

Answers to practical exercises

Chapter 11: Legal Reasoning

Page 252: Natural law

1. Is it natural to be homosexual?

Could argue that if it were unnatural then homosexuality would have been eliminated through natural selection. Homosexuality exists in nature, and so, according to nature, it exists for a reason. Alternatively, if nature will not allow two men or two women to produce a child then it is unnatural (in the sense that it goes against the laws of nature).

2. Is it natural to be racially or religiously prejudiced?

Could argue that racism or religious prejudice is natural, in the sense that it is basic nature to distrust those that resemble us, but belong to a different group. However, could also argue that man is more civilized than to rely on basic instinct and that prejudice on the basis of difference is wrong.

3. Is it natural to die by suicide?

Could argue that humans have free will including the choice when and how to end their life. Alternatively, could argue that it is unnatural to hasten death at one's own hand and that death at the time that nature intended therefore renders suicide unnatural.

4. Is it natural to be monogamous?

Could argue that there are several natural species who mate for life and that humans are such creatures. Alternatively, that the extent of infidelity in relationships renders monogamy an unnatural exception.

5. Is it natural to use contraception?

Could argue that any man-made intervention in the process of procreation is against the basic laws of nature. Alternatively, that for some humans, the ability to choose when actively to minimize the chances of pregnancy (or disease) is a mature and natural choice.

As said in the book, there are no right answers to any of these questions and they could be argued in many ways, depending on a variety of social, moral and religious factors, or personal views. So what is the 'right' morality to be adopted?