

# Psychology 2200

## Developmental Psychology I: Fundamentals

### Moral Reasoning

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## learning objectives

- explain the opinions of the left (counterculture) and right (establishment) in the 1960s cultural war
- explain how part of the cultural war boils down to views about obedience to authority versus human rights and freedoms
- describe how the moral judgment interview measures a person's moral reasoning
- describe Kohlberg's stage model of moral development
- using Kohlberg's model, explain why the protests of the 1960s and the Holocaust of World War II ever happened, and which side was more mature
- describe how parents and teachers can help children mature morally



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## who won the war in Vietnam?

- A. north Vietnam (Communists backed by the USSR)
- B. south Vietnam (Capitalists backed by the USA)
- C. it was a draw

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## which side was more mature?

moral reasoning lecture

moral intuition lecture

# A

# B

# C

"the counterculture"



"the establishment"



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## Moral Development

1. Internalization
2. Constructivism  
(they constructed their own moral point of view)

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## activity



- groups of 2
  - 1 interviewer, 1 respondent
  - difficult moral problems to solve
- interviewer's job
  - jot down responses (yes or no)
  - "test the limits" - ask "why?"
- first dilemma & follow-up questions
  - "Heinz and the drug"
- switch roles
- second dilemma & follow-up questions
  - "Captain and the bridge"

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## Heinz and the drug

first dilemma

4:03

In California, a woman was near death from a rare kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors thought might save her. It had recently been discovered by a druggist in the same town.

The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging ten times what the drug cost him to make. He paid \$400 for the ingredients but charged \$4,000 for a small dose of the drug.

The sick woman's husband, Heinz, went to everyone he knew to borrow the money and tried every legal means, but he could only get together about \$2,000, which was 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."

Having tried every legal means, Heinz gets desperate and considers breaking into the man's store to steal the drug for his wife.

Should Heinz steal the drug? Why or why not?

Suppose the person dying is not his wife but a stranger. Should Heinz steal the drug for the stranger? Why or why not?

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## Captain and the bridge

second dilemma

4:03

In Afghanistan, a company of Canadian Forces was way outnumbered and was retreating from the enemy. The company had crossed a bridge over a river, but the enemy was mostly still on the other side.

If someone went back to the bridge and blew it up, with the head start the rest of the people in the company would probably then escape. But the company who stayed back to blow up the bridge would not be able to escape alive.

The captain is the person who knows best how to lead the retreat. The captain asks for volunteers, but no one will volunteer. If the captain goes himself, the soldiers will probably not get back safely as the captain is the only one who knows how to lead the retreat.

Should the captain order a soldier to go (or even use a lottery) when it means sending the soldier to die? Why or why not?

Does the soldier who is selected have a duty or obligation to go? Why or why not?

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## the moral judgment interview

- hypothetical moral dilemmas
  - e.g., Heinz & the drug, captain and the bridge
- response (yes/no) not coded
- reasoning is coded - stage

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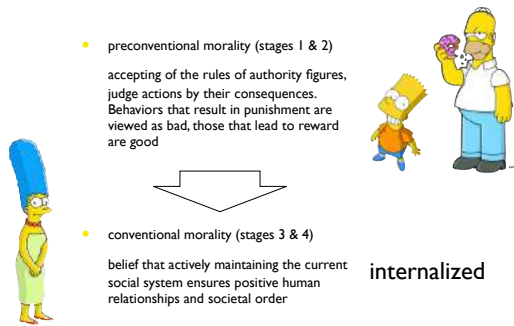
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## moral development that is (normally) good enough

- preconventional morality (stages 1 & 2)
 

accepting of the rules of authority figures, judge actions by their consequences. Behaviors that result in punishment are viewed as bad, those that lead to reward are good



- conventional morality (stages 3 & 4)
 

belief that actively maintaining the current social system ensures positive human relationships and societal order

