DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL REASONING

EXPLANATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF MORAL REASONING

- Piaget's cognitive theory
- Kohlberg's cognitive theory
- Gilligan's cognitive theory
- Socio-cultural approaches
  [e.g. Turiel; Shweder]
- Freud's psychoanalytic theory
- Social Learning approach
  [e.g. Bandura]
- Biological bases

Piaget

Kohlberg

Gilligan

Turiel

Shweder

Freud

Bandura

Piaget

Heteronomous reasoning

Influence of authority figures

Sacredness of rules

Children's understanding of intentions?

Autonomous reasoning

Intention and motivation

Flexibility

Authority figures?

Most children under 8 years - heteronomy

Majority of over 10s – autonomy

Progress - different domains of thinking

Shifts in moral thought associated with understanding of social relations/social bonds

Why?

THE STORIES OF THE ROLL AND THE RIBBON:

Alfred meets a friend of his who is very poor. The friend tells him that he has had no dinner that day because there was nothing to eat in his home. Then Alfred goes into a baker's shop, and as he has no money, he waits till the baker's back is turned and steals a roll. Then he runs out and gives the roll to his friend.

Henriette goes into a shop. She sees a pretty piece of ribbon on a table and thinks to herself that it would look very nice on her dress. So while the shop lady's back is turned (while the shop lady is not looking) she steals the ribbon and runs away at once.

Who is the naughtiest – Alfred or Henriette? (Piaget, 1932, p.119)

Younger children:

Material consequences/ likelihood of sanction = determined right or wrong

Older children:

Motivations and intentions impact upon judgements of morality

SOCIAL RELATIONS

Piaget:

Understanding od social relations – linked to growing recognition of social and interpersonal nature of moral obligations

'Growing up' - responsibilities

Continuing adult authority =

- egocentricity
- heteronomy
- morality of constraint

Challenging Piaget:

Pre-school children – perceived intention in judgements (e.g. Jones and Thomson, 2001)

Pre-school children - concerned about immoral acts regardless of adult opinion (Smetana, 1985)

From age 4 - believe lying to be wrong even when it is not detected (Bussey, 1992)

Summary: key terms in Piaget's account of moral development:

	Younger Children	Older Children
Understanding of rules	Motor-coercive	Rational
Justice	Retributive	Reciprocal
Reasoning	Egocentric	Socialized
Form of Morality	Heteronomous	Autonomous
Social relation	Constraint - Asymmetric	Cooperation - Symmetric

KOHLBERG'S THEORY OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT (1963, 1981, 1984)

Piagetian tradition

Importance of maturation

No emphasis of social relations

Morality – personal cognitive conflict resolution

HEINZ AND THE DRUGGIST

In Europe, a woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that doctors thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a druggist in the same town had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make, but the druggist was charging $2,000, or 10 times the cost of the drug, for a small (possibly life-saving) dose. Heinz, the sick woman's husband, borrowed all the money he could, about $1,000, or half of what was needed. He told the druggist that his wife was dying and asked him to sell the drug cheaper or let him pay later. The druggist replied, "No, I discovered the drug, and I'm going to make money from it". Heinz then became desperate and broke into the store to steal the drug for his wife.

Should Heinz have stolen the drug?

Competing moral rules:

'It is wrong to steal'
'It is right to preserve life' (Kohlberg, 1963)

Symmetric/asymmetric moral worlds for adult-child and peer morality? - No evidence

Kohlberg (1971): Some forms of moral reasoning are necessarily superior

Level 1 - Preconventional		
Stage 1	Heteronomous morality	Avoidance of breaking rules backed by punishment. Obedience for the sake of it
Stage 2	Individualism, instrumental purpose and exchange	Acting in accordance with individual interests - fairness is an equal exchange motivated by self-interest
Level 2 - Conventional		
Stage 1	Mutual interpersonal expectations, relationships and interpersonal conformity	Living up to what is expected of you. Maintain relations of trust and respect as long as you conform to your expected role
Stage 2	Social system and conscience	Rules to be upheld unless conflict with expected duties. 'Right' is contributing to society.
Level 3 - Postconventional		
Stage 1	Social contract or utility and individual rights	Awareness of social contract between individuals, but also different moral perspectives. Some individual rights transcend all and should be upheld
Stage 2	Universal ethical principles	Maintaining self-chosen ethical principles even if conflict with existing moral standards

