

Structuring arguments on homosexuality

AIM: This activity will help you to develop the essay technique you will need Here is one of the arguments from last lesson

'Homosexuality is morally wrong.' Discuss

In order to gain high marks this point needs to be developed and discussed. See the example paragraph below:

'One argument given by opponents of homosexuality that homosexual acts are unnatural. (Point) This is particularly important for followers of natural law where Aquinas primary precepts involve reproduction and the Greek background from the Stoics focuses on the idea of being in harmony with nature. For most people their natural sexual urges are heterosexual and that is nature's way of allowing reproduction to take place. (Explanation) However there are two objections to this point. Firstly, it is not clear why we should live according to nature, what is natural and what is morally right may be two different things. Secondly it assumes that we all have a similar nature, for a gay person homosexuality is perfectly natural and it is heterosexuality that is unnatural (Analysis) So ultimately the argument that homosexuality is unnatural is not successful. (Intermediate Conclusion)

Tasks

1. Copy the paragraph above as an example of good technique.
2. Using the arguments below – write 4 similar paragraphs developing other arguments.
3. Write a killer conclusion to your essay

The arguments:

Genesis 1 shows God created male and female and told them to 'be fruitful and multiply.'
This shows heterosexuality is part of God's plan

The Old Testament law contains the commandment that 'a man should not lie with a man as with a woman.'

Paul in the New Testament lists a number of people that will not inherit the kingdom of God. This includes homosexual offenders.

It can be argued that homosexuality is acquired or is learned through upbringing

No society has ever given homosexuality equal status with heterosexuality

The laws of the Old Testament no longer apply. Most Christians eat food such as pork or prawns! No one offers 'burnt offerings.' So verses condemning homosexuality can equally be ignored.

The Old Testament laws are cultural and reflect the attitudes of the writers, they are not God's direct commandments

It is difficult to say what exactly is natural. Heterosexuality is unnatural to you if you are gay.

Mill's principles of liberty and non-harm suggests that we should give freedom to consenting adults.

People should have the right to do what they wish with their own bodies.

There is growing evidence that sexuality is innate and part of our genes, it is not a matter of choice.

Morality changes over time. The argument that 'we have always done it this way' could be applied to keeping slaves or discriminating against women

Some animals are homosexual so it is difficult to make the claim that only heterosexuality is natural

Fletcher supports homosexual relationships. They are consistent with doing the most loving thing

It may be difficult to universalise homosexuality yet equally for a Kantian, denying people the right to express their sexuality treats them as a means to an end. It does not treat them with dignity and respect.