



PROSPECTIVE PSYCHOLOGY

A Project of the University of Pennsylvania and the John Templeton Foundation



WORKSHOP ON MORAL LEARNING

May 15-17th, 2015

Michigan League, Ann Arbor, MI

OBJECTIVE

Recent years have witnessed dramatic growth in three areas of psychological and philosophical research: learning, decision-making, and moral judgment. It seems a good time to ask how these bodies of research might inform one another, and whether the outlines of a new synthesis in understanding moral psychology is beginning to become visible. For example, while there is important evidence that implicit, affect-laden processes are at work in moral judgment, research in affective science, behavioral economics, and learning theory suggests that such processes involve much more sophisticated information-processing mechanisms than previously thought, and that these mechanisms regulate choice and behavior in ways that approximate normative conceptions of decision-making and action developed by philosophers and cognitive scientists. This picture is strengthened by new research in developmental psychology, which suggests that infants early on have complex models of their social and physical environment, which update in response to experience. Perhaps the long-standing distinction between reason and emotion needs to be put into question, permitting a more integrated and normatively-interesting picture of moral learning and decision-making. At the same, however, there is a great deal of evidence that there are multiple implicit learning processes underlying intuitive moral evaluation, which can at times come into competition for the regulation of decision-making and action and can lead to choices that are defective from the standpoint of rational decision theory. Such competition among implicit learning processes might be able to explain some of the more paradoxical aspects of moral judgment, but it also raises challenges for assessing the normative standing of moral intuitions.

This workshop brings together psychologists and philosophers working in these areas for an extended discussion of where research in moral psychology is today, and where it might be going.

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

Friday, May 15

1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Lunch, Henderson Room, 3 rd Floor, Michigan League
2:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Meet and greet, Introductory Remarks, Koessler Room, 3 rd Floor, Michigan League
3:00 – 5:00 p.m.	Panel # 1, Koessler Room, 3 rd Floor, Michigan League

Saturday, May 16

9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast, Michigan Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Panel # 2, Vandenberg Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch, Michigan Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
1:00 – 3:00 p.m.	Panel # 3, Vandenberg Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
3:00 – 3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.	Panel # 4, Vandenberg Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League

Sunday, May 17

9:30 – 10:00 a.m.	Breakfast, Michigan Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
10:00 – 12:00 p.m.	Panel # 5, Vandenberg Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
12:00 – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch, Michigan Room, 2 nd Floor, Michigan League
1:00 – 2:00 p.m.	Wrap-up and discussion

SCHEDULE OF PANELISTS

Friday, May 15th

Panel 1: 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Joshua Greene,
Harvard University

Human Morality: Features and Bugs

Joshua Tenenbaum,
Massachusetts Institute
of Technology

*Grounded Models of Moral Cognition in Intuitive Theories of
Mind*

Peter Railton,
University of Michigan

Why Learning? Why Moral?

Saturday, May 16th

Panel 2: 10:00 a.m – 12:00 p.m.

Kiley Hamlin,
University of British
Columbia

*The Developmental Origins of Morality: Studies with
Preverbal Infants*

Henry Wellman,
University of Michigan

Origins of Moral Learning in Early Childhood

Joshua Knobe,
Yale University

The Essence of Psychological Essentialism

Panel 3: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Shaun Nichols,
University of Arizona *Rational Learners and Moral Rules*

Molly Crockett,
University of Oxford *How do we Learn Whether a Person is Nasty or Nice?*

Laura Schulz,
Massachusetts Institute
of Technology *Ordinary Morality: Thoughts, Value, and Virtue*

Panel 4: 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Liane Young,
Boston College *Neural Processing of Morals, Facts, and Preferences*

James Blair,
National Institute of
Mental Health *Emotional Responses in Judgments about Care and Justice*

Tania Lombrozo,
UC Berkeley *Explanation-Based Reasoning in the Moral Domain*

Sunday, May 17th

Panel 5: 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Fiery Cushman,
Harvard University *How Can a Reinforcement Learning Model of Morality
Possibly be Right?*

Victor Kumar,
University of Michigan *Explanation and Justification in Moral Learning*

Richmond Campbell,
Dalhousie University *Moral Consistency Reasoning*

About the Prospective Psychology Grant

This retreat is one of four occurring as part of a research grant funded by the John Templeton Foundation. This grant, *Prospective Psychology Stage 1: Imagination and Being Drawn into the Future*, serves to establish the field of Prospective Psychology.

These meetings serve three purposes: (1) to galvanize scholarly interest in the Prospection research agenda; (2) identify promising post-doctoral students and the most worthy empirical projects; and (3) establish the basis of Prospective Science.

For more information about Prospective Psychology, please visit www.prospectivepsych.org, or contact Jeanette Elstein at 215-746-4953 or elsteinj@sas.upenn.edu.

SPONSORS

The University of Pennsylvania Positive Psychology Center

The Positive Psychology Center promotes research, training, education, and the dissemination of Positive Psychology. This field is founded on the belief that people want to lead meaningful and fulfilling lives, to cultivate what is best within themselves, and to enhance their experiences of love, work, and play.

Positive Psychology has three central concerns: positive emotions, positive individual traits, and positive institutions. Understanding positive emotions entails the study of contentment with the past, happiness in the present, and hope for the future. Understanding positive individual traits consists of the study of the strengths and virtues, such as the capacity for love and work, courage, compassion, resilience, creativity, curiosity, integrity, self-knowledge, moderation, self-control, and wisdom. Understanding positive institutions entails the study of the strengths that foster better communities such as justice, responsibility, civility, parenting, nurturance, work ethic, leadership, teamwork, purpose, and tolerance.

Some of the goals of Positive Psychology are to build a science that supports:

- Families and schools that allow children to flourish
- Workplaces that foster satisfactions and high productivity
- Communities that encourage civic engagement
- Therapists who identify and nurture their patients' strengths
- The teaching of Positive Psychology
- Dissemination of Positive Psychology interventions in organizations and communities.

To learn more about the Positive Psychology Center, please visit www.positivepsychology.org.

The John Templeton Foundation

The John Templeton Foundation serves as a philanthropic catalyst for discoveries relating to the Big Questions of human purpose and ultimate reality. We support research on subjects ranging from complexity, evolution, and infinity to creativity, forgiveness, love, and free will. We encourage civil informed dialogue among scientists, philosophers, and theologians and between such experts and the public at large, for the purpose of definitional clarity and new insights.

Our vision is derived from the late Sir John Templeton's optimism about the possibility of acquiring "new spiritual information" and from his commitment to rigorous scientific research and related scholarship. The foundation's motto, "How little we know, how eager to learn," exemplifies our support for open-minded inquiry and hope for advancing human progress through breakthrough discoveries.

To learn more about the John Templeton Foundation, please visit www.templeton.org.



A special thank you to
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