

## How Are Moral Judgments Reached?

edited by mks

*Is morality a product of reason or intuition? Both, of course; moral psychology of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by an emphasis on reasoning and the slow, explicit construction of moral principles, but contemporaneous evidence suggests morality first emerges as quick, unconscious, gut reactions called moral intuitions, similar to ‘heuristic’ or ‘system 1’ thinking of dual-process modes of cognition. These intuitions are often affectively valenced and difficult to override, even to the point of dumbfounding; contrary to pursuing object moral truth, we seek out confirmatory evidence that strengthens our priors and protects our reputation. Haidt’s Social Intuitionist Model offers ways to more effectively change moral minds by triggering new intuitions in oneself and others, particularly by addressing personal and ideological narratives, the natural language of morality.*

For much of Western history, reaching sound moral judgment has been framed as a struggle of “reason and emotion,” of “divinity and animality.”<sup>1</sup> “To be human is to feel pulled in different directions;”<sup>2</sup> as Plato mythologized it in *Timaeus*, “human heads, with their divine cargo of reason,” must channel their “seething, passionate bodies [...] towards virtuous ends.”<sup>3</sup> In other words, “the passions are and ought only to be the servants of reason.”<sup>4</sup> The stoic philosophers [went further and viewed] emotions [as binding] one to the material world and therefore to a life of misery. Medieval Christian philosophers [likewise linked emotions] to desire and hence to sin. The 17th century’s continental rationalists (e.g., Leibniz, Descartes) worshiped reason as much as Plato had:”<sup>5</sup> For example, Kant worked “to deduce a foundation for ethics from the meaning of rationality itself”<sup>6</sup> and “discover the timeless, changeless form of the Good,”<sup>7</sup> while Jeremy Bentham “systematized the parameters needed to calculate ‘hedons’ (pleasures) and ‘dolors’ (pains) [...] “to reach a moral verdict.”<sup>8</sup>

“There’s a direct line running from Plato through Immanuel Kant to Lawrence Kohlberg,”<sup>9</sup> the largest figure in moral psychology of “the cognitive revolution of the 1960s, [whose] work was a

---

1 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 815.

2 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 32.

3 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 815.

4 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 33.

5 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 815.

6 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

7 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 139.

8 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 138.

9 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 34.

sustained attack on ‘irrational emotive theories.’”<sup>10</sup> He “trained or inspired most of the leading researchers in moral psychology” into the 1990s,<sup>11</sup> establishing a “consensus that morality lives within the individual mind as a traitlike cognitive attainment, a set of knowledge structures about moral standards that [people] create for themselves in the course of their everyday reasoning.”<sup>12</sup>

The above thinkers can all be described as moral rationalists, a term for “anyone who believes that reasoning is the most important and reliable way to obtain moral knowledge.”<sup>13</sup> For these types, “moral knowledge and moral judgment are reached primarily by a process of reasoning and reflection,”<sup>14</sup> “conscious mental activity that consists of transforming given information about people (and situations)”<sup>15</sup> in order to reach moral judgments, “evaluations (good vs. bad) of the action or character of a person.”<sup>16</sup> “Moral reasoners are sometimes said to be like scientists,”<sup>17</sup> who “judgment is a kind of inference made in several steps”<sup>18</sup> towards the best moral judgment. These ideas are exemplified within the “social interactionist model” of Elliott Turiel and Larry Nucci, which suggests people “think about the consequences of an action before determining whether the action is a moral violation.”<sup>19</sup> Supporters of this moral model acknowledge “affective forces are involved in moral decisions,”<sup>20</sup> “small flashes of positive or negative feeling that prepare us to approach or avoids something,”<sup>21</sup> “but moral emotions are not the direct causes of moral judgments.”<sup>22</sup>

---

10 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

11 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

12 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

13 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 7.

14 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 814.

15 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 10.

16 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 817.

17 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 817.

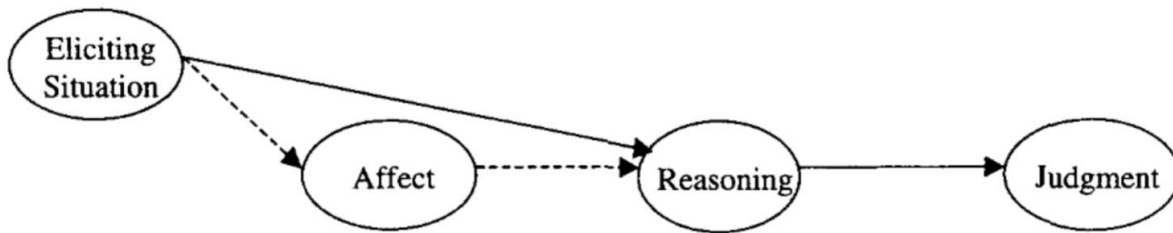
18 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

19 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 817.

20 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

21 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 65.

22 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 814.



*Figure 1.* The rationalist model of moral judgment. Moral affects such as sympathy may sometimes be inputs to moral reasoning.

Are there alternative views?

“Thomas Jefferson offered a more balanced model of the relationship between reason and emotion” and believed reason was “allotted the field of science [while the heart] received morals [...] feelings of sympathy, of benevolence, of gratitude, of justice, of love, of friendship;”<sup>23</sup> in essence, “reason and sentiment are (and ought to be) independent co-rulers.”<sup>24</sup>

Other philosophers and early psychologists suggest the inverse of the rationalist model; David Hume asked “whether we attain the knowledge of [morality] by a chain of argument and induction, or by an immediate feeling and finer internal sense”<sup>25</sup> and concluded “the ultimate ends of human actions can never ... be accounted for by reason, but recommend themselves entirely to the sentiments and affections of mankind.”<sup>26</sup> Sigmund Freud felt similarly, and “saw people’s judgments as driven by unconscious motives and feelings, which are then rationalized with publicly acceptable reasons.”<sup>27</sup> Behaviorist Burrhus Frederic Skinner likewise “saw moral reasoning as epiphenomenal in the production of moral behavior, explaining morality as the actions that a society happens to reward or punish.”<sup>28</sup> In all these cases, irrational, unconscious impulses; gut feelings; and affect-laden intuitive thinking are viewed as underlying and determining morality, not reason.

