

2025-10-27

Week 2: How arguments function

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Lucas Veltkamp

27th October 2025

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Section 1

I want your emails

your emails, please

henri.lv/email

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└ I want your emails
└ your emails, please

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henri.lv/email

Section 2

The technical stuff

Inductive vs Deductive

Definition (Inductive Reasoning)

Reasoning from the a series of premises to show a certain conclusion to be likely

Definition (Deductive Reasoning)

Reasoning from a series of premises to show a certain conclusion to follow logically from the premises

- Things to learn

- ▶ Why is deductive reasoning more at home in philosophy?
- ▶ Able to identify each when you see them

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1. Expect answers that emphasise the difference between philosophy and science. Try to encourage a positive understanding that emphasises a focus on what comes before our knowledge of the external world, including study of concepts, sensory experience etc. Encourage a problematising of definitions, maybe ask why we might not like this pair as they are – starting out with the presumption of a harsher division.

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Inductive vs Deductive: two examples

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Reasoning from a series of premises to show a certain conclusion to follow logically from the premises

Example (no.1)

- 1 All dogs are animals
- 2 Brian is a dog
- 3 Brian is an animal

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└ The technical stuff

└ Inductive vs Deductive: two examples

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Example (no.2)

- 1 All dogs I've met so far have been kind deep down
- 2 Steevy is a dog
- 3 Steevy is kind deep down

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Validity and Soundness

- Not types of arguments, but good qualities of arguments

Definition (Validity/Gültigkeit)

'If the premises are true, then the conclusion must also be true' or In every possible world where all the premises are true, then the conclusion is also true

Definition (Soundness/Schlüssigkeit)

A valid argument where all the premises are true

- Weird consequences of this definition
 - When a conclusion is always true
 - When a premise is always false

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Valid vs Sound: examples

- Valid, sound, or both?
- Trick questions?

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examples

Definition (Validity/Gültigkeit)

In every possible world where all the premises are true, then the conclusion is also true

Definition (Soundness/Schlüssigkeit)

A valid argument where all the premises are true

Example (no.1)

- 1 All bachelors are male
- 2 Socrates is a bachelor
- 3 Socrates is male

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└ examples

examples

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- 3 Socrates is male

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Example (no.2)

- 1 All things that are round are bouncy
- 2 Chairs are round
- 3 Chairs are bouncy

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Example (no.3)

- 1 Today it is rainy
- 2 $1 + 1 = 1$
- 3 I am the pope

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Example (no.4)

- 1 Paris is in France
- 2 The Louvre is in Paris
- 3 The Louvre is in France

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└ examples

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examples

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Definition (Soundness/Schlüssigkeit)

A valid argument where all the premises are true

Example (no.5)

- 1 Scunthorpe is in the UK
- 2 Heidelberg is on the moon
- 3 The UK is on earth
- 4 Scunthorpe is on earth

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examples

Definition (Validity/Gültigkeit)

In every possible world where all the premises are true, then the conclusion is also true

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Example (no.6)

- 1 I am wearing a fun hat
- 2 Everyone loves my fun hat
- 3 $1 + 1 = 1$

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Example (no.6)

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- 2 Everyone loves my fun hat
- 3 $1 + 1 = 1$

Why this technical stuff

- No testing :)
- I spin a yarn
- Coming from attempts to systematise what makes a good argument, based on its structure
 - Using wacky symbols!
 - $\forall x \exists y (x \neq y \rightarrow x \neq y)$
- Formalising produces limitations
 - 'The conclusion should be the result of the premises' is hard to formalise
 - A bunch of other good stuff

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1. Note in particular that students don't have to worry about the weird exceptions

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Section 3

Other virtues

Group activity! How fun + social

What to discuss

What did you like and not like about the Rosenberg reading? What does this tell you about what characteristics philosophy should have, and which it should not have?

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└ Other virtues

└ Group activity! How fun + social

1. Emphasise here about how we want to think about what other virtues there are in philosophical writing by looking at a practical example together. Emphasise that what good philosophy looks like is a philosophical question

What to discuss

What did you like and not like about the Rosenberg reading? What does this tell you about what characteristics philosophy should have, and which it should not have?

Section 4

Any other business (questions on the text/lecture)

Section 5

Some exegesis

1) *Paintings are sometimes forgeries*

∴ it could be the case that paintings are always forgeries.

The premise of A3[above] is obviously, as a matter of fact, true. But the conclusion of A3 is just as obviously false. A forged painting is a copy of some original painting, and it could not be the case that all paintings are copies. If no paintings were originals, there would be nothing for the supposed copies to be copies of.

- What are the premises, what the conclusion?
- If we wanted to criticise the premises, what would we say?

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The premise of A3[above] is obviously, as a matter of fact, true. But the conclusion of A3 is just as obviously false. A forged painting is a copy of some original painting, and it could not be the case that all paintings are copies. If no paintings were originals, there would be nothing for the supposed copies to be copies of.

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- If we wanted to criticise the premises, what would we say?

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Week 2: How arguments function

└ Some exegesis

1) Paintings are sometimes forgeries
∴ it could be the case that paintings are always forgeries.
The premise of A3[above] is obviously, as a matter of fact, true. But the conclusion of A3 is just as obviously false. A forged painting is a copy of some original painting, and it could not be the case that all paintings are copies. If no paintings were originals, there would be nothing for the supposed copies to be copies of.
• What are the premises, what the conclusion?
• If we wanted to criticise the premises, what would we say?

Extra time? Let's get ahead time

- Is death bad?

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Week 2: How arguments function

└ Some exegesis

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• Is death bad?