

LECTURE 1: PSYCHOLOGY OF MORALITY

Psychological Versus. Philosophical

Psychological	Philosophical
Empirical regularities or facts about moral judgement and behavior with an aim to uncovering psychological mechanisms underlying moral judgement and behavior	Linguistic analysis, conceptual analysis
Descriptive (e.g. is/fact)	Normative/Prescriptive (e.g. ought/value) ²

MORALITY (PHILOSOPHY): Code of conducts or set of rules pertaining to "right" / "good" / "wrong" / "bad", held by an individual (**GERT, 2005**)

MORALITY (PSYCHOLOGY): Different approach: response-dependent. What counts as moral is that set of phenomena to which people have 'moral' responses.

The Moral/Conventional Distinction

TURIEL ET AL. (1987) AND THE MORAL/CONVENTIONAL TASK

Violations of Rule	Asked
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• One child hits another• One child pushes another off a swing• A child wears a dress to school• A child talks out of turn in class	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wrong/serious• Punishable• Authority dependent (e.g. what if a teacher said that x was okay. Would it still be wrong)• General in scope (temporally and geographically)• How is the wrongness explained (rights, harm, justice)

Findings

The Signature Moral Response (SMR)	The Signature Conventional Response (SCR)
Serious, wrong, bad	Less serious, less wrong, less bad
Punishable	Less punishable
Authority independent	Authority dependent
General in scope (universal)	Local in scope
APPEALS TO HARM	NO APPEALS TO HARM

THE KEY DISTINGUISHING FEATURE OF STIMULUS: HARM OR WELFARE (ALSO RIGHTS AND JUSTICE)

IF HARM (OR RIGHTS OR JUSTICE), THEN SMR

A Challenge

HAIDT, KOLLER & DIAS (1993): non-harm violations evokes the signature moral response.

Some people judge these transgressions as:

- Authority independent;
- General in scope (universally wrong in time and space).

KELLY, STICH, HALEY, ENG & FESSLER (2007): not all harms evoke the signature moral response. Instead, they argued that responses were:

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- Authority dependent;
- Local in scope.

Variability in the Relationship between Stimuli and the SMR

TURIEL	Harm (injustice) 	SMR
HAIDT, KOLLER & DIAS	Harm (injustice)  Non-harm	SMR
KELLY, STICH, HALEY, ENG & FESSLER	Harm (injustice) 	SMR

How To Make Sense of This Variability?

SHWEDER ET AL. (1997): *Systematizing Variability in Moral Responses*

Autonomy (harm/rights)	<i>[The ethics of Autonomy]</i> Individual freedom/rights violation. In these cases an action is wrong because it directly hurts another person, or infringes upon his/her rights or freedoms as an individual. To decide if an action is wrong, you think about things like harm, rights, justice, fairness, individualism, and the importance of individual choice and liberty.
Community (hierarchy)	<i>[The ethics of Community]</i> Community/hierarchy violations. In these cases an action is wrong because a person fails to carry out his or her duties within a community, or to the social hierarchy within the community. To decide if an action is wrong, you think about things like duty, role-obligation, respect for authority, loyalty, group honor, interdependence, and the preservation of the community.
Divinity (Purity)	<i>[The ethics of Divinity]</i> Divinity/purity violations. In these cases a person disrespects the sacredness of God, or causes impurity or degradation to himself/herself, or to others. To decide if an action is wrong, you think about things like sin, the natural order of things, sanctity, and the protection of the soul or the world from degradation and spiritual defilement.

Moral Foundations Theory: **HAIDT & GRAHAM (2004, 2007)**

Expanded this to 5 domains.

Harm/Care	Representing concerns about violence and the suffering of others, including compassion and care
Fairness/Reciprocity	Representing the norms of reciprocal relations, equality, rights and justice
Authority/Respect	Representing moral obligations related to hierarchical relations, such as obedience, duty, respect for superiors, and protection of subordinates
Ingroup/Loyalty	Covering moral obligations related to group membership, such as loyalty, betrayal, and expectations of preferential treatment for ingroup members relative to outgroup members.
Purity/Sanctity	Representing the moral ideal of living in an elevated, noble, and less carnal way, based on institutions about divinity, feelings of moral disgust, and the purity of body, mind and soul.

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Who Finds What Morally Wrong?