These ideas precede contemporary emphasis on interdisciplinary explanations for psychological theory, but the biologist and pioneering synthesizer of scientific fields Edward Osborne Wilson thought

23 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 35.

24 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 36.

25 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 9.

26 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

27 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

28 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 816.

Hume, Freud, and Skinner were closer to the truth than the rationalists. E.O. Wilson was “a professor at Harvard, along with Lawrence Kohlberg and the philosopher John Rawls, [where it seemed clear to him] what the rationalists were *really* doing was generating clever justifications for moral intuitions. Do people believe in human rights because such rights actually exist, like mathematical truths, sitting on a cosmic shelf next to the Pythagorean theorem just waiting to be discovered by Platonic reasoners? Or do people feel revulsion and sympathy when they read accounts of torture, and then invent a story about universal rights to help justify their feelings?”<sup>29</sup>

### Dual-Process Cognition

Before we determine if rationality or intuition predominates in moral judgment, let’s review the scientific consensus that “the mind is composed of two distinct processing systems”<sup>30</sup> that are both “at work when a person makes judgments or solves problems.”<sup>31</sup> In Haidt’s work, “the words *intuition* and *reasoning* are intended to capture the contrast made by dozens of philosophers and psychologists between [these] two kinds of cognition.”<sup>32</sup> To avoid worsening the common conflation of affect, emotions, sentiments, and feelings versus gut reactions and intuitions, “it must be stressed that the contrast of intuition and reasoning is not the contrast of emotion and cognition.”<sup>33</sup> When we look at *moral* intuitions later, we will see “emotions are one type of moral intuition, but most moral intuitions are more subtle; they don’t rise to the level of emotions.”<sup>34</sup> “Moral intuitions are about good and bad. Sometimes these affective reactions are so strong and differentiated that they can be called moral emotions, such as disgust or gratitude, but usually they are more like the subtle flashes of affect that drive evaluative priming effects.”<sup>35</sup>

“Intuitions are the judgments, solutions, and ideas that pop into consciousness,”<sup>36</sup> a “one-step mental process” in which “sudden flashes of insight [that occur] quickly, effortlessly, and automatically, such that the outcome but not the process is accessible to consciousness.”<sup>37</sup> This is how the mind “does

29 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 38.

30 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. “Intuitive Ethics...” 2004, 56.

31 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 819.

32 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

33 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

34 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 53.

35 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 10.

36 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. “Intuitive Ethics...” 2004, 56.

37 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

most of its work,”<sup>38</sup> “constantly reacting intuitively to everything [it] perceive[s]”<sup>39</sup> “by automatic pattern matching and distributed processing [that uses] shortcuts, or heuristics,”<sup>40</sup> involving “manoeuvres [sic] based seemingly on an implicit perception of the total problem.”<sup>41</sup> Intuition is the “pattern matching that brains have been doing for hundreds of millions of years,”<sup>42</sup> “animal brains make such appraisals thousands of times a day with no need for conscious reasoning, all in order to optimize the brain’s answer to the fundamental question of animal life: approach or avoid?”<sup>43</sup>

Reasoning “is a conscious process [that is deliberative,] intentional, effortful, and controllable.”<sup>44</sup> It “occurs more slowly [than intuition], requires some effort, and involves some steps that are accessible to consciousness.”<sup>45</sup> This system is used “when you think in words or reason through a problem or work backward from a goal to your present position.”<sup>46</sup> It “plays the crucial role of correcting the occasional errors of faster and cognitively cheaper intuition”<sup>47</sup> by going “through steps of searching, weighing evidence, or inferring a conclusion.”<sup>48</sup> It “can see further into the future [...] learn new skills and master new technologies.”<sup>49</sup> It is “evolutionarily newer and motivationally weaker”<sup>50</sup> than the intuitive system, existing in “creatures that have language and a need to explain themselves to other creatures [...] it sometimes *feels* like work, and it’s easily disrupted by cognitive load.”<sup>51</sup>

“This contrast [of intuition and reason] is similar to the one made in [Shelly] Chaiken’s Heuristic-Systematic Model, [Howard Margolis’s seeing-that and reasoning-why model,] as well as the one widely used by behavioral economists between ‘system 1’ and ‘system 2’”<sup>52</sup> which “Daniel Kahneman has long called these two kinds of cognition.”<sup>53</sup>

---

38 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. “Intuitive Ethics...” 2004, 57.

39 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 69.

40 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. “Intuitive Ethics...” 2004, 57.

41 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

42 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 51.

43 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 64.

44 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

45 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

46 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. “Intuitive Ethics...” 2004, 57.

47 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 10-11.

48 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

49 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 54.

50 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 8.

51 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 51.

52 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 10.

53 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 385.

*General Features of the Two Systems*

The intuitive system	The reasoning system
Fast and effortless	Slow and effortful
Process is unintentional and runs automatically	Process is intentional and controllable
Process is inaccessible; only results enter awareness	Process is consciously accessible and viewable
Does not demand attentional resources	Demands attentional resources, which are limited
Parallel distributed processing	Serial processing
Pattern matching; thought is metaphorical, holistic	Symbol manipulation; thought is truth preserving, analytical
Common to all mammals	Unique to humans over age 2 and perhaps some language-trained apes
Context dependent	Context independent
Platform dependent (depends on the brain and body that houses it)	Platform independent (the process can be transported to any rule following organism or machine)

*Note.* These contrasts are discussed in Bruner (1986), Chaiken (1980), Epstein (1994), Freud (1900/1976), Margolis (1987), Metcalfe and Mischel (1999), Petty and Cacioppo (1986), Posner and Snyder (1975), Pyszczynski and Greenberg (1987), Reber (1993), Wegner (1994), T. D. Wilson (in press), and Zajonc (1980).

from Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 818.

“The two processes are thought to run with some independence, [but] how do the two interact, and what is their relative importance? Existing dual process models allow for many ways of putting the two processes together,”<sup>54</sup> but which is most relevant to *moral* cognition?

