**Texto 1. Verdad, conocimiento y creencia**

T. Bowell, R. Cowan y G. Kemp. (2019). *Critical Thinking. A Concise Guide.* 5ta edición. Routledge. pp. 282-292.

When we claim something such as ‘The kettle has boiled’, we **assert** something; we express a **belief**. A belief is an attitude we take towards a **proposition**: to believe a proposition is to accept it as true. Assertion is a truth-claim, and belief is a truth-attitude. Assertion, belief and truth are internally related in this way. From the outset we have been working with an intuitive understanding of truth such that to say that a claim is **true** is simply to say that things are as the claim says they are: *to assert that a proposition is true is equivalent to asserting that very same proposition*. What this means is that a pair of sentences such as the following:

* Novak Djokovic was the Wimbledon Men’s Singles Champion in 2018
* It is true that Novak Djokovic was the Wimbledon Men’s Singles Champion in 2018

must have the same truth-value; if one of them is true, then so is the other. This necessary equivalence is the fundamental fact about the ordinary meaning of the word ‘true’. Suppose, then, that Jelena says that Novak Djokovic was the Wimbledon Men’s Singles Champion in 2018. To say that Jelena’s claim is true, at bottom, is just to say that Novak Djokovic did win the Men’s Singles championship at Wimbledon in 2018. Thus, although truth is a feature of claims that people make (of some claims, of course, not of all of them), whether or not a claim is true has nothing at all to do with the person who makes it; nor with that person’s beliefs, culture or language. An exception is when the proposition is explicitly about those things. If someone says, ‘I believe that the moon is made of green cheese’, and they really do believe that, then their statement *about* their belief is true, but the belief itself is false. Whether or not Jelena’s claim about Novak Djokovic is true depends *only* on whether or not Novak Djokovic won the Men’s Singles championship at Wimbledon in 2018 and does not depend in any way on anything about Jelena. In particular, the mere fact that Jelena *believes* and *has claimed* that Novak Djokovic won Wimbledon has nothing to do with whether or not her belief or claim is true.

Notice also the following consequence of the equivalence noted above. If Roger responds to Jelena’s claim by saying, ‘That’s true’, then what he does, in effect, is to assert the very same thing that Jelena did. He agrees with her. Her claim is true if Novak Djokovic won Wimbledon and false otherwise, likewise with Roger’s. These points are quite straightforward, but they can be easy to lose sight of in other contexts, and these contexts can create confusion about truth generally. In order to dispel the myth that truth is relative, we will first explain the concepts of **indexicals** and **implicit speaker-relativity**. Consider the following sets of claims:

**Set 1**

* Bill Clinton was the US president immediately before George W. Bush.
* Water is H2O.
* Neptune is larger than Venus.
* La Paz is the capital of Bolivia.

**Set 2**

* It’s raining here.
* She’s 35 years old.
* That book is too expensive for most students to afford.
* The boss is visiting our office today.

**Set 3**

* Learning languages is hard.
* Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla ice cream.
* Daniel Craig is the best James Bond of all time.
* *Gone with the Wind* is a highly entertaining film.
* It is more fun to play Monopoly than it is to play football.

The claims in each of the three sets are expressed using the same **assertoric** form. Assertoric form is generally used to express a belief that such-and-such is true (except when someone is lying or play acting); but the fact that someone has made an assertion does not establish that the assertion is true, only that the speaker believes it to be so. Thus, if someone asserts ‘Neptune is larger than Venus’, they express their belief that one planet is larger than the other, that it is fact that the one is larger than the other. But whether or not the assertion is true depends only on whether or not Neptune really is larger than Venus. Similarly, with ‘Bill Clinton was the US president immediately before George W. Bush’ and ‘La Paz is the capital of Bolivia’. Note that, although someone making one of these statements asserts their own belief, they are certainly not talking *about* themselves; someone who asserts that La Paz is the capital of Bolivia asserts one of their beliefs, but the statement, and their belief, is only about La Paz and Bolivia.

