

Candidate 7 evidence

Understanding Standards Higher RMPS

Essay 7 – Relationships

Evaluate religious and non-religious responses to the moral issues arising from sexual relationships. (20)

One moral issue arising from sexual relationships is the issue of sex outside of marriage. Literal Christians believe sex is a sacred act to be shared between a married couple. They believe it is an act of love and trust to be taken very seriously and it is God given. The Catholic Church agree with this and believe sex should be between a man and a woman when they are married until death parts them. A consequence of this is that it may cause young men and women to feel ashamed of themselves if they engage in a sexual act and do not wish to wait for marriage. In evaluation, I think this is wrong and unrealistic in today's society, as our society has become more open and is very evolved from Biblical times with many couples choosing to live together rather than get married. The Church should move with society and therefore I do not agree with the literal view or the Roman Catholic Church.

However, liberal Christians view sex before marriage as very different. They believe sex is a gift from God to be enjoyed and experienced by all. They believe sex before marriage is ok if it happens between two people who deeply love and care for each other and are of a legal age. The Church of Scotland accept this idea and also accepts co-habitation as long as there is love and trust. In consequence, this can cause Christians to be very confused as liberal and literal have extremely different viewpoints. In evaluation, I think this is right and how it should be. I think the Church should support different types of love and relationships in today's society as not everyone wants to or has the money to get married, therefore I agree with this viewpoint.

Another moral issue arising from sexual relationships is same-sex relationships. Literal Christians believe that the Bible tell them this is wrong as it says 'a man should not lie with another man as they would with a woman, that is detestable (Leviticus). This means they believe anyone in a gay relationship or having gay sex will go to hell. They believe sex and marriage is for creating new life which a gay couple cannot do naturally. As a result of not being able to procreate naturally, they believe gay marriage undermines the idea of a traditional family. An implication of the literal Christian response to same-sex relationships is that gay people who are also Christian may suffer severe mental health issues as they are told that how they live is wrong. In evaluation, I think this is morally wrong because the Bible says, 'you are all one in Jesus Christ' (St Paul) so no one should be looked down on and shunned for who they love.

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A non-religious viewpoint is Utilitarianism. There are two types: act and rule. Act is where individual actions are judged on their moral acceptability, therefore lying can be acceptable as long as the majority of people are happy. An Act Utilitarian would argue gay relationships are wrong as it makes a lot of the Christian community unhappy. In consequence, this can cause gay people to try hide who they are and become someone else which is very wrong. In evaluation, I disagree with the Act Utilitarian view because then it would leave a large amount of gay people unhappy and there is a huge gay movement in the church. Therefore, I disagree with the act utilitarian viewpoint.

However, rule Utilitarianism goes by set rules and principles of society which have shown to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number. Therefore a rule Utilitarian would say gay relationships are acceptable because it is wrong to discriminate against people on the basis of their sexuality, as to do so would not generate the greatest happiness for the greatest number. In consequence this can make gay people feel supported and less alone and it may give them courage to come out. In evaluation I agree with rule Utilitarians as gay relationships cause no harm to anyone and anyone who has an issue with it is morally wrong and needs to accept not everyone wants a tradition life and family.

Another moral issue surrounding sexual relationships is consent. Consent is defined as agreeing or making a decision when you have the capacity and ability to do so with regards to sex. The age of consent varies in each country as in the UK it is 16, in Egypt it is 18, in Chile it is 14, and in Pakistan there is no age as everyone should wait until marriage. A rule Utilitarian would say that the age of consent in the UK is good and acceptable because it prevents harming the community with teen pregnancies etc. They would argue it is doing good for the community. In consequence this can cause people who have had underage sex to feel very ashamed and disappointed in themselves. In evaluation, I agree with the viewpoint of a rule Utilitarian on consent as children under 16 won't fully understand how serious sex is and how much it can physically and mentally affect you which is why you need to be mature and ready. Therefore I agree with the rule Utilitarian on the moral issue of consent.