### Challenges to Rationalism

Haidt originally agreed with Jefferson, believing “each process could make moral judgments on its own, and they sometimes fought it out for the right to do so.”<sup>55</sup> However, his own research suggests otherwise. Following the premise that controlled thinking is impacted from cognitive loads “such as holding the number 7250475 in the mind”<sup>56</sup> and automatic, intuitive thinking isn’t, Haidt tested if “people [can] make moral judgments just as well when carrying a heavy cognitive load as when carrying a light one [and found] the answer [...] to be yes.” When he “used a computer program to force some people to answer quickly [and] forced other people to wait ten seconds before offering their judgment [to] shift the balance of power”<sup>57</sup> from fast intuition to slow rationality, he still found no difference.

He also designed studies to examine “responses to actions that were offensive yet harmless, such as eating one’s dead pet dog [...] or eating a chicken carcass one has just used for masturbation.”<sup>58</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 10.

<sup>55</sup> Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 41.

<sup>56</sup> Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 42.

<sup>57</sup> Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 42.

<sup>58</sup> Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 817.

This was followed by his and other researchers' questioning participants' moral reasoning, often until some "seemed to be flailing around, throwing out reason after reason;"<sup>59</sup> others "would stutter, laugh, and express surprise at their inability to find supporting reasons, yet they would not change their initial judgments of condemnation."<sup>60</sup> In effect, Haidt made them "*morally dumbfounded*-- rendered speechless by their inability to explain verbally what they knew intuitively."<sup>61</sup>

Social psychologist Robert Zajonc helps explain these puzzling results with his "reviv[al of] Wilhelm Wundt's long-forgotten notion of affective primacy." Disagreeing with the premise that "people are cool, rational information processes who first perceive and categorize object and then react to them,"<sup>62</sup> Zajonc argues that "affective reactions are so tightly integrated with perception that we find ourselves liking or disliking something the instant we notice it, sometimes even before we know what it is."<sup>63</sup> He therefore advocates for "a dual-process model in which affect or "feeling" is the first process [with] primacy both because it happens first [...] and because it is more powerful."<sup>64</sup> "We are capable of using [the second process of thinking] dispassionately, such as when we consider abstract problems with no personal ramifications. But the machinery itself was 'designed' to work with affect, not free of it;<sup>65</sup> "Higher-level human thinking is preceded, permeated, and influenced by affective reactions ... which push us gently (or not so gently) toward approach or avoidance."<sup>66</sup> "The thinking system is not equipped to lead [...] but it can be a useful advisor."<sup>67</sup>

This hot/fast, cold/slow paradigm is echoed by a dual process model of willpower proposed by Janet Metcalfe and Walter Mischel, "in which two separate but interaction systems govern human behavior in the face of temptation. The 'hot' system is specialized for quick emotional processing and makes heavy use of amygdala-based memory. The 'cool' system is specialized for complex spatiotemporal and episodic representation and thought. It relies on hippocampal memory and frontal lobe planning and inhibition areas. It can block the impulses of the hot system, but it develops later in

---

59 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 45-46.

60 Haidt, Jonathan, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail..." 2001, 817.

61 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 29.

62 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 65.

63 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 65.

64 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 66.

65 Haidt, Jonathan. "The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology," 2007, 1000.

66 Haidt, Jonathan. "The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology," 2007, 998.

67 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 66.

life.”<sup>68</sup> Their work suggests “improved moral behavior comes more from [one’s] greater self-regulatory abilities than from [one’s] greater moral reasoning abilities. The development of the cool system does not represent the triumph of reasoning over emotion; rather, [...] the successful development and integration of the cool system [is] an essential feature of emotional intelligence.”<sup>69</sup>

In both models that introduce affect to standard dual cognition, “reasoning appears to have less power and independence [than intuition].”<sup>70</sup> Why could this be so? “Because people have limited cognitive resources, and because heuristic processing is easy and adequate for most tasks, [the intuitive process] is generally used unless there is a special need to engage in systematic processing.”<sup>71</sup> In addition to this biological explanation, reasoning emerged evolutionarily “perhaps only in the past 100 thousand years, so it is implausible that the neural mechanisms that control human judgment and behavior were suddenly rewired to hand control of the organism over to this new deliberative faculty.”<sup>72</sup>

Do others’ scientific studies and theories bear out this supremacy of intuition and affect?

The most obvious work linking emotions to morality is Daniel Batson’s empathy-altruism hypothesis of moral behavior, which suggests “people are often motivated to help others and that the mechanisms involved in this helping are primarily affective, including empathy as well as reflexive distress, sadness, guilt, and shame.”<sup>73</sup> Though “subsequent rounds of experiments established that empathetic and selfish motives are both at work under some circumstances, [...] empathetic feelings of concern, including the goal of helping the victim, really do exist, and sometimes do motivate people to help strangers at some cost to themselves.”<sup>74</sup>

In favor of gut reaction intuition, many researchers have found that the “gustatory cortex,” which “processes information from the nose and tongue, [...] had taken on new duties [in humans, getting] active when we see something morally fishy, particularly something disgusting, as well as garden-variety unfairness.”<sup>75</sup> This finding fits with the work on embodied cognition by “Lakoff and

68 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 823.

69 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 823-824.

70 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 10.

71 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 820.

72 Haidt, Jonathan. “The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology,” 2007, 998.

73 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 825.

74 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 17.

75 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 70.