POSITIVE ASPECTS OF THE THEORY

- More variation in reasoning than Piaget's 'two moral worlds' model
- Covers development beyond the middle teens

BUT - specific claims

- Disregard for alternative development
- 'Rigid' stages
- Moral judgement - consequence of the whole of an individual's reasoning
- Order of progression through stages - universal

CRITICISMS

- Coding system – subjective / omission
- Male / western
- Social development de-emphasised
- Knowledge and understanding – verbal expression

TWO POSSIBLE CONCLUSIONS……

a) If Kohlberg's model is correct:

- Moral reasoning in the West - most advanced reasoning
- Advanced education = advanced reasoning
- Men's reasoning - more advanced than women's

Thus…
Western, educated men are the most highly developed moral humans…?

OR……..

b) Kohlberg's model - ethnocentric

- Male, liberal, Western, 'rational' values
- Morality that resists a Kohlbergian interpretation?

(Emler, 1987)

USEFUL READING

Keenan, T., Evans, S. (2009). An Introduction to Child Development. London: Sage. (Chapter 12: Moral development)

Carpendale, J. I. M. (2000). Kohlberg and Piaget on Stages and Moral Reasoning. *Developmental Review 20, 181–205*

Krebs, D. L., Denton, K. (2005). Towards a More Pragmatic Approach to Morality: A critical evaluation of Kohlberg's model. *Psychological review, 112 (3), 629 – 649*

BREAK

10 MINUTES!

Development of Moral Reasoning (2)

Last week:

- Piaget's theory
- Kohlberg's theory

This week:

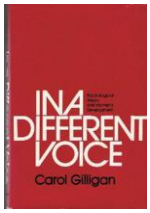
- Gilligan's theory - gender differences
- Socio-cultural approaches - cultural differences
- Freud's theory - psychosexual theory
- Social Learning - modelling
- Biological view - neural basis

GENDER ISSUES IN MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Gilligan (1988) – Two different moral orientations

Kohlberg mainly – gender biased research

Women's responses - a different moral orientation.



A MORALITY OF JUSTICE

- Individuality
- Fairness - duty and obligation of roles
- Moral problems - issues of conflicting claims between the self and others
- Resolved by?

  - invoking impartial rules, principles or standards

  - considering whether values, principles or standards were/are maintained

A MORALITY OF RESPONSE AND CARE

- Connectedness
- Understanding of relationships as response to another in their own terms
- Moral problems are generally construed as issues of relationships or of response - how to respond to others in their particular terms
- Resolved through?

  - the activity of care

  - considering whether relationships were/are maintained or restored

Preconventional level	
Stage 1	Caring for the self
Stage 2	Concern judged to be selfish
Conventional level	
Stage 3	Goodness is caring for others, frequently equated with self-sacrifice
Stage 4	Illogic of inequality between self and others becomes evident. Search for equilibrium
Postconventional level	
Stage 5	Focus is on the dynamics of relationships, to eliminate the tension between self and others
Stage 6	Care is extended beyond personal relationships to a general recognition of the interdependence of self and other, accompanied by a universal condemnation of exploitation and hurt

QUERIES ABOUT GILLIGAN'S VIEW

- Initial study conducted solely on women - reverse bias
- Stereotypical ideas of male and female roles?
- Socialisation - blurs the boundaries between the two moral 'voices'

ONE SOCIO-CULTURAL VIEW

Turiel (1983) - Moral and Conventional rules

- Social conventions are relative
- Moral rules are universal

The child's recognition that moral rules are not random arises from personal experience

BUT - EVEN IF MORAL RULES ARE UNIVERSAL…

…this doesn't mean that everyone everywhere will abide by them

- Individuals
- Sub-cultures

-

SHWEDER, MAHAPATRA AND MILLER (1987)

Distinction between morality and convention across cultures

India - no common set of moral rules distinct from conventions

Socially valid moral codes

Challenges Turiel's claim

- Turiel: tendency to regard morality as universalizable

  - it could be recognized by all

- Challenge to the assumption that any one system of morality is universal

  - that it is recognized by all

FREUD (PSYCHOSEXUAL THEORY) – MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Internalising of a parental moral code

