

NATURAL LAW & ETHICAL SKEPTICISM

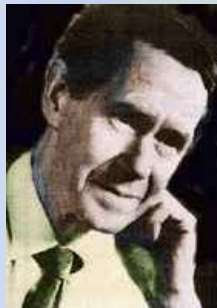
PHIL 420

Philosophy of Law

Distance Delivery

Lecture Five

J. L. MACKIE



- **1917-81**
- **Australian career**
- **English career**
- **W.W.II**
- **“Evil and Omnipotence”**
- ***Cement of the Universe***
- ***Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong***

ETHICAL SKEPTICISM

- **“There are no objective values”**
- **“Values ... are not part of the fabric of the world”**
- **Applies to aesthetic values**
- **Second order theory**
- **Subjectivism**
- **Rejection of positivism**
- **Error theory**

ARGUMENT FROM RELATIVITY

- **Explanatory challenges**
- **“well-known variation in moral codes ...”**
- **“very general basic principles”**
 - **Does he go “deep” enough?**
- **Mackie’s claim that there will be relativity in intuitions**
- **Relativity of native language**
- **Common deep-structure syntax?**

METAPHYSICAL QUEERNESS

- “utterly different from anything else in the universe”
- Naturalism
- Mathematics
- Divine commands
- Platonism

EPISTEMOLOGICAL QUEERNESS

- “some special faculty of moral perception”
- Intuitionism
- Empiricism
- Supervenience

MOTIVATIONAL QUEERNESS

- **“intrinsically action guiding”**
- **Contemporary debate**
 - **Realists who endorse this**
 - **Realists who reject it**
 - **Skeptics**

NATURAL LAW

- **In moral theory**
- **In jurisprudence**
- **In political theory**
- **Moral realism**
- **Problem of relativity**
- **Problems of queerness**
 - **Metaphysical**
 - **Epistemological**
 - **Motivational**

THEOLOGICALLY BASED NATURAL LAW

- **Theism**
 - Omniscience
 - Moral perfection
- **How the natural world operates – natural laws**
- **How the human world operates**
 - Free will
 - Prescriptive laws, not descriptive
- **Relativism**
- **Metaphysical Queerness**
- **Epistemological Queerness**
- **Motivational Queerness**

SECULAR NATURAL LAW

- **John Finnis**
- **Moral realism**
- **Relativism**
- **Queerness**
 - Metaphysical – rejects this charge
 - Epistemological – rejects this charge
 - Motivational – doesn't really address, but we can speculate