Johnson [who] have shown that nearly all complex thought relies on metaphors, drawn mostly from our experience as physical creatures” that predate rational categories. They find “concepts may have some innate basis [and are then] built up largely by metaphorical extensions from physical experience.”<sup>76</sup> Such embodied experiences influencing moral affect and judgment are examples of “the somatic marker hypothesis[, which] states that experiences in the world normally trigger emotional experiences that involve bodily changes and feelings.”<sup>77</sup> These concepts can be seen in several different studies:

With Thalia Wheatley, Haidt tested “hypnotized people [that felt] a flash of disgust whenever they saw a certain word[. They subsequently judged scenarios] to be more disgusting and morally wrong when their code word as embedded in the story, [even when a story] contained no moral violation of any kind.”<sup>78</sup> This experiment demonstrates that “artificially increasing the strength of a gut feeling increases the strength of the resulting moral judgment.”<sup>79</sup> Alex Jordan had people “make moral judgments while he secretly tripped their disgust alarms [with a secret] fart spray [that led to] harsher judgments when [people] were breathing in foul air. Other researchers have found the same effect by asking subjects to fill out questionnaires after drinking bitter versus sweet drinks.”<sup>80</sup> Chenbo Zhong [...] has shown that subjects who are asked to wash their hands with soap before filling out questions become more moralistic about issues related to moral purity. [She also found that people] who [...] recall their own moral transgressions [...] find themselves thinking about cleanliness more often, and wanting more strongly to cleanse themselves.”<sup>81</sup> “A notable finding in this studies was that moral judgments [can grow] more severe primarily for those who scored above average on a measure of ‘private body conscious’ [...] which is the degree to which people attend to their own bodily sensations.”<sup>82</sup>

In the above experiments, the manipulation of participant’s gut reactions are also examples of “‘affective priming,’ [which] triggers a flash of affect that primes the mind to go one way or the other.”<sup>83</sup> This fits with “research in social psychology on the ‘affect as information’ hypothesis, which demonstrates that people frequently rely on their moods and momentary flashes of feeling as guides

76 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 825.

77 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 825.

78 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 62.

79 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 825.

80 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 70-71.

81 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 71.

82 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 14.

83 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 67.

when making judgments and decisions.”<sup>84</sup> As studies on politics show, these quick judgments can be surprisingly accurate and persistent.

“Psychologists who study political behavior have generally found that intuition, framing, and emotion are better predictors of political preferences than is self-interest, reasoning about policies, or even assessments of the personality traits of a candidate.”<sup>85</sup> Psychologist Drew Weston, “based on a broader view of empirical research, argued that ‘successful campaigns compete in the marketplace of emotions and not primarily in the marketplace of ideas.’ [...] Overall feelings of liking predict[s] people’s judgments about specific issues very well [while] variables related to factual knowledge, in contrast, contribut[es] almost nothing.”<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Alex Todorov “found that the candidate that people judged more competent [from “photographs of the winners and runners-up in hundreds of elections”] was the one who actually won the race about two-thirds of the time.”<sup>87</sup>

What happens when affect is blocked? Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio’s research on “patients who had suffered brain damage [and subsequently] their emotionality dropped nearly to zero [suggests] that gut feelings and bodily reactions were *necessary* to think rationally.”<sup>88</sup> Without affect, “every option at every moment felt as good as every other;”<sup>89</sup> In other words, “when the master (passions) drops dead, the servant (reasoning) has neither the ability nor desire to keep the estate running.”<sup>90</sup> “The separation was not the liberation of reason from the thrall of the passions. It was the shocking revelation that reasoning *requires* the passions.”<sup>91</sup> “Emotions are cognitions invested with a motivation force,”<sup>92</sup> and without them, decision-making halts. “Damasio refers to this pattern of affect loss combined with intact reasoning as ‘acquired sociopathy.’ [those with this condition] do not generally become moral monsters [but do] become much less concerned with following social norms.”

---

84 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 825.

85 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 16.

86 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 16.

87 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 69.

88 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 39.

89 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 40.

90 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 41.

91 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 40.

92 Jonathan Haidt, Silvia Helena Koller, and Maria G. Dias, “Affect, Culture, and Morality...” 1993, 626.

What about psychopaths? They have “a genetically heritable condition that creates brains that are unmoved by the needs, suffering, or dignity of others.”<sup>93</sup> “Psychopaths do have *some* emotions,” but Robert Hare defines psychopathy as a lack of *moral* emotions: “they feel no compassion, guilt, shame, or even embarrassment.”<sup>94</sup> “Psychopaths know the rules of social behavior and they understand the harmful consequences of their actions [...] they simply do not care about those consequences.”<sup>95</sup> They “seem to live in a world of objects, some of which happen to walk around on two legs.”<sup>96</sup>

In summary, there is ample evidence that quick, affective gut reactions and intuitions underlie much of what we understand as moral thought and behavior. But where does that leave standard rationalist measures of morality?

“One of the most active areas [...] in moral psychology uses quandaries”<sup>97</sup> such as “the ‘trolley dilemma,’ “in which the only way you can stop a runaway trolley from killing five people is by pushing one person off a bridge onto a track below,”<sup>98</sup> or else flipping a switch that will then kill one person instead of five. If one follows Kant’s deontology, “that we have duties to respect the rights of individuals, and we must not harm people in our pursuit of other goals, even moral goals such as saving lives,”<sup>99</sup> one won’t sacrifice one person for five others. If one follows utilitarianism or consequentialism, “the philosophical school that says you should always aim to bring about the greatest total good, even if a few people get hurt along the way, [...] there’s really no other way to save those five lives, [so] go ahead and push.”<sup>100</sup>

Both schools of moral philosophy believe they are making wholly rational decisions, but “[Joshua] Greene had a hunch that gut feelings were what often drove people to make deontological judgments, whereas utilitarian judgments were more cool and calculating.”<sup>101</sup> “This work shows that the choices people make can be predicted (when aggregated across many judgments) by the intensity and time course of activation in emotion areas (such as the VMPFC and the amygdala), relative to areas

---

93 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 73.

94 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 72.

95 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 824.

96 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 73.

97 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 4.

98 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 76.

99 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 76.

100 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 76.