- Process of eventual identification with the parent of the same sex

- Takes up a moral code – need for identity
- Identifies with parental morality – need for security

SOCIAL LEARNING

One social learning view - moral development - a direct process of learning

- e.g. Aronfeed (1968) – social conditioning

Feedback from parents/carers

- Positive / Negative Reinforcement
- Punishment

Child comes to behave in a morally acceptable way

- Alternative social learning view
  – moral development - an indirect process of learning

- Bandura (1977; 1986) - observational learning / vicarious reinforcement

- Observation of adults making moral judgements – more mature responses from children in a subsequent post-test
  (Bandura and McDonald, 1963, in Leman, 2001)

- As observations increase, so does the child's grasp of the complexities of moral thought

- Reduces children's lived experiences to just behaviours
- How does punishment correlate with moral behaviour and moral thinking?
- Resulting conception of morality?
- Internalization of morality?
- Influence of models?
- Morality involved in enforcment?

NEURAL BASIS OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

fMRI research: Role of cognitive control in moral judgement

- Prefrontal cortex - involved in 'controlled processing'

Cognitive control processes override emotional processes to produce utilitarian responses to moral dilemmas

(e.g. Greene et al, 2001, 2002; Miller and Cohen, 2001)

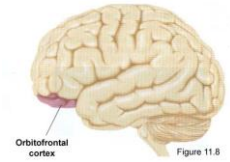
NEURAL BASIS OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Orbitofrontal cortex damage leads to:

Socially inappropriate behaviour (e.g. aggression, callousness)

Impaired recognition of facial expressions of anger and disgust

(e.g. Blair and Cipolotti, 2000)

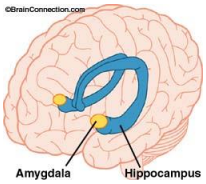


NEURAL BASIS OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

- Amygdala – key role in moral socialization

Bilateral amygdala lesions - impaired perceptual judgement of facial emotions

(e.g. Blair and Cipolotti, 2000)



BUT….

- Freudian interpretations – internal drives, id, ego, superego
- Behaviourist accounts – stimulus-response
- Biological explanations – brain regions

How much do these explanations acknowledge that:

- Moral dilemmas are social questions
- We manipulate social information
- We respond to social demands

SUMMARY

Piaget

- Understanding of moral rules
- Heteronomous and Autonomous moral reasoning
- Social relationships important

Kohlberg

- Understanding of moral rules
- No differences in reasoning due to heteronomy/autonomy
- Development of moral reasoning independent of the social world

SUMMARY CONTINUED……

Gilligan

- Gendered moralities – Justice and Care
- Different ways of seeing self and the world
- Socialisation important

Turiel

- Moral and Conventional rules
- Universality of moral rules?

Socio-cultural research

- Different, but equally valid cultural moralities
- Moral rules universalizable, not universal

SUMMARY CONTINUED……

- Freud
  - Psychosexual theory of development
  - Identification with same sex parent
  - Internalisation of moral code
- Social Learning
  - Aronfeed: direct process of learning
    - social conditioning, reinforcement
  - Bandura: indirect process of learning
    - observational learning / vicarious reinforcement
- Neural basis
  - Prefrontal cortex – controlled processing
  - Orbitofrontal cortex – aggression, callousness / facial expressions
  - Amygdala – recognition of facial expressions

READING

Berk, L., E. (2006). *Child Development*. Boston : Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Luo, Q., Nakic, M., Wheatley, T., Richell, R., Martin, A. and Blair, R. J. R. (2005). The neural basis of implicit moral attitude – An IAT study using event-related fMRI. *NeuroImage, 30, 1449-1457.*

Moll, J., Zahn, R., de Oliveira-Souza, R., Krueger, F. Grafman, J. (2005). The neural basis of human moral cognition. *Nature Reviews/Neuroscience, 6, 799-809.*

Santrock, J. W. (2006). *Child Development*. Boston ; London : McGraw-Hill.

And, of course, your OWN literature search around this topic…….