Western

Educated

Industrialized

Rich

Democratic

Moralize violations to harm/care and fairness/reciprocity

NON-WEIRD finds a different morality; moralize all five foundations/domains.

In-culture variability in what people find morally-wrong in the moral-foundations framework.

Within-Culture Differences

SES Differences: As **SES INCREASES**, people moralizing **LESS** of **community and purity**

What Accounts for Judgements of Right and Wrong?

STIMULUS → MORAL BLACK BOX → RESPONSE

Reason Versus. Emotion

MORAL REASONING: conscious mental activity that consists of transforming given information about people in order to reach a moral judgement. To say that moral reasoning is a conscious process means that the process is intentional, effortful, and controllable and that the reasoner is aware that it is going on (**HAIDT, 2001**)

MORAL INTUITION: Sudden appearance in consciousness of a moral judgement, including an affective valence (good-bad, like-dislike), without any conscious awareness of having gone through steps of searching, weighing evidence, or inferring a conclusion. *Largely dependent on emotions.* (**HAIDT, 2001**)

KOHLBERG (1963) and the Heinz Dilemma

In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about half of what it cost. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the druggist said: "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it." So Heinz got desperate and broke into the man's store to steal the drug-for his wife. Should the husband have done that?

Stages in the Black Box [STAGE THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT]

- Obedience/punishment;
- Individualism/exchange; Emphasis on consciously accessible rules that were applied at the time of judgement.
- Roles;
- Social order;
- Individual rights; Stimulus - reasoning - judgement
- Universal principles



For the majority of the 20th century (until Johnathon Heinz). people thought that moral

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judgement was made from moral reasoning.

Moral Dumbfounding HAIDT, KOLLER & DIAS (1993)

When the reasoning processes are not accessible (so are they even employed?):

'it is just wrong' (without being able to justify why)

If anything, people fumbled around for reasons in order to justify or rationalize their intuitions

A brother and sister like to kiss each other on the mouth. When nobody is around, they find a secret hiding place and kiss each other on the mouth, passionately.



Haidt argues that morality is by and large a function of affect-laden intuitive responses to stimuli, any reasoning that happens is post-hoc rationalization for our intuitions

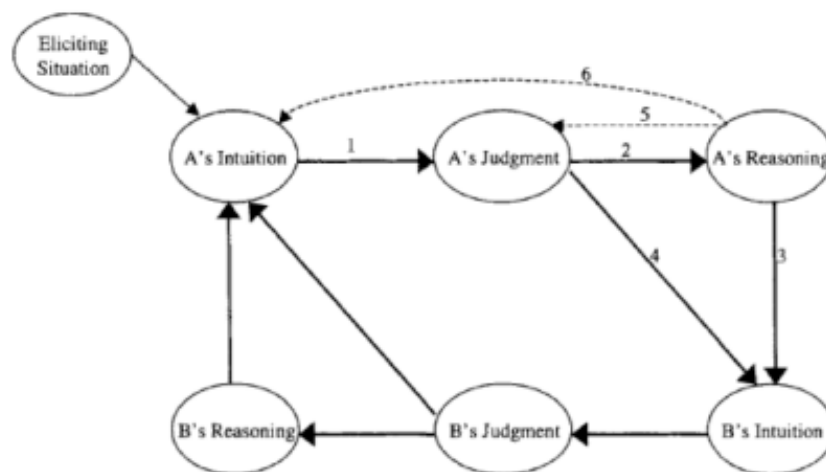


Figure 2. The social intuitionist model of moral judgment. The numbered links, drawn for Person A only, are (1) the intuitive judgment link, (2) the post hoc reasoning link, (3) the reasoned persuasion link, and (4) the social persuasion link. Two additional links are hypothesized to occur less frequently: (5) the reasoned judgment link and (6) the private reflection link.

Associating Emotion and Moral Judgements: Do intuitions and emotions influence moral judgement?

Finding Out:

Manipulate emotions and see how this affects moral judgement

WHEATLEY & HAIDT (2005)

Congressman Arnold Paxton frequently gives speeches condemning corruption and arguing for campaign finance reform. But he is just trying to cover up the fact that he himself [will take bribes from/is often bribed by] the tobacco lobby, and other special interests, to promote their legislation.

Post-hypnotic suggestion: disgust when see take.

