

The morality of informing on criminals argumentative essay sample

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



1) What happened? You need not describe the event in substantial detail. At the same time, you also need to include enough information so I can understand the nature of the action. Usually, this part will not exceed one-half of one single-spaced page, although it may extend further if necessary.

Some time ago, I learned that two people were stealing money from the homeless shelter they were managing. I won't go into all the details about when and where this occurred, but basically it was a husband and wife who ran this shelter and started bragging to me about how much money they were stealing, even laughing about how 'clever' they were. I didn't say much of anything back to them, but it just repulsed me that they could sit there laughing about all the money they were taking, including grants from the government and churches, just to line their own pockets. Of course I'm not naïve and I know that there are all kinds of criminals and sociopaths in this world who will do just about anything if they think they can get away with it, but the brazenness of these two really galled me. So all I did was just sit there and listen, carefully eliciting some of the details from them, and after they had gone on their way I made a phone call. What these two had not realized was that I had a friend who worked as an assistant to the state attorney general, so I just called him and turned them in. I had never done anything like that before and do not like to think of myself as an 'informer' but in this case I felt very strongly that something had to be done. After all, they were literally stealing money from the poorest people in society, people who were powerless and often had severe physical and mental problems, and thought it was a big joke. To make a long story short, my friend spoke with the attorney general who in turn contacted the district attorney in the

city where these two lived and they were arrested. They later pled guilty rather than going to trial, but still got some time in prison.

2) Why do you think the event or action was ethical? That begs three questions:

Even though I do not attend church or follow any organized religion, my definition of good still follows the Golden Rule of 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you.' I do not always follow that in my own life and do not think that anyone can 100% of the time, but I really do not know of any better standard of morality and right and wrong. So by my standard of ethics, what these two people were doing was the opposite of morality: it was not just amoral but ant-moral. I would go so far as to call them evil. It's not just that stealing is wrong in all cases because I think there are instances when people are very poor or hungry, and when they get desperate enough they have to steal. These two people were stealing from the poor, though, not out of desperation but because they just wanted money, material things and a higher living standard for themselves. They were stealing from people who had nothing, which is why I informed on them and said I would testify against them if it ever went to court.

I have trouble thinking of any moral or honest person who would object to what I did in this case, except maybe for those who think that individuals should just be free to do whatever they feel like. Even if someone is a radical individualist or libertarian, though, they still believe there should be laws in society and that people should be prevented from doing injury to others.

Perhaps only an anarchist who opposes all law and government would say that no one should ever inform to the police, although I am certain that not

even they would care for people who steal money from the poor. In fact, I am almost certain they would not. There are pacifists and supporters of nonviolence who think that the police should not be called in to deal with these problems but they should be resolved within the community. In this case, though, I thought these two thieves had placed themselves outside of any community, and I just did not feel like following a 'turn the other cheek' policy with them. I have never lost any sleep over this and my conscience is clear because I still believe I did the right thing. After all, what would have happened if I had just decided to look the other way and mind my own business? How much more money would they have stolen and how much more damage would they have done to these poor and homeless people who were supposed to be their responsibility?