

Reading Questions for September 8

These questions cover an article by Louis Pojman titled “Who’s to Judge?”. The answers do not have to be turned in. You will probably have to read more than once to get the answers.

*Background:*

Today we’re going to take a look at a debate in meta-ethics. Meta-ethics tries to ask what we’re doing when we do ethics. It asks questions like: are moral obligations relative? Are they expressions of opinion or statements of fact? How do we have moral knowledge, assuming we do indeed have it? What is the connection between morality and religion? For today’s class, we are looking at relativism. Pojman distinguishes several different types of relativism and considers some arguments for and against them.

*Question:*

1. In his second section, “Subjective Ethical Relativism (Subjectivism)” (242-44), Pojman discusses a view called subjective ethical relativism. What is this view and what does Pojman think of it? Why does he think that? Is he right to?
2. In the first part of his third section, “Conventional Ethical Relativism (Conventionalism)”, (244-7) Pojman discusses conventional ethical relativism. What is this view? What are the main conclusions he draws about it? How does he support these conclusions? Is he right and why?
3. In the second part of his third section, (247-50), Pojman discusses what he calls the three theses of relativism. What does he think of them and why? Is he right to? Why?