



# At The Symposium

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## **On Morality and Rhetoric**

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Since the academic proliferation of postmodernism, headed by the ethics and worldview of Michel Foucault, we have seen a rise in advocacy and social justice. Such things as the green movement and anti-racism sound good enough to suppose that these movements and the people behind them are trying to carry out a greater good. Though to what extent has the modicum of justice been used not as an item to implement truth and prosperity but as an ideological and political weapon to wage against those casually selected as enemies? The nature of the rhetoric of those claiming to fight for justice largely resides in speech with an emphasis on morality.

Though, as it may not be difficult to imagine, what might be characterized as moral does not necessarily consist of there being moral outcomes that follow. Doing the “right thing” in principle does not constitute doing what is purposefully justifiable. There are a number of things that one might assume to be enjoyable and gracious that might otherwise debilitate or harm an individual. Those with allergies may understand this fact better than others. In another vein, what might seem moral to one person or culture may be completely immoral to another.

Still yet, what is characterized as moral does not always come with evidence of being such. It just so happens that one of life’s most significant challenges is dealing with a lack of intrinsic moral normativity. We often do not know what the right things are until we experience the wrong things first, and even then, we are vulnerable to repeat these offenses until we establish a moral code or understanding to help us conceptualize what may be wrong with doing a particular thing. Those that ring the bells of moral reason, however, tend to do so in one of two ways: to propagate their own wishes or to condemn others for not having similar desires. This is all to say, what is morality when it is used as a sentiment for manipulation?