Now look at the second set of claims, which, as we have noted already, are expressed in the same assertoric form. Each claim includes an **indexical** – ‘here’, ‘she’, ‘that’ and ‘today’, respectively. An indexical is a word that picks out a particular thing (in philosophers’ terms, it is a ‘referring term’), but precisely *which* thing it picks out depends upon the context of utterance, and sometimes on the intention of the speaker. Thus, what it picks out can change from utterance to utterance. This has the effect of making the truth-value of the sentence **context-relative** too. ‘It’s raining here’ uttered in Glasgow might be true, whereas uttered in Madrid at the very same moment it might be false. So, determining what location ‘here’ refers to in a given context is crucial to determining the truth-value of the sentence in which it occurs. Similarly ‘She’s 35 years old’ might be true if uttered about Diane, yet false when uttered about Deirdre; while it might be true that the boss is visiting today when ‘today’ refers to Tuesday, it might be false if ‘today’ is Friday; and if ‘that book’ is a 100-page paperback that costs £50, then it is indeed too expensive for most students; if, on the other hand, ‘that book’ refers to a 300-page hardback edition at £5, then it is false to claim that it is beyond the means of most students.

Sentences are often context-relative in a certain respect without *explicitly* containing an indexical that signifies it as such. Consider ‘It’s raining here’ again. That might be true if uttered in Glasgow *today*, but false if uttered in Glasgow *tomorrow* (one can always hope). The sentence does not *contain* the indexical word ‘now’, but it is context-sensitive with respect to the time of utterance. It is exactly as if the sentence were ‘It’s raining here now’. That is how it is with many typical uses of present-tense verbs: if you say, ‘I’m hungry’, or ‘The car needs a wash’, you are saying that these things are so *now* (similarly with past and future tenses – ‘They used to be married’ etc.). Location is also a contextual feature that is often left tacit. For example, we usually say ‘It’s raining’, reserving ‘It’s raining here’ for the case where speaker and hearer are in different places, as on the phone. So ‘It’s raining’ involves *two* implicit indexicals: ‘here’ and ‘now’.

More generally, a sentence containing indexicality (explicit or implicit) *expresses* *different propositions in different contexts of utterance*. A **context** is simply a collection of factors relevant to determining what is said by a given utterance. This will include the identity of the speaker (*who* is speaking), the time and place of utterance, and other factors such as what a speaker happens to be pointing to. Thus, if Groucho says ‘I’m hungry’ at 3.00 pm and Chico says ‘I’m hungry’ at 5.00 pm, then they express different propositions – Groucho says *that Groucho is hungry at* *3*.*00 pm*, whereas Chico says *that Chico is hungry at 5*.*00 pm*. If they both speak truly, they report *different facts*.

Since what is expressed by a sentence involving indexicality depends on the context of the utterance, its truth-value depends on the context of the utterance. But such sentences are still fact-stating: once we have determined the relevant features of the context, we have a complete proposition with a fixed truth-value. The truth-value of the *proposition* is not context-relative: either Groucho was really hungry at 3.00 pm or he wasn’t, end of story (ignoring the possible vagueness of ‘hungry’). Other indexical terms include personal pronouns such as ‘I’, ‘he’, ‘we’, ‘you’ and ‘they’; impersonal ones such as ‘this’ and ‘there’ (often accompanied by a pointing gesture or suchlike); expressions employing possessive pronouns such as ‘my house’, ‘your car’, ‘our dog’, ‘their holiday’; and temporal expressions such as ‘tomorrow’ and ‘yesterday’.

Turning to the third set of claims, let us consider the first claim:

Learning languages is hard.

This appears to assert a fact about the difficulty of learning languages. But imagine Alex – who has had no end of tutoring and has certainly tried her best – saying this to Maggie; Maggie replies, ‘No it’s not! It’s easy!’ Must they really be disagreeing? It seems not. In such a case, it seems that what Alex might really be saying is that learning languages is hard *for her;* Maggie is saying that *she*, Maggie, finds it easy (unless Maggie is telling Alex that she’s so dim she can’t even do something that is in fact easy – but let’s assume she isn’t!). Since the sentence expresses a different proposition depending on who utters it, the sentence is implicitly indexical and hence context-relative. In this kind of case, we say that the claim is **implicitly relative**. A claim is implicitly relative when it states a comparison or other relation to something it doesn’t explicitly mention (see Chapter 2, p. 39, for a review of this concept). For example, said of an adult man, ‘John is tall’ states a *comparison*, a *relation*, between John and other men; it really says that John is taller than the average man[[1]](#footnote-1).

