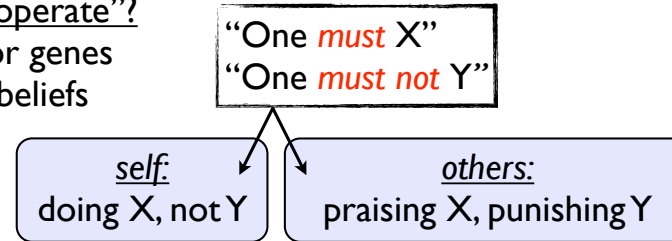


**9.916**  
**Morality & Norms**

# Today's Lecture

Why do people “cooperate”?

- Evolved cooperator genes
- Acquire *normative* beliefs



## (1) Content of Morality

What do we have moral intuitions about? Why?

## (2) Implementation of Morality

How do we make moral judgments? i.e. proximal mechanisms.

Different for 1st person (action) vs 3rd person (judgement)?

How do norms interact with economic motives?

## (3) Origins of Morality

How do human children acquire moral intuitions?

How did human beings evolve moral norms?

# Content of Morality

What do we have moral intuitions about?

Standard View

(1) Harm/Care:

“One *must not* commit murder”

self:  
avoid causing pain

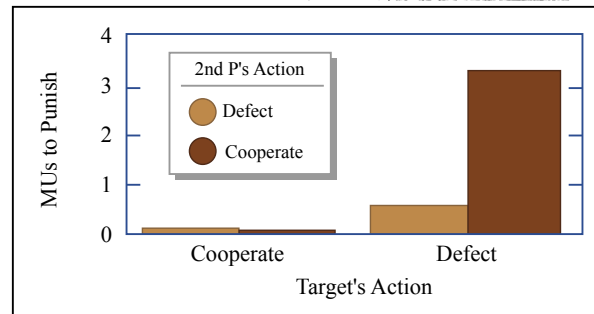
others:  
punish murders

(2) Justice/Fairness:

“One *must* reciprocate”

self:  
inequity aversion

others:  
3PP in PD



Fehr & Fishbacher (2004)

Figure by MIT OpenCourseWare.

# Content of Morality

*What do we have moral intuitions about?*

## 5 Pillars of Morality

(1) Harm / Care

(2) Justice / Fairness

(3) Ingroup / Loyalty

- Loyalty, patriotism, self-sacrifice for the group, vigilance for traitors
- “People should be loyal to their family members, even when they have done something wrong”

(4) Authority / Respect

- Obedience, respect for authority, protection of subordinates
- “If I were a soldier and disagreed with my commanding officer’s orders, I would obey anyway because that is my duty.”

(5) Purity / Sanctity

- Purity / pollution, contamination sensitivity, laws about food & sex
- “I would call some acts wrong on the grounds that they are unnatural.”

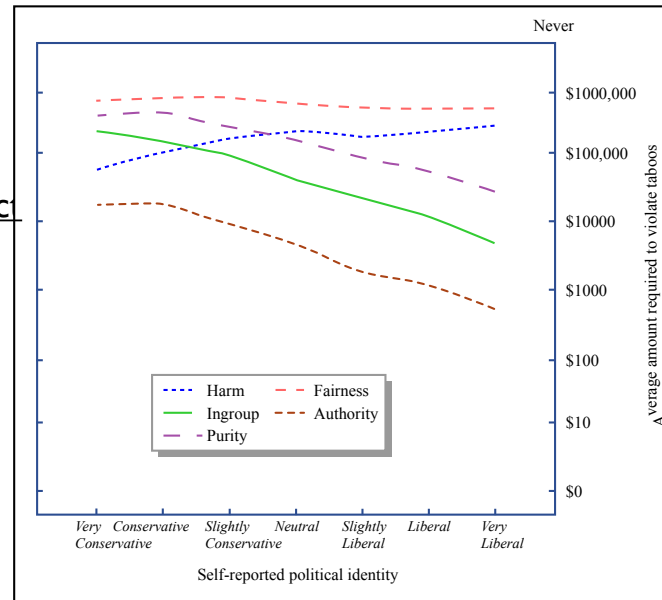
# Content of Morality

What do we have moral intuitions about?

## 5 Pillars of Morality

- (1) Harm / Care
- (2) Justice / Fairness
- (3) Ingroup / Loyalty
- (4) Authority / Respect
- (5) Purity / Sanctity

Even in liberals, elicit  
“taboo trade-off”  
response.



Haidt, Tetlock, Graham et al (2009)

Figure by MIT OpenCourseWare.

# Implementation of Morality

I. What are the proximal mechanisms of moral judgements?

(I) Effortful and deliberative or heuristic and intuitive?

## Kohlberg (1963)



72 boys from Chicago, age 10 -16

Test: Interview, dilemmas

Measured: Explicit justification

Theory: 6 developmental stages:

I. Punishment & obedience

III. Maintain others' approval

V. Contracts, laws

VI. Universal principles, conscience

### Justifications:

- come after Js
- don't explain Js ("dumbfounding")
- develop slower than Js
- more culturally variable than Js

Future research: what is the role of explicit reasoning?

