

Socratic irony is a technique philosophy essay



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Socratic irony is a technique used in the Socratic method of teaching. Irony is used when someone says something that conveys a message that contradicts the literal words. In the case of Socratic irony, Socrates might pretend to think his students wise or he might denigrate his own intelligence by pretending he is ignorant or that he does not know the answer. Socrates would pretend to be ignorant of the topic under discussion, to draw out the flaws in the arguments of his opponents. USE THE EXAMPLE FROM EUTHYPHRO AND EXPAND ON IT HERE (Socrates asks Euthyphro [who claims to know what exactly piety is] to teach him, and praises him as the wiser etc)

METHOD

The Socratic Method is a process of question and answer. Socrates would have an opponent state a thesis and would then prove that it led to a contradiction by asking his opponent questions. It is a basic form of inquiry and debate between individuals with opposing viewpoints based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to illuminate ideas. It is a dialectical method, which usually involves an oppositional discussion in which the defense of one point of view is matched up against the defense of another. Generally, one participant may lead another to contradict himself in some way, in order to expose flaws in their opponents arguments. The Socratic Method is a negative method of hypothesis elimination. Better ideas are found by identifying and eliminating those that lead to contradictions. The Socratic Method searches for general, commonly held truths that shape opinion, and examines them to determine their consistency with other beliefs. The basic form of the method is a series of questions which are used as tests of logic and fact, and are intended to help

a person or group discover their beliefs. AGAIN USE EXAMPLE OF EUTHYPHRO (looking for a definition of Piety and then Justice through questioning).

ETHOS

UNEXAMINED LIFE

What Socrates was trying to convey with his notions of 'the unexamined life' was not that one must examine their own life for it to have worth, but rather that if one claims that their life is worthy, they need to examine themselves. In the Apology, Socrates is talking about how he tries to get Athenians in positions of authority to realize they don't know what they're talking about. He subjects their beliefs to critical scrutiny and embarrasses them when it turns out they aren't as knowledgeable as they've claimed. So, the examination that is being discussed is actually the questioning of people in authority who claim to have knowledge. Socrates himself doesn't claim to know anything, but does claim to realize that he doesn't know anything. This realization is the knowledge, and truth, that was produced through Socrates' own self-examination. In a way, Socrates argues that living a life where one does not realize their own ignorance is a life not worth living. When Socrates discusses "life", we are to consider not an individual life, but the life we live as if it were a kind of skill, or rather a kind of thing that we all do together. In a sense, that we are all living life, but it has no worth if we do not examine it for soundness. In a way, it might be a better translation to say "the unexamined world is not worth living in". To put this in other words; finding one's life to be meaningful is an answer to the questions that are brought

forth through internal examination, and without asking the questions, one will never receive the answer.

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY

Simply put, philosophy – to me – is the need to understand. It is a genuine interest in the pursuit of knowledge, and is – at the core – the driving force of my curiosity. Obtaining an answer isn't a necessary corollary to the pursuit, and as such is not necessarily the important aspect. It is in the process in which one makes an attempt at finding an answer where the importance lies. To me, the ever evolving understanding of the world is enough for philosophy to be important. It allows me to grasp forms of comprehension that I could have never conceived. It is invaluable solely because of the critical thinking it requires. However, I find it hard to articulate why the content of philosophy matters. At least, I find it hard to suggest philosophy is relevant in a more general or practical sense. I argue there is a need to find a place for philosophy within the world outside of academia. Perhaps it does not necessarily have to be in terms of finding a way to turn the profession into capital, but rather finding a way to make the content of philosophy relevant. One may argue that philosophy forms the foundations of most sciences and it allows theories to be extremely clear and extremely powerful. The question to ask though, is how useful is this? Can we not settle for the former answering the latter? Heidegger offered an opinion on the matter when he said

“ It is entirely correct and completely in order to say, ‘ You can't do anything with philosophy.’ The only mistake is to believe that with this, the judgment

concerning philosophy is at an end. For a little epilogue arises in the form of a counterquestion: even if we can't do anything with it, may not philosophy in the end do something with us, provided that we engage ourselves with it?"

– Martin Heidegger, Introduction to Metaphysics, 13 (H9-10)

CONCLUSION