

Psychology 2200

Developmental Psychology I: Fundamentals

Moral Reasoning

1

learning objectives

- describe Kohlberg's claims about the changes in stage of moral reasoning that do and do not happen
- review a longitudinal study that presents evidence that (mostly) supports Kohlberg's claims
- explain the effects of adults modelling different stage reasoning on the moral reasoning of children
- describe the phenomenon of "moral dumbfounding" and explain how it challenges the claim that reasoning causes moral judgments
- review a study that shows that intuition/emotion influences moral judgments



2

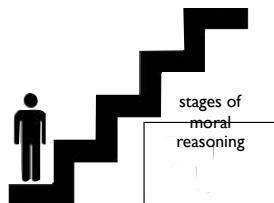
Kohlberg's model

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

3

model predictions

1. progress ok
2. stagnate ok
3. no regress
4. no skipping



4

5-year longitudinal study

Walker, Gustafson, & Frimer (2007)

64 children and adolescents

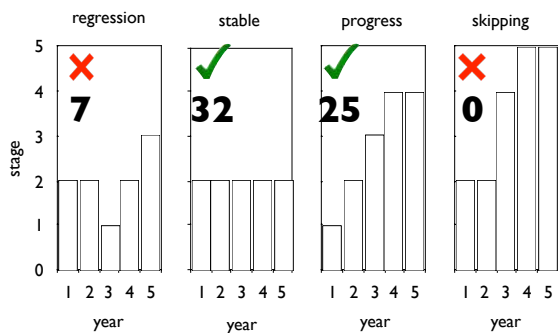
five annual MJIs

each person can follow one of **four patterns** of change in stage



5

results

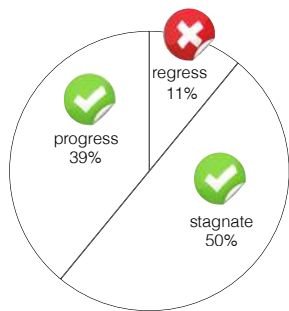


6

results

Do these results fully support Kohlberg's model? (progress, stagnate, and no regress)

yes
no



7

intervention

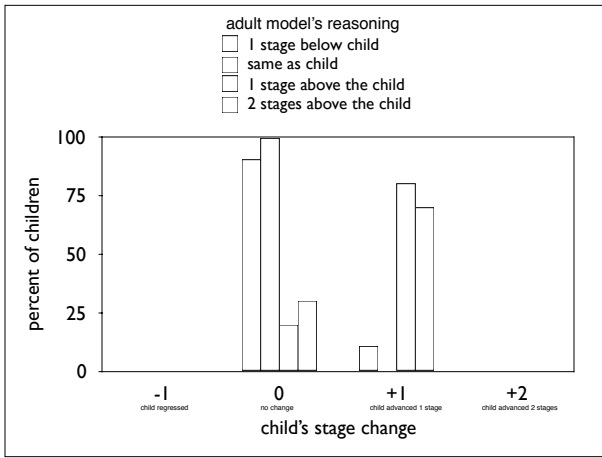
Walker (1982)

N = 50 children

- **aim:** induce moral stage change in child through modelling
- child watches two adults (actors) debate a moral dilemma
- child did not participate in the discussion
- random assignment to one of four conditions: adults' (actors') reasoning was
 1. 1 stage lower than the child's
 2. same stage as the child's
 3. 1 stage above the child's
 4. 2 stages above the child's




8



9

summary



- **“1 stage lower”** condition failed to induce regression in stage.
 - meaning: can't go backwards
 - model supported
- **“1 stage higher”** condition succeeded in inducing 1 stage of progress
 - progress happens
 - model supported
- **“2 stages higher”** condition induced only 1 stage of progress
 - progress happens one stage at a time
 - model supported

10

how do people make moral judgments?

like a lawyer
argue for one side
judgment decided already
reason afterwards
to convince others



Haidt





like a judge
consider both sides
think carefully
reason through evidence
then reach a judgment



Kohlberg

11

cause and consequence

<p>moral reasoning</p> <p>“law and order...” stage 4</p> <p>“equality and justice...” stage 5</p> <p>“hot air” rationalizations justifications tools of persuasion</p>	<p>causality</p> <p>➔</p> <p>➔</p>	<p>moral beliefs</p>  	<p>⚡</p> <p>⚡</p>
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12



Julie and Mark, who are brother and sister, are traveling together in France. They are both on summer vacation from college. One night they are staying alone in a cabin near the beach.

