

● ● ● | Psychological Aspects  
of Social Issues

Chapter 2  
Objectivism, Subjectivism,  
Relativism, and Emotivism

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● ● ● | Outline/Overview

- Honor killing – examples and moral frameworks
- Objectivism
- Cultural Relativism
- Subjective Relativism
- Emotivism

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● ● ● | Honor killing – examples  
and moral frameworks

- Heshu Yones – text example
- Father disapproved of boyfriend
- Tried to kill self after murdering her



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● ● ● | Honor killing (cont.)

- Not an uncommon practice
- Incidents in North America
  - Dallas, TX, early 2008
  - Abdul, Amina, and Sarah Yaser Said



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● ● ● | Honor killing (cont.)

- Not unique to Muslims
- Many incidents throughout N America
- UN data maybe 1000s annually
- Women who shame their family
- Countless other examples
  - Thoughts on these practices?
- If the society approves of the practice, it is morally right – what perspective?

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● ● ● | Other perspectives

- Subjective relativism
- Emotivism
- Different perspectives in different situations
  - What sorts of moral decisions might be best handled by each perspective?
  - Non-negotiables?

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## Subjective relativism

- Action is right if I approve it, wrong if I disapprove it
- No objective “right or wrong”
- Right or wrong according to individuals
- Problems with this perspective?
  1. Implies moral infallibility
  2. No moral disagreements

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## Cultural relativism

- Many cultures have practices that other cultures find morally repugnant
- Eating habits can become a moral issue
- Problems
  1. Logical inconsistency
  2. Implies moral infallibility
  3. Social reformers are always wrong
- rejecting cultural relativism as tolerance

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## Emotivism

- Non-cognitivist view
- Simply expressing an emotion or an attitude
- Makes disagreements in the usual sense impossible - no moral facts to disagree about.
- Eliminates reasons for moral judgments
- Good and bad (or evil) cease to exist
  - expressions of personal preference

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