**internalized**

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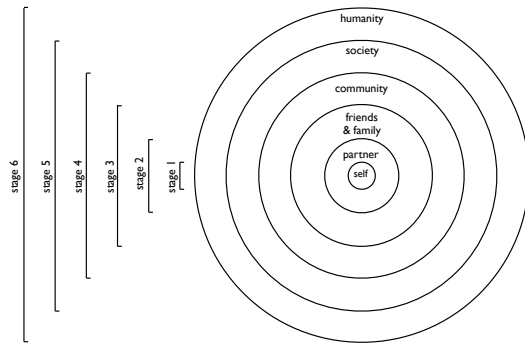
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## expanding reference group



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## Kohlberg's stages



Level	Stage	Stage Name	primary concern	reference group
preconventional	Stage 1	obedience	fear of authority & avoiding punishment	self
	Stage 2	exchange	satisfying personal needs	self + partner
conventional	Stage 3	conformity	being a good person, maintaining the approval of friends and family	self + friends & family
	Stage 4	social order	upholding laws and rules for their own sake	self + one's community
postconventional	Stage 5	social contract	fair procedures for changing laws to protect individual rights and the needs of the majority	self + society
	Stage 6	universal ethical principles	abstract, universal principles that are valid for all humanity	self + all humanity

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# Kohlberg's model

- 1. six stages of moral reasoning
- 2. active development: people **construct** forms of reasoning
- 3. developmentally irreversible
- 4. one stage at a time

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# moral reasoning

human rights  
equality  
justice

- A. stage 1
- B. stage 2
- C. stage 3
- D. stage 4
- E. stage 5 or 6

the law  
social order  
obey authority

"the counterculture"



"the establishment"



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# implications

- persons develop by advancing in stage
- argument against ethical relativism: later stages are "better"
- fairer: takes into consideration more groups' interests
- stage structure is universal, captures the logic of morality
- cross cultural (Belize, 1971)
- can go forward and stay still but not go backwards
- understand lower, prefer higher stage
- stagnation is typical: most people stop at stage 3 or 4 (conventional)



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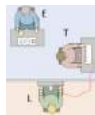
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# OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

MILGRAM (1974)



Milgram



- cover story: study of memory
- actually a test of whether ordinary people will disobey authority to prevent suffering
- "random assignment" to be Teacher (**T**) or Learner (**L**); rigged so every subject was **T**
- **T** administered increasingly painful shocks to **L** who was actually a confederate (no actual shocks)
- **L** screamed in pain, begging for mercy
- Experimenter (**E**) instructed **T** to continue
- **Results**
- about 2/3 of participants shocked "to the limit"
- about 1/3 quit the experiment

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# OBEDIENCE TO AUTHORITY

MILGRAM VS. KOHLBERG



- **Milgram:** 66% shock to the limit
- **Kohlberg:** people who obeyed authority had were less developed than those who quit and protected the "learner" from suffering
  - of stage 3 people: 86% shock to the limit
  - of stage 4 people: 83% quit

	stage 3 conformity	stage 4 law and order
quit	3	5
shock to the limit	18	1

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# Dr. Phil



vs.



son

mom

- argument: son vs. mom
  - with sound effects!
- disastrous relationship - physical hitting
- each takes a moral position (right and wrong)
- pay attention for: stages of moral reasoning.

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source	statement	orientation	stage
	"if you are aggressive, they will put handcuffs on you"	punishment	1
	"when a mother says to be quiet, she's the boss of you and you need to listen to that"	obedience	1
	"I did lightly slap her on the face to show her how that feels"	punishment	1
	"You be nice to me, I'll be nice to you"	exchange	2



"if you are aggressive, they will put handcuffs on you"

"when a mother says to be quiet, she's the boss of you and you need to listen to that"

punishment 1

obedience 1



"I did lightly slap her on the face to show her how that feels"

"You be nice to me, I'll be nice to you"

punishment 1

exchange 2

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# zone of proximal development



son

vs.

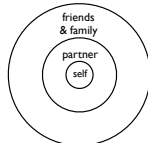


mom

stage 2



stage 3



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