Furthermore, what Maggie says about learning languages is **implicitly speaker-relative**. Unlike ‘John is tall’, the fact expressed is implicitly *about the person* *making the assertion*. Maggie, we are assuming, is really expressing the proposition that *learning languages is easy for Maggie*. Similarly, suppose that Joe has very fair skin, and says ‘The sun is too strong’ during a walk on a Mediterranean beach. He alludes to the danger of sunburn. Billy, whose skin is less sensitive to the sun, says ‘No it isn’t.’ In such a case, Joe might only be saying that the sun is too strong for him, and Billy is saying that it isn’t too strong for her.

Implicit speaker-relativity is most common in the expression of attitudes, preferences and the like, as illustrated by the remainder of the examples in the third set. If Nancy says, ‘Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla’, then what she is really saying is that *she* prefers chocolate to vanilla. Similarly, if Shaun asserts this very same sentence, then he is saying that chocolate ice cream tastes better to *him* than vanilla does. So, Nancy and Shaun are saying different things, despite the fact that they use the same sentence to say it. These two speakers’ assertions are statements of fact about their respective preferences, not statements of fact about the superiority of chocolate over vanilla ice cream independent of anyone’s preference.

To sum up the discussion of the third group: the sentence by means of which we express such a proposition – ‘Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla’ – is an incomplete expression of the proposition we express by means of it. The statement actually expresses a fact about the person making it, but the sentence does not explicitly mention this; that is why the statement is **implicitly speaker-relative[[2]](#footnote-2)**.

The importance of these differences emerges when we consider what happens when people appear to disagree over claims that are implicitly speaker-relative in this way and compare this with genuine factual disagreement. Suppose now that Nancy and Shaun disagree about the capital of Bolivia. Nancy says:

La Paz is the capital of Bolivia.

But Shaun denies it. He says: ‘La Paz is not the capital of Bolivia’ (perhaps he thinks it’s the capital of Colombia). In this case, there is exactly one proposition – that La Paz is the capital of Bolivia – such that Nancy asserts it, and Shaun denies it. That is what genuine factual disagreement is: genuine disagreement is when there is one proposition that is asserted by one person but denied by another. If Nancy and Shaun value the truth, they will want to know whose claim is true.

Contrast with the case when Nancy says, ‘I am wearing wool socks’, and Shaun says, ‘I am not wearing wool socks.’ The sentence that Shaun asserts is the negation of the sentence that Nancy asserts, but obviously they are not disagreeing about anything. Due to the explicit context-relativity introduced by the indexical ‘I’, the proposition asserted by Nancy is not the proposition denied by Shaun.

But when context-relativity is implicit rather than explicit, there can appear to be genuine factual disagreement when there isn’t. Suppose that Nancy and Shaun seemingly disagree about the relative merits of chocolate and vanilla ice cream: Nancy contends that chocolate tastes better, while Shaun is on the side of vanilla. As we have seen, in order to make her meaning perfectly explicit, Nancy would have to say ‘Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla to me’; Shaun would have to say the same in order to be explicit. So what Nancy is really saying is that chocolate tastes better to *her*; Shaun, that vanilla tastes better *to him*.

The proposition that Nancy expresses can be equally well expressed as:

1 Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla to Nancy.

whereas Shaun’s proposition is:

2 Vanilla ice cream tastes better than chocolate to Shaun.

These are two different propositions. There is certainly no logical conflict between them: they could both be true. But in that case, Nancy and Shaun do not really disagree: there is not one proposition here that either Nancy or Shaun asserts, and that the other denies. They are not really disagreeing about the truth-value of the same proposition. That is, they do not dispute the facts of the matter; their claims are simply expressions of different preferences. To continue to dispute such an issue would be a waste of time. Indeed, notice that 1 and 2 are no longer implicitly speaker-relative; they are *explicitly* speaker-relative. So, there should be no temptation to say that the truth of either 1 or 2 depends on who is making the claim. If you say, ‘Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla’, then you are implicitly talking about yourself, and the truth of what you say depends on facts about you (your preferences). If you assert 1, however, the truth of your assertion depends only on facts about Nancy, not on facts about you.

Having discussed the concepts of indexicals and implicit speaker-relativity, we are now in a position to confront the myth that truth is relative.

