

THE BROADER ROLE OF EMOTIONS. Having surveyed the empirical grounds of deontology and consequentialism, Greene turns to broader questions. Why should deontological judgements and emotions go together? Well, why should there be moral emotions at all? Greene endorses an evolutionary premiss, that moral responses are evolutionary adaptations formed to deal with various situations of social life. Morality as a whole, as an institution, is an evolutionary adaptation. And we need emotions, rather than 'cognitions', because they are quick and reliable. 59

Now, supposing that there are such moral emotions, why do they elicit specifically deontological philosophy? Greene embraces Haidt's approach, that this philosophy is a rationalisation of the pre-loaded emotional responses. 60

Such rationalisations, indeed, are observed in a wide variety of cases. Consider confabulation. One amnesiac was seated by an air-conditioner in his pyjamas. When asked where he thought he was, he replied that he was at an air-conditioning plant. But when asked why he is wearing pyjamas, he replied that he was about to change into his work clothes. Similar effects of arbitrary rationalisations were shown in split-brain patients. 61

These effects are not limited to brain disorders. It is our general characteristic. So we have the equation: 62

(20-1) Emotional responses (to morally significant situations) + confabulation = deontology.

But again, why can't consequentialism be a moral confabulation, too? Of course, we could simply say that it is by definition a product of our 'cognitions' (as opposed to 'emotions').

Still, we must do better. We should further say that consequentialist reasoning (=typical consequentialist judgements) are systematic. Only in very simple situations it delivers clear answers. In the rest it is negotiable and revisable. This corresponds to the typical features of 'cognition' that produces complex behaviour, rather than (like 'emotions') pulling us in one particular direction. 64

Greene adds two important qualifications. (a) We don't deny the role of emotion in consequentialist judgements. As I understand it, emotions influence the higher-order, general principles of consequentialism. Consider the principle of utility: why should we hold that pleasure and pain are the ultimate carriers of moral value? Not through reason alone (recall psychopaths). More likely, it is partly by having emotional aversion to instances of suffering, including by others, and emotional attraction to instances of enjoyment. Individual dilemmas, however, need not be resolved by using emotions. (b) Deontological conclusions *may* be reached by reasoning. But this is not their typical way. As I understand it, the attraction of deontological ethics and the 'plausible' conclusions to be vindicated by some deontological reasoning are first determined by quick emotional responses. 65

Question 1. Greene says that his claims about consequentialism and deontology can't be debated from an armchair. They have to be examined empirically. But haven't started with some definitions of deontological and consequentialist judgements, the definitions that can only be made in an armchair, rather than by observation? 66

DEBUNKING DEONTOLOGY. Greene's avowed goal is to attack deontology as a normative theory. That is, the normative reasoning used to justify deontological theories is not cogent. 67

The argumentative strategy is illustrated with the Alice's dates example. Here is what happens: 67

Data: Alice goes on numerous dates. Her reactions are mixed: she likes some, but not the other.

Alice's own explanations: may be couched in aesthetic, sexual, or any other terms.

Additional fact: there is no clear pattern in her declared reactions. For example, she likes some funny dates, but dislikes other etc.

Observed regularity: Alice uniformly likes tall dates and just as uniformly dislikes short ones.

Hypothesis: Alice's reactions can be both explained and predicted by her attitudes toward height (approval of tallness, disapproval of shortness).

Corollary: Alice's own explanations are bogus. They don't reflect what's *really* going on with her.

The strategy generalises. To dismantle deontology, or any other rationalising judgement, you need to locate a common cause that has no plausible relation to the declared rationales. And we already know what this hidden common cause would be for deontology: emotions. Although deontologists

There is a complication, however. Unlike Alice, deontologists mount an *alternative* explanation of their reactions. They, of course, argue that these reactions follow from the demands of reason. Thus, in the first instance, we have:

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The problem of coincidence Our emotional responses systematically match deontological prescriptions.

But we can't be content with the *bare* fact of coincidence. It is a miracle too good to be true. So we must be able to explain it. There are two basic moves to consider:

Divine pre-established harmony Emotions and reason are both divine products pointing, at least when not corrupt, in the same direction. That's Kant's diagnosis (maybe!!).

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Evolutionary harmony Emotional mechanisms produced by evolution track objective, rationally justifiable truths.

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The divine harmony won't cut it, for obvious reasons. So what about evolution?

Here we go back to the earlier discussion where we noted that emotional aversion to up close violence explains the deontological intuitions in the footbridge scenario. But this aversion exists because of particular conditions in ancestral populations. Its origins have *nothing to do* with objective ethical truths. Similarly, we have deontological intuitions about retributive punishment. But these intuitions developed to solve a very specific evolutionary problem of stable cooperation in groups. Once again, it's implausible to link them to objective truths.

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