

Human evil by hicks

Sociology



(d) PERSON or HUMAN - The idea of a person in Hicks is tied to the ability to be "responsible for one's own decisions," which he says causes one to be "a finite center of freedom." (106) A working definition in the context of the essay might perhaps be that a person or human is a being created by Judeo-Christian God and given the ability to exercise the power of free will. He also makes the point that this means persons are not necessarily good due to these "moral freedoms," and that this is why "persons" are the only ones "capable of entering into a personal relationship with their Creator by a free and uncompelled response to his love." (108)

(e) FREE WILL - Free Will in Hicks means a will that decides things in a way that cannot be analyzed on a strictly causal level. Hicks gives the example of a patient who has received hypnosis therapy, and that "his volitions of actually been predetermined by another will ... in relation to whom the patient is not a free agent." (107) This, he says, is not truly free will. Therefore, true free will, even if given by God, must not contain any pre-conditions like a mind "infallibly guaranteed always to act rightly." (107)

2. (6 points) Hick argues that the existence of God, conceived of as Omniscient, omnipotent, perfectly benevolent and the creator of the universe,

is compatible with the existence of NATURAL EVIL. Give a clear and complete statement of this part of his paper—do not address the issue of MORAL EVIL.

The argument put forward for this is that non-moral or natural evil acts as a sort of character-building process which helps people to become successful (Christian) people and enables them to truly ascend to a higher plane of spirituality. Because Christianity has "never supposed God's purpose in the <https://assignbuster.com/human-evil-by-hicks/>

creation of the world was to construct a paradise," the fact that natural evil exists does not contradict the idea of a benevolent, omnipotent deity. (109) Hicks paraphrases Irenaeus, who believed that although Man was made in the image of God, the suffering and hardships of the world were a necessary evil to help turn the man into the "finite likeness of God, which is revealed in Christ." (109) In other words, it is only through suffering that Man can become truly good. A Man created good and given no option would have no choice in the matter, and thus his entirely free decision to be good would have no meaning. A predetermined Mankind would instead be God's "helpless puppets." (107)

3. (5 points) Give a complete list of all the assumptions which Hick makes in constructing the argument just presented in 1. He may explicitly state that he is making an assumption, or he may not state it. You must list all the assumptions about whether or not Hick actually mentions them.

Judeo-Christian God exists

Judeo-Christian God is benevolent and omnipotent

Humanity was created by Judeo-Christian God

Humanity has Free Will

The purpose of the world is not to be a paradise

Through suffering, humans become better people

Predetermination and Free Will are mutually exclusive

4. (5 points) What would Hick say if someone argued that he doesn't prove the need for NATURAL EVIL because everything that it is supposed to accomplish could be accomplished by HUMAN EVIL in the world?

Give the reasons which support this claim.

Hicks makes a clear point of setting Natural and Human Evil into two entirely

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distinct categories. I believe that his answer to such a claim would be to point out that while all this could be accomplished by Human Evil, for that to happen would mean that God would have to expressly wish some of His Creation to turn bad so that others may suffer and become good. As Hicks has defined Human Evil not as an abstract force, but as willful evil, for Human Evil to accomplish these goals would contradict the idea of a benevolent and omnipotent God in a way that Natural Evil does not. This is because it would imply that God causes Human Evil on purpose.

5. (4 points) Do you believe that Hick has made a good case for the compatibility of NATURAL EVIL and God's existence? No matter what your answer is, give your reasons for your judgment. Be as clear and explicit as you can in explaining your reasons.

Overall, I find Hicks article a well-thought one and also a well-executed one. While I think that Hicks has made quite a good background for the case in the way he splits the evils off into two categories, and also by his skillful usage of sources like Augustus and Irenaeus to back up his arguments, I think that he lets himself go a little bit towards the end of the essay. That is, while he makes a good start at explaining Natural Evil vs Human Evil, and why Human Evil is a necessary one, by the time it gets around to proving Natural Evil and God can co-exist, he is not perhaps as exhaustive as he should be. There are fewer nods to earlier philosophers, as seen by the decreasing number of footnotes, and I think that Hicks is relying on the voice of logic and authority he has set up early in the essay to prove his final point.

All numbers in parentheses refer to the page numbers in the reading on Hicks.

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