OCR H573 | INDEPENDENT REVISION

A* Model Essay

Meta-Ethics

Religion and Ethics

Does moral disagreement give us good reason to prefer emotivism to ethical naturalism or intuitionism?

1,517 response words | Complete annotated PDF | Individual topic edition

What is included

A complete original response, an argument plan, paragraph-level AO1/AO2 annotations and source works for further reading.

A* describes the intended style of this teaching model. This is independently written, not an OCR-marked script or a guaranteed grade.

Use this model to study argument and evaluation, then write your own answer. Do not submit it as your own assessed work.

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Argument plan

Does moral disagreement give us good reason to prefer emotivism to ethical naturalism or intuitionism?

Thesis: Persistent disagreement supports emotivism's insight that moral language expresses attitudes and attempts to influence others, but it does not establish that moral claims lack truth altogether. Naturalism and intuitionism face serious problems of justification, yet disagreement alone cannot settle the debate between them and non-cognitivism.

1. Emotivism explains the practical and persuasive force of moral conflict.

Counter-argument: An account of emotional force is not yet a proof that moral judgements are not truth-apt.

Interim judgement: Disagreement supports an expressive dimension without establishing an exclusively expressive meaning.

2. Naturalism and intuitionism face disagreement over the facts or intuitions said to ground ethics.

Counter-argument: Neither disagreement nor difficulty of knowing a truth shows that there is no truth to know.

Interim judgement: The rivals need independent arguments about meaning and knowledge rather than a simple appeal to moral consensus.

3. Stevenson can explain reasoning as a means of changing attitudes through factual clarification.

Counter-argument: Some moral reasoning concerns consistency and the adequacy of standards themselves.

Interim judgement: Emotivism captures important moral practice but is not decisively preferable on the evidence of disagreement alone.