# Implementation of Morality

*I. What are the proximal mechanisms of moral judgements?*

**(2) Cognitive or emotional?**

Moral violations elicit corresponding emotions

e.g. "CAD" model

Moral Pillar

Emotion

**Community**

**Contempt**

Authority / Respect  
Ingroup / Loyalty

**Autonomy**

**Anger**

Harm / Care  
Fairness / Justice

**Divinity**

**Disgust**

Purity/Sanctity

# Implementation of Morality

I. What are the proximal mechanisms of moral judgements?

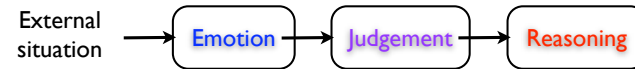
(2) Cognitive or emotional?

Haidt:

First *feel bad* towards X, then *judge* X wrong

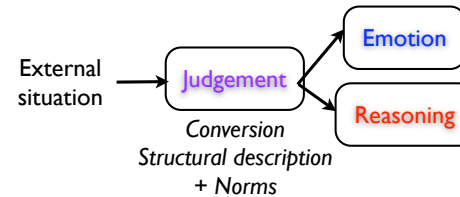
Evidence: induce disgust, generate judged “wrongness”

e.g. dirty desk, hypnotism



Mikhail: First *judge* X wrong, then *feel bad* towards X

Argument: “wrongness” ~ causality, intentionality, framing



e.g. Tetlock's  
commission example:  
vacuous reasons



# Implementation of Morality

*II. Is there a difference bw morality for action vs judgement?*

Mikhail:

- **Act:** performance muddied by non-moral factors
- **Judge:** moral competence

Tetlock:

- **Act:** trade-offs are necessary
- **Judge:** trade-offs are unthinkable

Blair:

- **Act:** primary, ontogenetic & phylogenetically
- **Judge:** derived by generalisation

*Another difference:*

- **Judge:** can exculpate for ignorance
- **Act:** can't choose based on ignorance

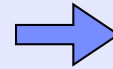
# Implementation of Morality

## III. How do norms interact with economic motives?

Two kinds of trade-off:

(1) Sacred Values

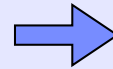
Norms &  
Economic  
motives  
conflict



*N trump E*  
Outrage  
Entrenchment  
Disgust

(2) Overjustification

Norms &  
Economic  
motives  
concur

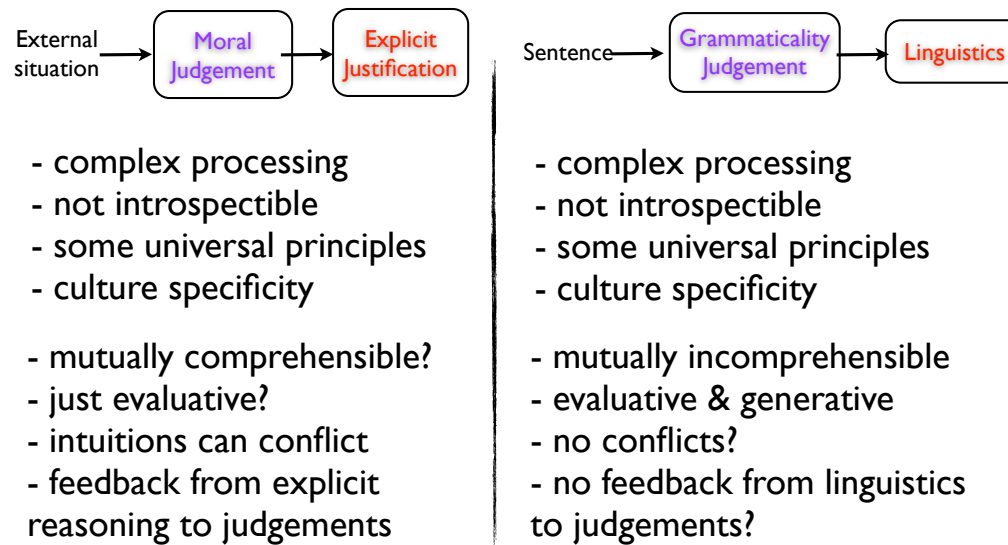


*E trump N*  
Switch to  
calculated  
reciprocity

e.g. daycare; paying pro-bono lawyers;  
paying blood donors

# Origins of Morality

## I. The language analogy



### Acquisition?

Mikhail (2007), Dupoux & Jacob (2007)

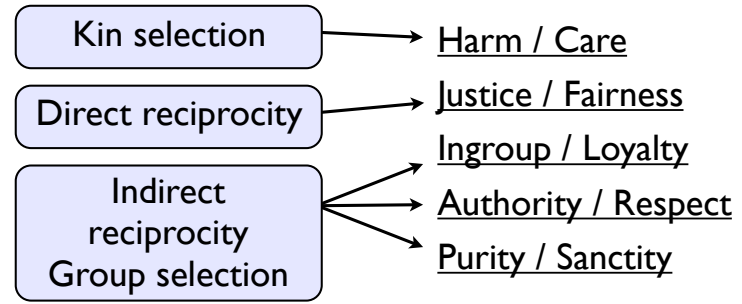
“one or both of us” is or are X

## Development of Morality

# Content of Morality

What do we have moral intuitions about?

Haidt's evolutionary account:

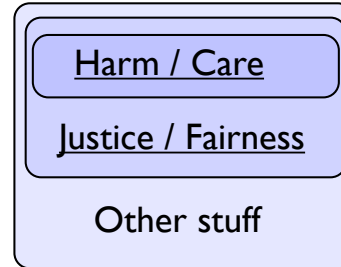


# Content of Morality

*What do we have moral intuitions about?*

**Mikhail's view:**

(based on comparative law)



Future research: development of other moralities

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9.916 Special Topics: Social Animals  
Fall 2009

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