101 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 76-77.

associated with cool deliberation. When emotion areas are most strongly activated, people tend to choose the deontological outcome (don't push the person off of a footbridge, even to stop a train and save five others). But in scenarios that trigger little emotional response, people tend to choose the utilitarian response (go ahead and throw a switch to divert a train that will end up killing one instead of five)"<sup>102</sup> "Greene described these two modes of processing as [...] 'intuitive emotional processing' which generally leads to deontological conclusions about the inviolability of rights, duties, and obligations," and "'controlled cognitive processing,' which generally leads to consequentialist conclusions that promote the greater good."<sup>103</sup>

Even Kant, creator of deontology, "had intuitions of a broader moral domain. He wrote that masturbation was 'in the highest degree opposed to morality,' although he granted that 'it is not so easy to produce a rational demonstration' of its wrongness."<sup>104</sup>

For all the above evidence in intuition's favor, "the precise roles played by intuition and reasoning in moral judgment cannot yet be established based on the existing empirical evidence." There is no scientific consensus around the primacy of affection intuition over reason; the aforementioned work by "Greene and colleagues have [led them to propose] a more traditional dual process model in which the two processes work independently and often reach different conclusions," in Jefferson's and Haidt's original mold.<sup>105</sup>

Nonetheless, Haidt argues "moral evaluation ... is more a product of the gut than the head, bearing a closer resemblance to aesthetic judgment than principle-based reasoning."<sup>106</sup> Intuition is hotter, easier, faster, and automatic; reason is cooler, harder, slower, and deliberate. In some domains of human experience they seem matched, independent, and able of mutual inhibition, but in terms of morality, intuition may have the upper hand.

This is in stark contrast to "the idea that reasoning is our most noble attribute, one that makes us like gods (for Plato) or that brings us beyond the 'delusion' of believing in gods (for the New

---

102 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, "Morality," 2009, 11-12.

103 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, "Morality," 2009, 19.

104 Graham, Jesse et al., "Mapping the Moral Domain," 2011, 367.

105 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, "Morality," 2009, 19.

106 Graham, Jesse et al., "Moral Foundations Theory..." 2012, 15.

Atheists).”<sup>107</sup> Haidt considers “the worship of reason is itself an illustration of one of the most long-lived delusions in Western history,”<sup>108</sup> and that “anyone who values truth should stop worshipping reason. We all need to take a cold hard look at the evidence and see reasoning for what it is. [Reasoning] evolved not to help us find truth but to help us engage in arguments, persuasion, and manipulation in the context of discussions with other people.”<sup>109</sup>

Where did contemporary rationalist models go wrong? “Kohlberg focused on conscious verbal reasoning, [and so] Kohlbergian psychology forged its interdisciplinary links with philosophy and education, rather than with biology.”<sup>110</sup> Standard moral judgment interviews involve talking to “a stranger (a research psychologist) who challenges your judgment at every turn [which forces you] to engage in extensive, effortful, [and] verbal [cognition. This likely creates] an unnaturally reasoned form of moral judgment, leading to the erroneous conclusion that moral judgment is primarily a reasoning process.”<sup>111</sup> “Yet ever since Plato wrote his *dialogues*, philosophers have recognized that moral reasoning naturally occurs in a social setting.”<sup>112</sup> Further, “most research has used stories about dying wives, runaway trolleys, lascivious siblings, or other highly contrived situations,”<sup>113</sup> again not representative of morality as it emerges in the real world. What can we learn from these errors? That “it is useful to study judgments of extreme cases, but much more work is needed on everyday moral judgment,”<sup>114</sup> which can be better understood in terms of self-constructed and ideological narratives.

### Paradigmatic and Narrative Morality

Contrary to the artificial and extreme cases cited above, “moral thinking, argument, and reflection [are] better described as a kind of narrative thinking,”<sup>115</sup> “one of two basic forms of human cognition.”<sup>116</sup> Jerome Bruner distinguishes “the narrative mode of cognition and the paradigmatic or logico-scientific mode,”<sup>117</sup> which parallels the distinctions made about dual-process models of

---

107 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 103.

108 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 103.

109 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 104.

110 Haidt, Jonathan. “The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology,” 2007, 998

111 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 820.

112 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 820.

113 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 19.

114 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 19.

115 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 389.

116 Graham, J., & Haidt, J. “Sacred values and evil adversaries...” 2012, 7.

117 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 388.

cognition described above. “For the paradigmatic mode, prostheses include logic, mathematics, and the sciences.”<sup>118</sup> It involves “dictating explicit rationale or principles” that can produce “an overemphasis on deductive and calculative conceptions of value and rationality,”<sup>119</sup> products of system 1, reasoned thinking that are least likely to trigger new intuitions and change someone’s mind.

In contrast, “for the narrative mode, the most common prosthetic devices are texts.”<sup>120</sup> “Without narrative, our moral concepts would be disjointed and hard to integrate into coherent action plans,”<sup>121</sup> to the extent that “it seems plausible that human morality and the human capacity for narrativity have co-evolved, mutually reinforcing one another in our recent phylogenetic development.”<sup>122</sup> As Christian Smith says, we are “animals who make stories but also animals who are made by stories; arguments convince one of their truth, stories of their lifelikeness. The [former] verifies by eventual appeal to procedures for establishing formal and empirical proof. The [latter] establishes not truth but verisimilitude.”<sup>123</sup> Indeed, “psychologists know that such stories are often made up post hoc ... yet even if such stories are generated post hoc to justify the gut feelings that draw one to a particular cause, they may still measure effects on a variety of outcomes [and] play an important role in influencing others.”<sup>124</sup>

Working from a personality model by Scott McAdams, Haidt views moral narratives as built up from temperamental traits and lived experience into “the personal narratives that [help people] make sense of their values and beliefs. For many people these life stories include an account of the development of their current moral beliefs and political ideology.”<sup>125</sup> “These narratives are not necessarily true stories – they are simplified and selective reconstructions of the past, often connected to an idealized version of the future.”<sup>126</sup> “Each person must be the first author of her own life story,”<sup>127</sup> but “many such stories [about morality] are not fully self-authored, but rather are often ‘borrowed’ from ideological narratives and stereotypes commonly held in culture.”<sup>128</sup> “When people join together

---

118 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 389.

119 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 368.

120 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 389.

121 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 390.

122 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 390.

123 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph, “The Moral Mind,” 2008, 389.