SCHNALL ET AL. (2008)

- Moral judgements about permissibility of cousin marriage, sex etc.
- Bin sprayed with ammonium sulfide solution
- Disgust amplifies moral condemnation

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ROZIN ET AL. (1999) CAR TRIAD HYPOTHESIS



Reason and Emotion

Both kinds of processes are likely to be involved in moral judgements, but they compete in order to give rise to a response [trolley problem]

What's the difference? Each problem pits a deontological option (based on the rule: do not kill innocents) against a utilitarian option (greatest good for greatest number)

But most say yes (utilitarian) but no (i.e., deontological option) to footbridge.

Why?

GREENE ET AL. (2001, 2004)

- Deontological response driven by gut-reactions, emotion, intuition
- Utilitarian response driven by controlled, effortful reasoning processes
- Now, because the *footbridge* involves direct contact with another in order to kill (personal), sacrificing this one person is more emotionally aversive, and thus the deontological response is more potent.

SWITCH: impersonal (no direct contact) - less emotion - utilitarian.

FOOTBRIDGE: personal (direct contact) - more emotion - deontological

The Moral Brain

Greene et al. (2001) looks at personal vs. impersonal dilemmas, and argues that personal dilemmas recruit emotional processing.

Manipulating Emotion

If one reduces negative emotion during dilemma processing, one should see more utilitarian responding.

VALDESOLO AND DESTENO (2006): *EXPERIMENT*: half people watched Saturday Night Live or documentary, and then conducted Footbridge experiment.

TABLE 1

Frequencies of Appropriate and Inappropriate Responses to the Footbridge Dilemma as a Function of Affective State

Affective state	Response	
	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Control	3	35
Positive	10	31

Interfering with Reasoning Processes

IF UTILITARIAN = controlled, resource-dependent, such responses should be

interfered with by cognitive load

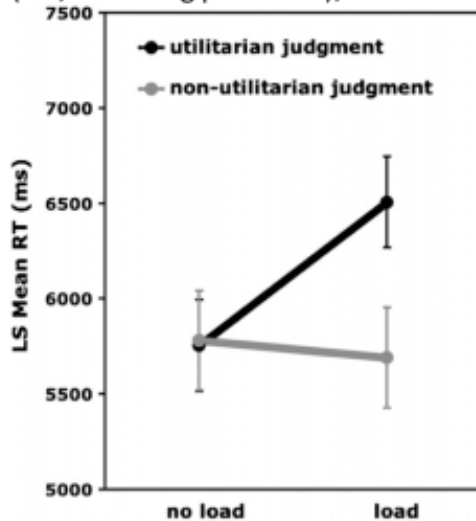
IF DEONTOLOGICAL

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IF DEONTOLOGICAL = intuitive/emotional, such responses should be **immune to cognitive load**

GREENE ET AL. (2008) : PERSONAL DILEMMAS | LOAD VS. NO LOAD

Cognitive load selectively disrupts resource-dependent, controlled cognitive processes (i.e., reasoning processes), not intuition.



When people made (non-utilitarian, aka. *Deontological* - don't push person off bridge) it did not matter whether they were underload or not (distracted or not), they were equally as fast to make the response. What this suggests is that the processing system to get a deontological response is not impacted by distraction (or dependent upon cognitive resources). However, people who made the utilitarian response (pushed person off of bridge), it took them longer to do this. Therefore, being distracted interferes with the way that people make utilitarian judgements.

Therefore, **a utilitarian response requires cognitive resources.**

Leading toward utilitarianism

Dual Process Model

Argues that both *moral reasoning* and *faster-automatic-intuitive reasoning* are both in the moral black box and they often conflict.

Leading towards deontology

What drives moral judgement is a function of properties of the stimuli (e.g. personal vs. impersonal) as well as situational factors (e.g. mood) and individual differences).

Beyond Reason vs. Emotion (Of Moral Judgement)

Decision framing (e.g. Petrinovich & O'Neill, 1996)

- Throw the switch, which will result in the *death* of the one innocent person on the side track" OR "Throw the switch, which will result in the five innocent people on the main track being *saved*

Metacognition (e.g. Laham et al., 2009)

SUMMARY

Emotions influence moral judgement, but so too does reasoning

Often in Conflict

- Emotion - deontological responses
- Reasoning - utilitarian responses

The content of the moral domain is varied

- Harm/justice play central roles, but other concerns are also involved (between culture and within culture variations)

Moral judgements are driven by both reason and emotion

- Emotion can increase moral condemnation
- Deont. - emotion
- Util. - reason

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