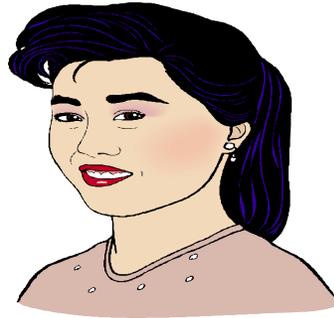


Ima
Emotivist



- “X is good” means “Hurrah for X!”
- Moral judgments aren’t true or false.
- We can’t reason about basic moral principles.



Logical Positivism: All genuine truth claims are either *empirically testable* or *true by definition*.

empirically testable

“It’s snowing outside.”

“The other side of the moon has mountains.”

“This battery has 1.4 volts.”

true by definition

“All bachelors are single.”

“All single men are single.”

“ $2 + 2 = 4$ ”

“ $1+1 + 1+1 = 1+1+1+1$ ”



Logical Positivism: All genuine truth claims are either *empirically testable* or *true by definition*.

Do these make truth claims?

“There’s an invisible angel sitting on my shoulder.”

“There’s a God.”

“Racist actions are wrong.”

All genuine truth claims are either empirically testable or true by definition.

No moral statements are empirically testable or true by definition.

∴ No moral statements are genuine truth claims.

Don't confuse these two views:

Emotivism: “X is good” means
 “Hurrah for X!”

Subjectivism: “X is good” means
 “I like X.”

Emotivism is a better view because it's simpler and explains more of the facts.

- It doesn't appeal to mysterious entities.
- It explains why we can't define "good" descriptively, why we can't prove moral beliefs, and why people disagree about morality.
- It fits how we speak.

We can't reason
about basic moral
principles.



We can reason about morality if we
assume a shared system of values.
But we can't establish the correctness
of any system of values.

Apply emotivism to



racism



moral
education



Logical Positivism: All genuine truth claims are either *empirically testable* or *true by definition*.

Logical Positivism is self-contradictory,
has clear exceptions, and is vague.

“Philosophers who worship science often contradict themselves. They make claims, which can’t be based on science, about science being the only path to the truth. Such philosophers violate our first duty as rational beings, which is not the impossible demand that we prove all our claims, but the humble demand that our claims be consistent with each other.” (Section 5.4)

Emotivism claims to be a better view – because it’s simpler and explains more of the facts. But, against emotivism:

- Moral judgments aren’t necessarily emotional.
- Many cases of “good” and “bad” can’t translate into exclamations.
- Emotivism *explains away* commonsense ideas of moral truths and moral knowledge.
- Is this a truth claim or an exclamation: “A view is *better* if it’s simpler and explains more”?

Try replacing “good” and “bad” in these examples with exclamations:

“Hurrah for good people!”

“If lying is bad, then getting your brother to lie is bad.”

“This is neutral (neither good nor bad).”

Emotivism says we can't reason about basic moral principles.

- If this were true, it would be dreadful; the emotivist model of moral thinking would lead to social chaos and propaganda wars.
- It isn't true: we *can* reason about basic moral principles – as we'll see from further views.