**TRUE FOR ME, TRUE FOR YOU**

Often, people who have succumbed to the myth that ‘the truth is always relative’ respond to a disagreement about the facts by saying something like: ‘Well, that may be true for you, but it’s not true for me.’ In doing so, they use a common ploy to avoid proper engagement with the argument. Unless the matter under discussion is one that is actually implicitly speaker-relative, as it is in the ice cream example, this is not a legitimate move to make within an attempt to persuade rationally. It is a refusal to argue any further[[3]](#footnote-3). A similar refusal to engage in debate occurs when someone responds to others’ claims by saying, ‘That’s just your opinion’, as though expressing one’s mere opinion is not an attempt to make a true claim about a matter but, rather, tantamount to expressing a preference for chocolate rather than vanilla ice cream. But when we express our opinion on a matter – the best way of reducing crime rates, say – we *are* expressing our beliefs about the truth of a matter. It is really a kind of self-deception not to face up to this: that when we express our opinion, we are making a claim to the truth. So, criticizing someone’s contribution to a conversation by saying ‘That’s just a matter of opinion’ is another attempt to hinder rational persuasion or debate, and unjustifiably denies that there is any such thing as disagreement.

The ‘true-for-me’ phraseology, however, is not just a device for evading arguments. It is a characteristic way of expressing the relativity myth (though the relativity myth may itself be motivated by the wish to avoid the sometimes-unpleasant reality of disagreement). Thus, we shall try to dispel the myth by considering it in more detail. Consider again the sentence:

Chocolate ice cream tastes better than vanilla.

The implicit speaker-relativity of a sentence like this might be described by saying that the sentence is true for Nancy, and not true for Shaun. Upon hearing Nancy asserts this sentence, Shaun might say: ‘Well, that may be true for you, but it isn’t true for me.’ Shaun might, in this case, simply be making the point about implicit speaker-relativity. If so, then that is all right; he is quite right to do so. However, phrases such as ‘true for me’ are sometimes used in what appear to be factual contexts where implicit speaker-relativity is not in play. For example, suppose that Nancy believes in astrology, and says:

Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras.

Shaun does not believe in astrology, and therefore does not believe that one’s character depends on what time of the year one is born. So, he thinks this proposition is false. But Shaun, wishing to avoid a painful disagreement, expresses himself by saying: ‘Well, that may be true for you, but it isn’t true for me.’ As we have just seen, where implicit speaker-relativity is involved, the use of such phrases as ‘true for you’ is perfectly legitimate. But in the astrology case, the use of this phrase is misleading. Is this sentence implicitly speaker-relative? Is the sentence *about* a preference, belief or other attitude? It certainly does not seem to be. It is like the sentence about La Paz: it purports to state a fact about the respective fortunes of Scorpios and Libras. Someone asserting the sentence about La Paz expresses their belief concerning La Paz, but they are not talking about themselves, they are talking only about La Paz and Bolivia. This is shown by the fact that the truth of what they say depends only on how things are with La Paz and Bolivia; its truth does not depend in any way on the beliefs of the speaker. Likewise, someone asserting the astrology sentence *expresses* their own attitudes about Scorpios and Libras but is not saying anything *about* their own attitudes towards Scorpios and Libras. So, when Shaun says, of the astrology sentence, that it might be true for Nancy but not for him, he cannot be saying that the sentence is implicitly speaker-relative and could therefore be true when Nancy says it but false when he says it.

What, then, could Shaun reasonably mean by ‘true for you’ in this context? As we noted, when someone sincerely asserts a declarative sentence, they express a belief. By ‘true for you’, then, Shaun could simply mean that *according to Nancy*, the sentence is true. That is to say, he could mean simply that Nancy *believes* the proposition expressed by the sentence; that she believes that Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras. Shaun, of course, denies this very same proposition. So, this is a straightforward case of genuine disagreement over the same proposition. In suggesting that the sentence is true for Nancy and not for himself, all that Shaun is doing is pointing out the fact that he and Nancy do disagree: Nancy believes, and Shaun disbelieves, the very same proposition. Unfortunately, by using the phrase ‘true for you’, he makes it sound as if it’s a case of implicit speaker-relativity, in which case there is no actual disagreement. Since that is the sort of case where ‘true for me’ has a legitimate point to it, he makes it sound as if there is no actual disagreement, thus smoothing over his difference with Nancy. This is perhaps polite of him, but it is really just an evasion.

