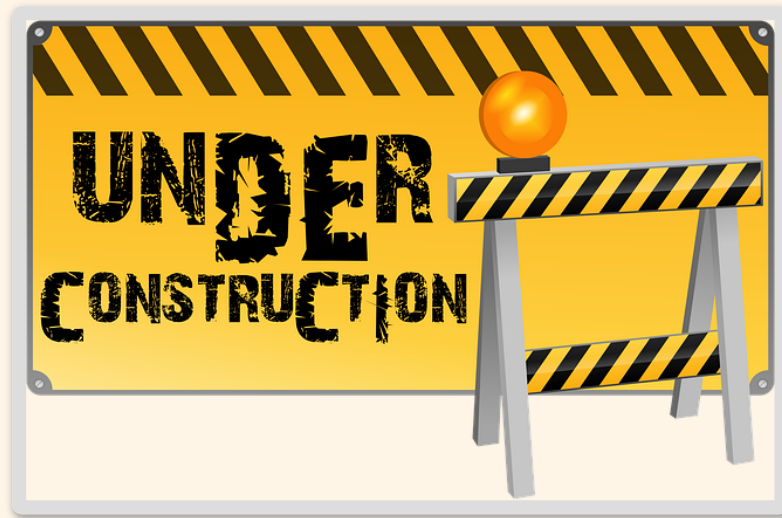


# *Philosophical Ethics*

*debating right and wrong*



George Matthews, Pennsylvania College of Technology

2020

# *The Runaway Traincar*

# *Cultural Relativism*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

# *Cultural Relativism*

"There are many answers to questions of right and wrong."



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

# *Cultural Relativism*

"There are many answers to questions of right and wrong."



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

- Ruth Benedict was an American anthropologist whose encounters with indigenous peoples convinced her that there was no universally valid set of moral principles.

# *Cultural Relativism*

"There are many answers to questions of right and wrong."



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

- Ruth Benedict was an American anthropologist whose encounters with indigenous peoples convinced her that there was no universally valid set of moral principles.
- For her, culture and community, not reason and humanity, dictate moral principles.

# *Cultural Relativism*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

# *Cultural Relativism*

*The argument from cultural differences*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948



# *Cultural Relativism*

## *The argument from cultural differences*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

Different cultures have different views about right and wrong.

---

Thus there are no universal moral principles.

# *Cultural Relativism*

## *The argument from cultural differences*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

Different cultures have different views about right and wrong.

---

Thus there are no universal moral principles.

- This may seem like an obvious argument, and yet...

# Cultural Relativism

## *The argument from cultural differences*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

Different cultures have different views about right and wrong.

---

Thus there are no universal moral principles.

- This may seem like an obvious argument, and yet...
- Does it really follow that there are no principles simply because people may disagree about *what they are*? We disagree about many things, but that doesn't establish that there are no facts.

# Cultural Relativism

## *The argument from cultural differences*



Ruth Benedict  
1887-1948

Different cultures have different views about right and wrong.

---

Thus there are no universal moral principles.

- This may seem like an obvious argument, and yet...
- Does it really follow that there are no principles simply because people may disagree about *what they are*? We disagree about many things, but that doesn't establish that there are no facts.

# *Divine Command Theory*



God

# *Divine Command Theory*

"Thou shalt not kill!"



God

# *Divine Command Theory*

"Thou shalt not kill!"



God

- This theory is popular among those who see religion as providing an authoritative set of moral principles.

# *Divine Command Theory*

"Thou shalt not kill!"



God

- This theory is popular among those who see religion as providing an authoritative set of moral principles.
- It offers an account of the meaning of moral principles -- they are to be understood as commands issued by a supreme being.



*Find out more*



Garry Winogrand "Flip"

### Credits

*Built with:*

Rstudio

xarignan html presentation framework

[download this presentation](#) or [print it](#)

[editorial suggestions and comments](#): requires a (free) GitHub account.