

Human Morality: Features and Bugs

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I'll provide an opinionated overview of human morality, drawing on insights from psychology, neuroscience, and philosophy. First, there are two general kinds of moral problems: The original moral problem is the problem of cooperation, the "Tragedy of the Commons"—Me vs. Us. Distinctively modern moral problems are different. They involve what I call the "Tragedy of Commonsense Morality," which is about conflicting values and interests across social groups—Us vs. Them. Second, there two general kinds of moral thinking: "fast" intuitive thinking that is efficient but inflexible, and "slow" moral reasoning that is flexible but inefficient. I'll present evidence that "fast" thinking is good for solving basic moral problems, but that solving modern moral problems requires "slow" thinking. I'll address some recent criticisms and talk about how our emerging scientific understanding of human morality may help us make better decisions.