With these points in mind concerning ‘true-for- me’, we can now dispel the myth that all truth is relative. The myth is often expressed by saying that we cannot legitimately speak simply of what is *true*, but only of what is *true for me*, or *true for* *you*, or more generally true-for-X, where X is some person (or perhaps culture or other group). If this is explained as the claim that all statements are really implicitly speaker-relative, then this is clearly not so, as we have seen: a statement like the one about La Paz just isn’t speaker-relative. However, the claim that all truth is truth-for-X might also be understood in accordance with the way that Shaun employed the phrase in his dispute with Nancy about astrology. According to this interpretation of ‘true-for-X’, to say that a proposition is true for X is to say that X believes it. Could all truth really be truth-for- X, in that sense?

Let us work out the implications of supposing that it is. Consider these two sentences:

3 Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras.

4 It is true that Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras.

According to what we said about the word ‘true’ at the beginning of this chapter, 3 and 4 are *necessarily equivalent*: it is *impossible* for one of them to be true and the other false. That is why we can always register our agreement with a claim simply by saying, ‘That’s true.’ And that, we might say, is the point of having the word ‘true’: that is how the word is used. However, according to the version of the myth we are considering, if Nancy asserts 4, then she would be speaking more accurately if she were to say: ‘It is true for me that Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras.’ Thus, as we ourselves would express it, what she says by means of 4, according to the myth, is really:

5 It is true for Nancy that Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras.

And this, as we said, is more accurately expressed by:

6 Nancy believes that Scorpios tend to be luckier than Libras.

So, according to this version of the relativity myth, Nancy’s utterance of 4 is equivalent to 5, which is equivalent to 6. So according to the myth, 4 is equivalent to 6. But 6 is certainly *not* equivalent to 3, which makes no reference to Nancy; it would be possible for 3 to be true but 6 false, or the other way round (in fact, if 6 were true, then since presumably 3 is false, they would actually differ in truth-value). *Thus, according to this version of the myth, we would have to say that 4 is not* *equivalent to 3*. But that cannot be right, for that is simply *not* how the word ‘true’ is used. This version of the relativity myth violates the actual, ordinary, day-to-day meaning of the word ‘true’ according to which 3 and 4 are equivalent. According to that meaning, Nancy is right when she says 3 if, and only if, she is right when she says 4. So, 3 and 4, whoever utters them, cannot differ in truth-value. If so, then since 5 and 6 mean the same thing, 5 cannot be what is meant by 4, in which case ‘true’ cannot mean ‘true-for-X’.

There is no getting around it, then. There is no way to make satisfactory sense of the relativity myth. So, truth is not relative. It is *objective*, and the truth of a proposition is *independent* of our desiring or believing it to be true. Just as thinking or desiring cannot make the moon be made of green cheese, thinking or desiring cannot make it *true* that the moon is made of green cheese. To believe is to believe something to be true, but truth is not the same thing as belief. This means that truth is independent of *all of us*; it does not mean that one powerful person or being could hold the key to all that is true about the world. Thus, in saying that truth is objective, we are certainly not taking any kind of political stance, saying that certain cultures or institutions have or might have a monopoly on truth. The aim of good reasoning and argument is to get at the truth, at the way the world is, irrespective of how people think or feel it to be. Rationality is a great leveller. In the pursuit of truth, we are all equally placed before the world, and no amount of political power can provide an advantage.

**TRUTH, VALUE AND MORALITY**

So far, we have been tackling the myth that all truth is relative. Many people are also tempted to think that values like those central to moral issues are relative to personal or cultural preferences. It is possible that people are tempted to think that *truth* is relative because they think that *value* is relative. In fact, however, the non-relativity of truth does *not* imply the non-relativity of value. The question of the relativity of value is a different sort of question, and it is important to see how and why. By way of example, we’ll take the claim:

Doctor (physician) assisted suicide is immoral.

According to the relativist view, when opponents of doctor-assisted suicide say it is morally unacceptable and their opponents contradict them and say that it is morally acceptable, there is no real disagreement; rather the two sides do not share the same moral preferences. Thus, for the relativist, value-statements are always speaker-relative, whether implicitly or explicitly. Thus, the incoherence of relativism about all truth does not entail that value-statements are not relative in this way: the relativist can claim that all value-statements are speaker-relative without claiming that all statements are speaker-relative. An apparent disagreement over value is in this respect like that between Nancy and Shaun concerning chocolate versus vanilla ice cream. One reason why this relativistic view of moral issues is so tempting is that we feel uncomfortable about being seen to dictate morals to other people because we (rightly) value tolerance of different opinions[[4]](#footnote-4).