124 Haidt, Jonathan, et al., “Above and Below Left-Right...” in *Psychological Inquiry*, 2009, 111

125 Graham, Jesse et al., “Moral Foundations Theory...” 2012, 17.

126 Haidt, Jonathan. *The Righteous Mind*. Vintage Books (New York), 2012, 328.

127 Graham, J., & Haidt, J. “Sacred values and evil adversaries...” 2012, 14

128 Graham, Jesse et al., “Moral Foundations Theory...” 2012, 17.

to pursue political projects [...] they must share a common story,”<sup>129</sup> which in turn insulates them from moral reasoning that is counter to all-encompassing worldview they occupy, what Haidt often refers to as a moral matrix.

Drew Westen in *The Political Brain* describes these ideological narratives as “coherent stories [with] an initial state, protagonists, a problem or obstacle, villains who stand in the way, a clash and a denouement. [...] Ideological narratives incorporate a reconstructed past and imagined future, often telling a story of progress or of decline, like the redemption and contamination narratives that McAdams finds are common in the individual life stories of adults in midlife. [...] Life stories cannot be shared [but] ideological narratives, in contrast, are successful only to the extent that large numbers of people accept the same ones,”<sup>130</sup> and the most “successful stories [...] fit well with the human mind, particularly by eliciting strong emotions.”<sup>131</sup> “Ideological narratives, then, by their very nature, are always stories about good and evil. They identify heroes and villains.”<sup>132</sup>

Once one’s morality operates from ideological narratives, it becomes particularly difficult to change minds, as intuitions about right and wrong are then no longer merely personal, but implicates one’s group identities. We will look at groups and morality more in essay 4, but the practical utility of narratives as the basis for moral construction and persuasion should not be overlooked.

### The Social Intuition Model of Morality

In light of and in response to the above studies, theories, and models, Haidt designed a moral model that highlights the role of affect and intuition, called the Social Intuition Model (SIM) of morality. Haidt first published this model in the 2001 “Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” paper cited throughout this essay, and given “the SIM is the prequel to MFT,”<sup>133</sup> it seems worth independently addressing its formulation and implications.

---

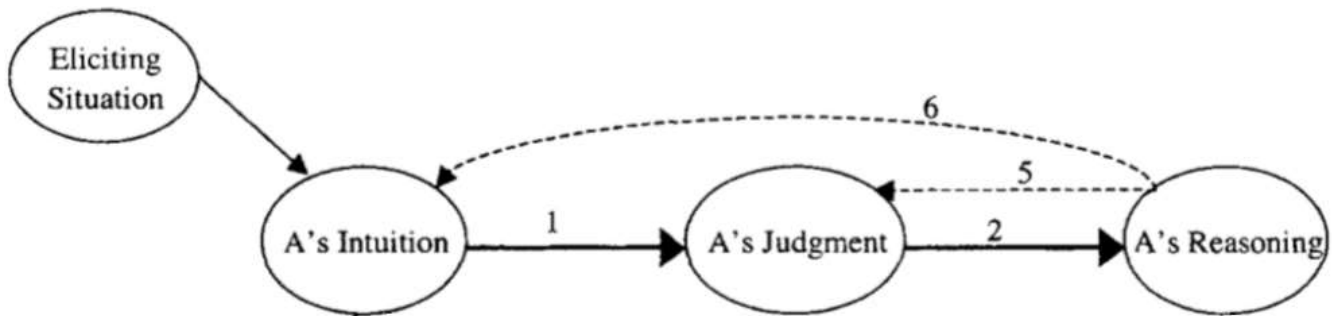
129Graham, Jesse, and Jonathan Haidt. “Sacred values and evil adversaries...” 2012, 7.

130 Haidt, Jonathan, et al., “Above and Below Left-Right...” in *Psychological Inquiry*, 2009, 115.

131Graham, Jesse, and Jonathan Haidt. “Sacred values and evil adversaries...” 2012, 8.

132Graham, Jesse, and Jonathan Haidt. “Sacred values and evil adversaries...” 2012, 7.

133 Graham, Jesse et al., “Moral Foundations Theory...” 2012, 11.



from Haidt, Jonathan, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail..." 2001, 815.

This model represents person A and three core components of their construction of moral judgment from an eliciting situation.

Moral intuition is defined as "the sudden appearance in consciousness, or at the fringe of consciousness, of an evaluative feeling about the character or actions of a person,"<sup>134</sup> "flashes of approval or disapproval toward certain patterns of events involving [others],"<sup>135</sup> "without any conscious awareness of having gone through steps of search, weighing evidence, or inferring a conclusion."<sup>136</sup> These "moral intuitions (including moral emotions) come first and directly cause moral judgment,"<sup>137</sup> as represented by link 1.

Link 2 show represents how "judgment and justification are separate processes,"<sup>138</sup> the latter being moral reasoning, "a controlled and "cooler" (less affective) process; it is conscious mental activity"<sup>139</sup> that "appears to have less power and independence [than moral intuition]; a variety of motives bias it towards finding support for the conclusions already reached by intuitive processes."<sup>140</sup> In other words, "our moral reasoning, like our reasoning about virtually every other aspect of our lives, is motivated."<sup>141</sup> This "System 2 Thinking ... [is] often initiated by social requirements to explain, defend and justify our intuitive moral reactions to others"<sup>142</sup> like a press secretary. "We do moral reasoning not to reconstruct the actual reasons why we ourselves came to a judgment; we reason to find

134 Graham, Jesse et al., "Moral Foundations Theory..." 2012, 15.

135 Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. "Intuitive Ethics..." 2004, 56.

136 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, "Morality," 2009, 10.

137 Haidt, Jonathan, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail..." 2001, 814.

138 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 50.

139 Haidt, Jonathan. "The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology," 2007, 998.

140 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, "Morality," 2009, 11.

