I would like to begin by thanking the author, Dustin Sigsbee, for his paper and the Kent State Graduate students for organizing this conference.

Until I was presented with this paper I had never read Audi’s work nor anything about intuitionism. Now that I have, I would say that I do not share Audi’s intuitions about ethics but not in the same way as Dustin Sigsbee. Sigsbee argues that it is problematic to take emotional phenomena as evidence of moral truths because people with similar ways of interpreting the world often disagree about what is morally right. He offers what he claims to be a solution within an intuitionist framework for this problem which proposes that people remain agnostic about the interpretation of their emotional experiences until there is no longer any disagreement. There are two aspects of this paper I find most problematic. First, I do not see how this is a solution for Audi; it seems rather to undermine Audi’s project “to explain how objectivity in ethics is possible.”1 Second, the problem Sigsbee points out does not go unaddressed by Audi, yet Sigsbee spends little time explaining Audi’s response or why he (Sigsbee) is unsatisfied with it.

Concerning my first complaint, Sigsbee says in his conclusion that he has offered a solution to a problem of Audi’s, but I think it is wrong to call it a solution as he merely favors one ethical outlook (what he calls a Sidgwickian) over Audi’s. The solution Sigsbee introduces engages what McGrath considers CONTRIVERSAL—(why is this capitalized?) and recommends agnosticism. Claiming that a truth has been found when people agree is pragmatic but does not suppose objective morals. Sigsbee’s solution is not a defense of either intuitionism or Audi because he feels they are unjustified and unjustifiable. Thus, it is not solution for Audi at all. While Sigsbee feels that disagreement should not preclude skepticism (which I agree on), acclaiming agnosticism does preclude the affirmation of objective moral truths which Audi and Plantinga, figure-heads of Moral Philosophy, have made their lifework. Furthermore, there seems to be an inconsistency in Sigsbee’s essay as his description of the problem claims that he is considering content disagreement not propositional disagreement. However, by the third section of his paper, where he considers a solution, he claims he is working with propositional disagreements. In the end the distinction might be unnecessary.

My second complaint is that Sigsbee appears to either have been unfair to intuitionism or has misunderstood it as he does not adequately engage with Audi’s recognition of the situation of moral disagreement. Sigsbee is right to say that Audi justifies his work in judgment rather than belief. Audi believes that people can hold incorrect justified true beliefs; our emotions are sometimes misleading. On page three of his essay, Sigsbee says that Audi’s account is unconvincing because “there is no set way in which intuition and emotion justify moral judgment.” However, Audi has a whole book about justifying intuitionism—The Structures of Justification. While Sigsbee is right to point out that reflection is necessary, it is not what Audi thinks necessarily renders truth value. When epistemic peers disagree, they aren’t both correct, but they could both be incorrect. Dealing in objective truths, as Audi does, there can be only one right answer between disagreeing parties who share an understanding of the problem. Sigsbee accounts for Audi’s solution to the problem at hand briefly with a quote taken from the second to

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last page of *Moral Perception* (which doesn’t seem like a charitable place to expect any thorough explanation). The whole quote (which Sigsbee doesn’t give in its entirety) reads as follows: “*Our emotional responses* to the world, like our sensory responses to it, *are fallible*; but moral emotions, like *moral perceptions, are responsive to the properties that determine moral truths, and moral emotions and [sic] often reflect such truths.*” [The bolded section is what Sigsbee quotes and the italicized words are what I wish to draw attention to in order to explain Audi’s solution to Sigsbee’s purposed problem.] Audi believes that emotions are connected to objective properties, but they only “often” lead to the truth and “are fallible.” Presumably, even moral experts could be wrong about their moral perceptions resulting in disagreement, but that would only mark the extent of their expertise.

In conclusion, I suggest that more research into Audi’s account of intuitionism could account for a richer sense of the passages he has selected from his book. In particular, I recommend checking into *The Structure of Justification* for a better understanding of intuitionist’s account of moral disagreement (which Audi doesn’t seem bother by) and false justified true beliefs.

Thank you for your time,

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2 Ibid. 168