We cannot prove, and would not try to prove, that moral relativism is false. It is conceivable that all claims about values are implicitly speaker-relative, or perhaps implicitly relative in some other way. We will, however, try to explain why there is good reason to resist moral relativism. While moral issues are almost always complicated and can be difficult to agree upon, the problem with this simplistic relativist approach is that it leaves no room for genuine disagreement about moral issues. It enjoins us to say, ‘You feel okay about doctors helping their patients to die, I don’t, end of story’ without attempting rationally to persuade one another of the truth of our beliefs. The poverty of such a view of morals is illustrated by the following case. Suppose there emerged a terrible fascist regime that murdered millions of people on grounds of race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or political beliefs. Simplistic relativists who desire to remain consistent with their relativist commitment would be unable to hope that the fascists are wrong, and that, therefore, others could rationally be persuaded that the fascists are wrong; for the fascists’ views about the moral status of their victims would be nothing more than preferences that just happen to be different from most other people’s. In the same way that many people prefer ice cream to carrots, this regime prefers murdering people who are different from them to living tolerantly alongside them. This is a very extreme example, but the point is well made. To adopt naive relativism about moral matters, to deny there can be a truth of the matter, and to say that claims such as the claim that torture is wrong have a similar status to the claim that chocolate ice cream tastes best is to deny ourselves the opportunity to attempt rationally to persuade others that their moral beliefs are false and to persuade them not to follow courses of action that would be harmful to others. It places fundamental moral issues outside of the ambit of critical thinking.

Yet the critical thinker does not have to give up hope. While people may continue to believe that moral relativism is true, they must also be consistent in their judgements. For example, it is irrational to hold that murderers are bad people, and at the same time, in full knowledge of his crimes, hold that Jack the Ripper was not a bad person. Thus, the critical thinker can at least demand logical consistency of the relativist; they can show that there is a valid argument from a premise accepted by the relativist to the conclusion that Jack the Ripper was bad. This means that it is possible to refute the relativist’s moral views if it can be established that they are incoherent. In moral arguments a good way to do this is to find a general principle that the relativist accepts and go on to show how it is inconsistent with the belief that you wish to challenge. For example, if a relativist is pro-abortion and you discover that they are also against any form of killing, then you could force them to revise their beliefs if you could establish by argument that abortion was a type of killing[[5]](#footnote-5).

1. Of course, there is no such thing as ‘the average man’; it is not as if, in addition to Tom, Dick, Harry and the rest, there were another chap, the average man. To say that John is taller than the average man is to say that if you take the average (the mean) of the heights of all men, then John’s height exceeds that figure. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. There is one slight complication, however: statements of this kind may mean that something is preferred or liked by most people. For example, this is plausibly what someone means who says: ‘Soured milk does not taste good.’ Nevertheless, these statements are still implicitly relative, because they still depend for their truth on an implicit reference to people’s preferences. In such a case, the statement is a generalization about people’s actual preferences rather than a statement of one person’s preference. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. When you think about it, it is very hard to see exactly what this claim amounts to. It seems to say that truth is relative to persons; yet it is odd that the only way that this can be the case is for that statement itself to be true in just the way that the statement itself denies – thus it seems that relativism about truth may be contradictory. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. This repudiation of moral relativism is aimed only at the very naive type of relativism that holds that moral questions are simply a matter of personal or cultural preference and therefore not the subject of genuine disagreements. There are various more sophisticated versions of moral relativism. It is not our intention to repudiate such theories [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See Louis Pojman’s essay ‘Ethical Relativism Versus Ethical Objectivism’ in his *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (4th edition; New York: Oxford UniversityPress, 2007) for an excellent critical analysis of moral relativism and a convincing case for aversion of moral objectivism. This very accessible paper is aimed at beginner philosophy students.The entry at [www.iep.utm.edu/moral-re/](http://www.iep.utm.edu/moral-re/)also provides an accessible overview of the main commitmentsof and objections to moral relativism. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)