141 Graham, Jesse et al., "Moral Foundations Theory..." 2012, 11.

142 Graham, Jesse et al., "Moral Foundations Theory..." 2012, 11



the best possible reasons why somebody else ought to join us in our judgment,”<sup>143</sup> “set out to find any evidence to support [our] initial idea. If [we] succeed, [we] usually stop searching.”<sup>144</sup> “Confirmation bias is a built-in feature ... not a bug that can be removed.”<sup>145</sup>

As Haidt quotes Tom Gilovich, “When we want to believe something, we ask ourselves, ‘can I believe it?’ then, we search for supporting evidence, and if we find even a single piece of pseudo-evidence, we can stop thinking. We now have permission to believe. When we don’t want to believe something, we ask ourselves, ‘must I believe it?’ then we search for contrary evidence, and if we find a single reason to doubt the claim, we can dismiss it.”<sup>146</sup>

With morality, reasoning “help[s] us pursue socially strategic goals, such as guarding our reputations and convincing other people to support us, or our team, in disputes.”<sup>147</sup> “People care a great deal more about appearance and reputation than about reality,”<sup>148</sup> so “moral reasoning is not like that of an idealized scientist or judge seeking the truth, which is often useful, rather, moral reasoning is like that of a lawyer or politician seeking whatever is useful, whether or not it is true,”<sup>149</sup> or like a press secretary who was “told what the policy is [by their moral intuition], and their job is to find evidence and arguments that will justify the policy to the public.”<sup>150</sup> “We lie, cheat, and justify so well that we honestly believe we are honest;”<sup>151</sup> after all, “we want to believe the things we are about to say to others,”<sup>152</sup> and who wants to feel bad or wrong? “People are especially likely to behave in morally suspect ways if a morally acceptable alibi is available.”<sup>153</sup> This cheating can occur “up to the point where [we ourselves can] no longer find a justification that would preserve [our] belief in [our] own honesty.”<sup>154</sup>

---

143 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 52.

144 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 11.

145 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 105.

146 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 98.

147 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 87.

148 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 86.

149 Haidt, Jonathan. “The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology,” 2007, 999.

150 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 92.

151 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 95.

152 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 89.

153 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 26.

154 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 97.

In addition to “striv[ing] to maintain positive identities with multiple constituencies; at other times [we] become ‘intuitive prosecutors’ who try to catch cheaters and free-riders.”<sup>155</sup> “In order to thrive socially, people must protect themselves from exploitation by those who are trying to advance through manipulation, dishonesty, and backstabbing[, producing] an eternal arms race between intuitive politicians and intuitive prosecutors, both of whom reside in everyone’s mind.”<sup>156</sup> This intuitive system is no less biased or motivated than the others; in one study “the degree of distortion [in recalling the harm someone had done] was proportional to the degree of blame in [the study’s] participants’ original ratings.”<sup>157</sup> Likewise, the Knobe effect shows that we assume more intentionality when “the outcome was unintended, foreseeable, and negative (e.g., harming the environment) than if the outcome was unintended, foreseeable, and positive (e.g., improving the environment),” as “the person who caused the negative outcome is a bad person who should be punished.”<sup>158</sup> Innocent until proven guilty is indeed against our basic nature.

### How to Change The Moral Mind

Moral reasoning’s ability to change moral judgments is represented by link 5, “deliberations [that] can – but rarely do – overturn one’s initial intuitive response. This is what is meant by the principle ‘intuitive primacy – but not dictatorship.’”<sup>159</sup> At his most pessimistic, Haidt says “the literature on everyday reasoning suggests that such an ability may be common only among philosophers who have been extensively trained and socialized to follow reasoning even to very disturbing conclusions.”<sup>160</sup> There can be cases where a person has “a ‘dual attitude’ in which the reasoned judgment may be expressed verbally yet the intuitive judgment continues to exist under the surface.”<sup>161</sup>

This isn’t merely a matter of sufficient ethical instruction; “nobody is ever going to invent an ethics class that makes people behave ethically,”<sup>162</sup> as “schools don’t teach people to reason thoroughly; they select applicants with higher IQs, and people with higher IQs are able to generate more reasons

155 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 24.

156 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 27.

157 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 29.

158 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 28.

159 Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, “Morality,” 2009, 18.

160 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 829.

161 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 819.

162 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 106.

[for their behavior and judgments, showing how] smart people make really good lawyers and press secretaries, but they are no better than others at finding reasons on the other side.”<sup>163</sup> To demonstrate an exception, he cites research by Joe Paxton and Josh Greene that shows “people who were forced to reflect on [a] weak argument [against a moral violation] still ending up condemning [it, but] people who were forced to reflect on [a] good argument for two minutes actually did become substantially more tolerant.”<sup>164</sup> It is worth noting they did not produce nor seek out this persuasive moral reasoning themselves, however.

The other dotted line is Link 6, the process of private reflection. It can happen “when mulling a problem by ourselves [and] suddenly seeing things in a new light or from a new perspective,”<sup>165</sup> such as “putting oneself into the shoes of another person [and feeling] pain, sympathy, or other vicarious emotional responses.”<sup>166</sup> But “for most of us, it’s not every day or even every month that we change our mind about a moral issue without any prompting from someone else.”<sup>167</sup> “people rarely override their initial intuitive judgments just by reasoning privately to themselves because reasoning is rarely use to question one’s own attitudes or beliefs.”<sup>168</sup>

“Intuitions come first, and under normal circumstances they cause us to engage in socially strategic reasoning, but there are ways to make the relationship more of a two-way street.”<sup>169</sup> Given how rare this may be the case, Haidt called his moral model *social*, as its full form supposes some interaction between people for moral judgments to change. Though “many of us believe that we follow an inner moral compass, [...] the history of social psychology richly demonstrates that other people exert a powerful force, able to make cruelty seem acceptable and altruism seem embarrassing, without giving us any reasons or arguments.”<sup>170</sup> Haidt therefore believes “we must be wary of any individual’s ability to reason. We should see each individual as being, limited, like a neuron.”<sup>171</sup> “The main way that we change our minds on moral issues is by interacting with other people. We are terrible at seeking evidence that challenges our own beliefs, but other people do us this favor, just as we are quite good at

---

163 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 94.

164 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 81.

165 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 56.

166 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 819.

167 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 56.

168 Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 819.

