

Handout 15: Arguments Against CI.

Stock Market Argument:

Bettina's act-token: Selling off all of her stock in the stock market.

Bettina's (specific) maxim: When the stock market index hits 10,000, I will sell all of my stock.

Bettina's generalized maxim: When the stock market index hits 10,000, everyone will sell all of their stock.

1. If CI is true then Bettina's act of selling all her stock is morally wrong.
2. It is not the case that Bettina's act of selling all her stock is morally wrong.
3. Therefore, it is not the case that CI is true. (1, 2, MT)

Change-the-maxim Argument.

Klepto Karl's Act-token: Stealing a book from an outdoor shelf outside a bookshop.

Kant's preferred interpretation of Karl's maxim: Whenever < I > want a book and don't feel like paying for it, < I > will take it without paying.

Klepto Karl's true maxim: Whenever < I > want a book and < I > don't feel like paying for it and no one will notice it is gone, and it is April 3, 2006 and < my > zodiac sign is Libra and < my > mother's maiden name is 'Levincrown,' then < I > will take it without paying.

1. If CI is true then Karl's act of stealing the book is morally right.
2. It is not the case that Karl's act of stealing the book morally right.
3. Therefore, it is not the case that CI is true. (1, 2, MT)