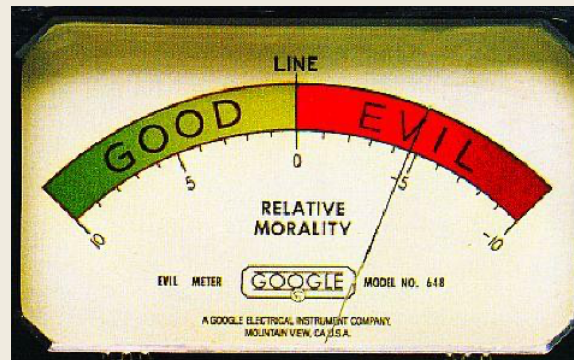


# Knowers & Knowing

Relativity, Relativism, and Absolutism

TOK L4



# Cultural Relativism vs Moral Relativism

Is it quaint, or benign.....unethical, or just plain wrong?

Handout: *Moral & Cultural Relativity Survey*

(see: *ibsmartest*)



So then, how do we as knowers decide which activities we should keep an open mind on, and which we should be clearly for or against?

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## Key Terms

- **Relativity:** recognizing that knowledge claims are dependent on contextual factors or frames of reference
- **Relativism:** the belief that what might be true or right for one person or group need not be true or right for another person or group; that all truths are of equal value
- **Absolutism:** belief in absolute truth and absolute cultural, religious, political and moral standards against which all other views can be judged
- *The idea that truth is relative can promote tolerance when people have conflicting truths, but what happens when different cultures have different truths that they each hold to be absolute?*

**For discussion:** *To what extent do our personal beliefs about what is normal, acceptable, tolerable, or unacceptable mirror those of the community we are raised in?*

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- **Q1:** Plato defined “knowledge” as *justified, true belief* (JTB) before ultimately rejecting his own definition. What is it, and what’s wrong with it?
- **Q2:** What’s the difference between knowledge and theory? Between data and information? Between information and knowledge? Why can’t knowledge be clearly defined?

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ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK:

## The Problem of Knowledge

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Arrange yourselves into groups to address one of these questions and elect a spokesperson to present your findings in a brief presentation. Don’t worry—there are no black and white answers when it comes to knowledge!