

Essay Questions

- A. Moral claims are not true or false they are just expressions of approval or disapproval. Discuss

(Suggestions: It would be sensible to start by reading the pieces by Ayer and Blanshard in Sterba's *Ethics The Big Questions*. The first chapter of Mackie's *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* will also be useful as will the chapters 38 Subjectivism and 40 Universal Prescriptivism in Singer's *Companion*. Note that the question makes two claims you might decide that moral claims cannot be true or false but still hold that they are more than being merely expressions of approval or disapproval)

- B. Why be moral?

(Suggestions: This is not a question to be tackled directly. Start off by asking 'what do we mean when we say that a person is being moral?' That will be what someone who asks 'why should I be moral?' is concerned about. Bernard Williams' short chapters 'the amoralist' in his *Morality* and 'The Archimedean Point' in his *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Massachusetts Harvard University Press 1985) will be helpful. There is a whole section of Sterba which has this essay question as its title though to make best use of them it will be worth the student sketching out an answer to the question before turning to those articles)