They decide that it would be interesting and fun if they tried making love. At very least it would be a new experience for each of them. Julie was already taking birth control pills, but Mark uses a condom too, just to be safe. They both enjoy it, but they decide not to do it again. They keep that night as a special secret between them, which makes them feel even closer to each other. So what do you think about this?

Was it wrong for them to have sex? Why?
A. OK
B. wrong

13

moral dumbfounding

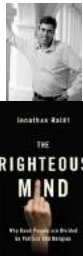
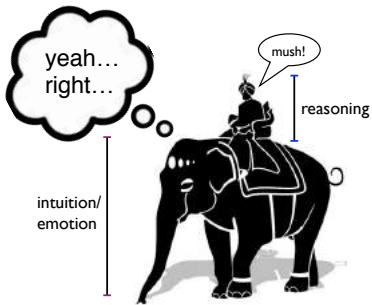
It's wrong!
 because... um... ah...
 because... hm...



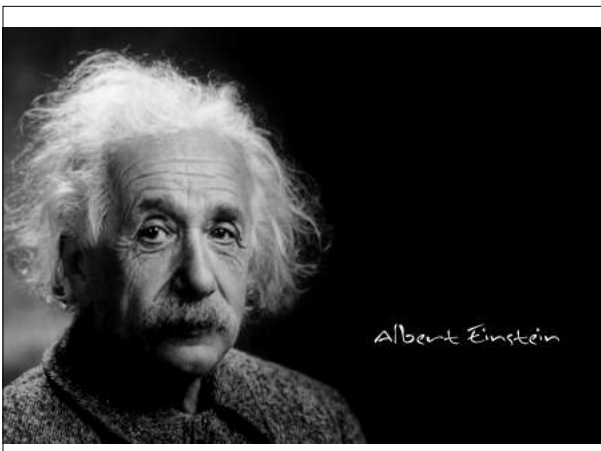
14

the righteous mind

rider = reasoning (thinks it's in control)
 elephant = intuition/emotion (is actually in control)



15



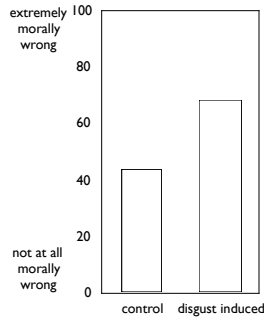
16

hypnotized disgust

Wheatley & Haidt (2005)



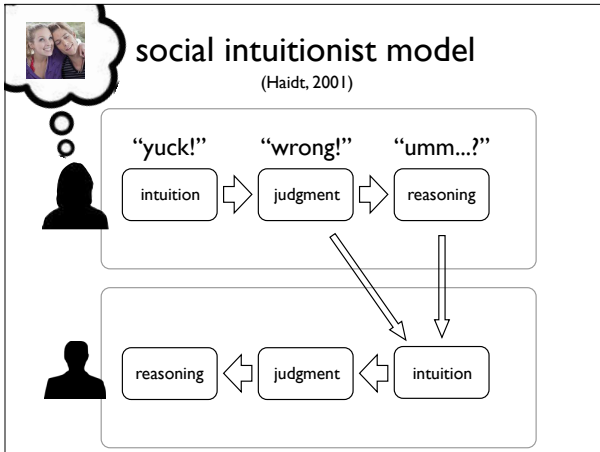
- participants either got hypnotized to feel disgusted when they hear a particular word
- or control condition
- results: moral judgments became more severe in disgust condition
- implication: emotion influences moral judgment



17

social intuitionist model

(Haidt, 2001)



18

2007



REVIEWS
The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology
Jonathan Haidt

Three Principles

1. Intuitive Primacy (but not dictatorship)
2. Morality is more than care and fairness
3. The conservative advantage

19

next lecture

- morality as an evolved set of intuitions and emotions
- therefore babies already have moral intuitions
- five different moral intuitions
 - care, fairness, loyalty, authority, and sanctity
- liberals rely on two, conservatives rely on all five
- conservatives have the moral advantage



20