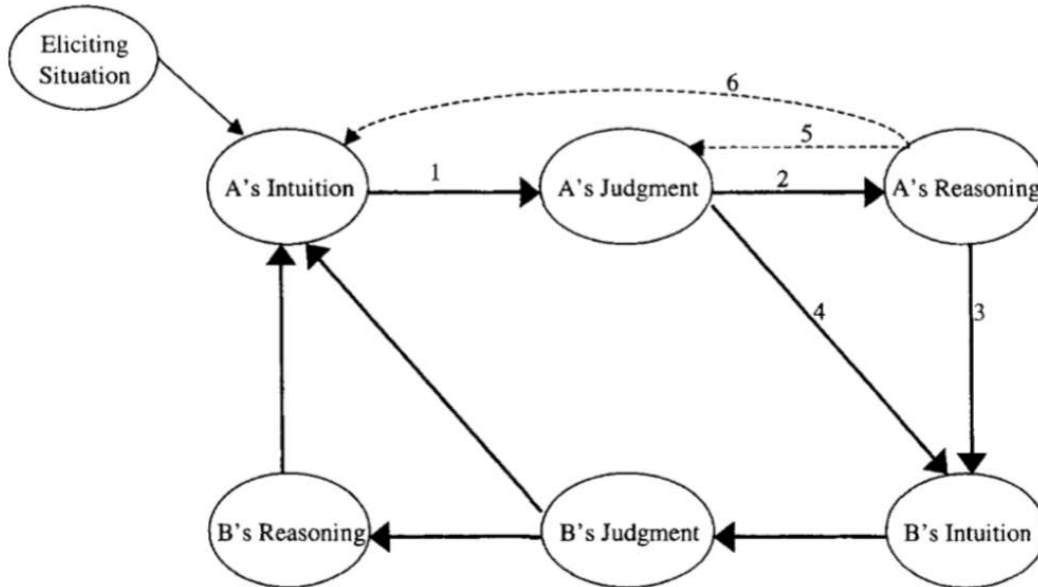
169 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 82.

170 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 56.

171 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 105.

finding errors in other people’s beliefs.”<sup>172</sup> Likewise, “if you put neurons together in the right way you get a brain; you get an emergent system that is much smarter and more flexible than a single neuron.”<sup>173</sup>

### How We Can Change Each Others’ Moral Minds



*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.

from Haidt, Jonathan, “The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail...” 2001, 815.

When it comes to person A and person B in moral dialogue, “you’ve got to use links 3 and 4 of the social intuition model to elicit new intuitions, not new rationales.” Otherwise you are futilely attempting to pit your reasoning against someone else’s, when neither of you came to your conclusions through reason alone nor primarily. As Haidt quotes Hume, “as reasoning is not the source [of ideas and beliefs,] it is in vain to expect, that any logic, which speaks not to the affections, will ever engage [others] to embrace sounder principles.”<sup>174</sup>

Following the advice of Hume and Dale Carnegie, Haidt agrees one’s initial “goal should be to convey respect, warmth, and an openness to dialogue before stating one’s own case.” This is an example of link 4, social persuasion, which suggests “if you really want to change someone’s mind on

172 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 79.

173 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 105.

174 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 58.

a moral or political matter, you'll need to see things from that person's angle as well as your own,"<sup>175</sup> which means creating space to see their angle. In this process of steelman construction, "one can get the other person to see the issue in a new way, perhaps by reframing a problem to trigger new intuitions, [influencing] others with one's words,"<sup>176</sup> as suggested by link 3, reasoned persuasion. Because moral, verbal reasoning alone so rarely can change someone's mind, "it is hypothesized that reasoned persuasion works not by providing logically compelling arguments but by triggering new affectively valenced intuitions in the listener."<sup>177</sup>

In summary, for changing moral beliefs, "we can use conscious verbal reasoning, such as considering the costs and benefit of each course of action [link 5]. We can reframe a situation and see a new angle or consequence, thereby triggering a second flash of intuition that may compete with the first [link 6], and we can talk with people who raise new arguments [links 3 and 4], which then trigger in us new flashes of intuition followed by various kinda of reasoning."<sup>178</sup>

---

175 Haidt, Jonathan, *The Righteous Mind*. 2012, 58.

176 Haidt, Jonathan, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail..." 2001, 823.

177 Haidt, Jonathan, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail..." 2001, 819.

178 Haidt, Jonathan. "The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology," 2007, 999.

### Bibliography

- Jonathan Haidt, Silvia Helena Koller, and Maria G. Dias, "Affect, Culture, and Morality, or Is It Wrong to Eat Your Dog?" from *The Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1993, Vol 65, No 4, p. 613-628.
- Jonathan Haidt, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment" from *Psychological Review*, 2001, Vol 108, No 4, 814-834.
- Haidt, Jonathan and Craig Joseph. "Intuitive Ethics: How Innately Prepared Intuitions Generate Culturally Variable Virtues" from *Daedalus*, Vol. 133, No. 4, On Human Nature (Fall 2004), p. 55-66.
- Haidt, Jonathan. "The New Synthesis in Moral Psychology." in *Science*, New Series, Vol 316, No 5827 (May 18, 2007), p. 998-1002.
- Haidt, Jonathan and Selin Kesebir, "Morality," in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., edited by Fisk and Gilbert, 2009, p 1-46.
- Haidt, Jonathan, and Jesse Graham and Craig Joseph, "Above and Below Left-Right: Ideological Narratives and Moral Foundations" in *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol 20, No 2/3 (April-September 2009), p. 110-119
- Graham, Jesse et al., "Mapping the Moral Domain," in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol 101, No 2, 2011, 366-385.
- Haidt, Jonathan. *The Righteous Mind*. Vintage Books (New York), 2012.
- Graham, Jesse, and Jonathan Haidt. "Sacred values and evil adversaries: A moral foundations approach." in M. Mikulincer & P. R. Shaver (eds.), *The social psychology of morality: Exploring the causes of good and evil*. American Psychological Association, 2012, 11-31.
- Graham, Jesse et al., "Moral Foundations Theory: the pragmatic validity of moral pluralism," November 28, 2012. unpublished manuscript, 1-64