

### **Cognitive load selectively interferes with utilitarian moral judgment**

Traditional theories of moral development emphasize the role of controlled cognition in mature moral judgment, while a more recent trend emphasizes intuitive and emotional processes. Here we test a dual-process theory synthesizing these perspectives. More specifically, our theory associates utilitarian moral judgment (approving of harmful actions that maximize good consequences) with controlled cognitive processes and associates non-utilitarian moral judgment with automatic emotional responses. Consistent with this theory, we find that a cognitive load manipulation selectively interferes with utilitarian judgment. This interference effect provides direct evidence for the influence of controlled cognitive processes in moral judgment, and utilitarian moral judgment more specifically.

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