it.

1. "I think that animals have rights because they can feel pleasure and pain."
2. "I think that people who are doing drugs shouldn't be allowed to have kids because illegal substances can harm kids and no one has the right to hurt anyone else."
3. "I think we have a duty to stop global warming. Climate change is going to harm future generations. It will also harm the environment. In fact, it already is harming the environment. Also, not only does climate change hurt others, it will hurt us."

What do you think: is human experimentation for medical purposes morally acceptable? Give an argument defending your view.