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Professor Ehrenberg

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Outline 1

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| **Thesis:** | Human beings are best understood in terms of their function. |
| Claim I: | Human function or ability is unique to only humans themselves. |
| One Reason in favor of Claim I: | Animals lack the ability to think cognitively unlike humans. Ability can be defined as the capacity to do something. Function is an activity or purpose naturally intended for a person or thing. |
| Another Reason in favor of Claim I: | Animals function on a more basic level and are used to serve the needs of humans. |
| Reason A against Claim I: | Animals can perform many of the same functions humans can. |
| Defeat Reason A against Claim I: | Humans can perform multiple functions and, in most cases, become more adept at performing those functions. Animals, while they may be able to perform minute tasks, do not have the cognitive ability to produce the framework of a greater overall goal. The closest example I can give is a beaver building a damn. While the function of the building the damn as a whole can be quite impressive, the overall impact it may have on the landscape cannot be anticipated by a beaver. Therefore the overall function a human can perform has a greater meaning a purpose because a human has the ability to view each action on a higher plane. |
| Reason B against Claim I: | Plants, animals, and humans live in a symbiotic functional relationship. A symbiotic relationship is a relationship of mutual benefit or dependence. Plants, animals, and humans all benefit from the function of the existence of each other. |
| Defeat Reason B against Claim I: | Human function is only to use plants to sustain their own function. Plants not only regulate the concentration of gases in the air, but are also the only organisms capable of transforming sunlight into food energy, which all other forms of life ultimately depend upon. Humans depend on plants to make air breathable. |
| Claim II: | The part of the human soul with reason is unique to humans. |
| One Reason in favor of Claim II: | Humans have the ability, or are capable of the mental capacity, to reason and make decisions and choose between them based on their wishes, therefore supporting their desires or a higher human function. |
| Another Reason in favor of Claim II: | Plants and animals lack the cognitive ability and foresight to accept that there is an end to life, and thus function in that capacity, while humans function knowing there is a set amount of time to accomplish more than day to day growth, but to achieve life goals. |
| Reason A against Claim II: | Animals, such as dogs, know right from wrong and make choices based on their desires suggesting they too have a soul that can reason. |
| Defeat Reason A against Claim II: | Dogs may reason some basic short term decisions but only in relation to their basic life sustaining needs and not in the same functional capacity humans are capable of. Dogs have some understanding of right and wrong, based on what their owners have programed them to know, but they are not able to reason further past that to understand any repercussions of their choices like humans do. |
| Reason B against Claim II: | Reason is a factual set of realistic choices made by any organism to achieve desires. |
| Defeat Reason B against Claim II: | Reason is used for more than realistic choices. Reason can be used to develop more abstract ideas, such as this ethical debate, or even to produce music. Music is blatant evidence of the higher human function and an expression of a soul for no other reason than pure enjoyment; no other organism shares this trait. Music can mentally stimulate humans so that their emotions are effected. |
| Claim III: | Each human body part has a function, so the whole human must likewise have a function |
| One Reason in favor of Claim III: | From the cellular level to whole appendages, each action functions to sustain life, but can also perform additional functions which in turn can support the claim to an overall function. Some additional functions allow some overall function, for example, blood flow from the heart to and through the brain allows the brain to control other parts of the body so it may act as a whole. |
| Another Reason in favor of Claim III: | The emotional state of humans caused by neurotransmitters and chemical reactions to stimulus around them; therefore, as a functioning part of the body that is not directly related to nutrition and growth, it can be inferred that this development is to support a higher function. |
| Reason A against Claim III: | Living cells that make up any organism act in the same life sustaining manner that human cells act thus making the human function not unique. This view of the living cells expanded to body systems or whole appendages suggests that each system of any organism functions solely to support life. |
| Defeat Reason A against Claim III: | While a cell may act in a way to support itself, it does still carry out a function in addition to life support. This suggests that humans may also support nutrition and growth along with engaging in a higher unique human function that a plant or animal may not cognitively be able to achieve. |
| Reason B against Claim III: | The formation and organization of random cells into tissues, organ systems, and full organisms is in no way connected together to perform or achieve an overall human function, rather to just function together to sustain their own system no matter what scale you choose to examine it at. |
| Defeat Reason B against Claim III: | These formations of cells and their structure subscribe to the butterfly effect. In that with each action, on whatever scale of the human body you choose to look at, have widely diverging outcomes that serve more purpose than just nutrition and growth, but a higher unique human function throughout a human’s existence, when they are performing their function in the correct way. |