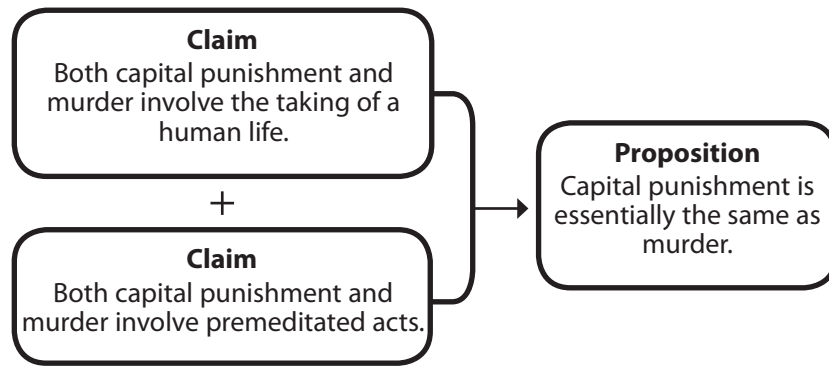




In summary, propositions of relationship go beyond describing objects to asserting how certain objects are related to others. Two of the most important kinds of propositions of relationship are propositions of cause and effect and propositions of similarity. Propositions of relationship carry implicit statements of values. For instance, to say that “the U.S. embargo of Cuba has weakened Cuba’s economy” implies for many a negative evaluation of the U.S. embargo just as the statement that “capital punishment is the same as murder” implies for many a negative evaluation of capital punishment. In propositions of relationship, the focus of the debate is on the nature of the relationship; the statement of evaluation is only implicit. The next category of propositions makes evaluative statements explicit.

PROPOSITIONS OF EVALUATION

We use propositions of evaluation to attach value judgments to objects, people, institutions, or ideas:

- Abortion is immoral.
- The nations of the world should restrict the practice of abortion.
- The U.S. embargo of Cuba is wrong.
- The United Nations should condemn the U.S. embargo of Cuba.
- All AIDS victims deserve free medical care.
- We should obliterate epidemics of curable human diseases.
- Human famine should not be allowed to exist.

Statements such as these represent statements of evaluation. All of these statements are both clearly controversial and concerned with evaluation.

Like propositions of relationship, evaluative propositions can be grouped into two narrower categories: value claims and policy claims. Value claims attach values to people, objects, institutions, etc., while policy claims urge people to adopt specific actions or policies. These two subcategories of evaluative claims (which for the sake of simplicity we will call value claims and policy claims) differ because the first makes a declaration of value without urging a particular action, while the latter makes declarations of value and action. Although value claims assert an evaluation, they do not include an explicit call for action.