

## **Bivalent triadic morality: Integrating the ADC model with the theory of dyadic morality**

Dario Cecchini (North Carolina State University)

One of the primary aims of moral psychology is to elucidate how human subjects form moral judgments from perceived stimuli. Current moral-psychological theories diverge in this respect. According to the Agent-Deed-Consequences (ADC) model, moral judgment depends on positive or negative evaluations of three distinct categories of information: the character and intentions of an agent (the Agent component, A), their actions (the Deed component, D), and the resultant consequences in the situation (the Consequences component, C) (Dubljević and Racine 2014). In contrast, the Theory of Dyadic Morality (TDM) explains moral judgment by perception of harm, which involves the cognition of an intentional agent, a vulnerable patient, and a perceived causal link between the two (Schein and Gray 2018).

This paper aims to integrate the ADC model with the theory of dyadic morality into a comprehensive Bivalent Triadic Model of morality. I argue that the two theories complement each other when considering their respective strengths and limitations. Specifically, the concept of harm explains the negative valence of the A/D/C components and provides narrative unity (intending to harm (A-) -> causing harm (D-) -> suffering harm (C-)). However, TDM overlooks the positive aspect of morality, which I define as help. Like harm, perception of help is subjective, intuitive, not purely affect-driven, and based on the same cognitive template for action (intending to help (A+) -> causing help (D+) -> helping (C+)). Complementing harm with help accommodates moral praise of supererogatory acts, fairness (helps distribution), punishment, and sacrificial acts (harming for a greater help).

Combining help and harm yields a cognitive model with considerable explanatory power, encompassing 27 types of moral judgment based on combinations of A/D/C components and valence (+/0/-). I demonstrate how cognitive biases in moral judgment can be elucidated by the human inclination to align the valence of components to construct a coherent narrative of either helping or harming. Additionally, moral disagreement can be accounted for by considering the emphasis that different ethical views place on each component.