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Le jugement moral

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What moral judgment is for and how it is developed: A social psychological perspective
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Nick Emler is currently emeritus professor of psychology at the University of Surrey and was formerly the University's Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences. He undertook his graduate studies at the London School of Economics. His first academic appointment was at the University of Dundee, where he was later became professor of social psychology and head of department. He has subsequently been a professor at Oxford, Paris V and the London School of Economics. He has also been a visiting professor at the Universities of Geneva, Bologna, and Tulsa, the Johns Hopkins University and the

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Résumé de la conférence

Since Piaget's pioneering work on the childhood development of moral judgment the inclination within psychology has been to interpret competence in this area as relevant to the self-control of conduct, while development of such competence has been regarded as self-constructed. In this presentation I offer an alternative, social psychological perspective on these two issues. One starting point is the lack of persuasive evidence that competence in moral judgment contributes to self control. I argue that conduct is normally subject to extensive social control. Thus the significance of moral judgment is the part it plays in *other* control. That is, moral judgment is an instrument of influence and persuasion. However, it is useful here to distinguish the imperative role of social actor that all individuals must play in their social worlds from the more optional role of political actor. In this latter role moral judgments are reflected in social attitudes, effectively judgments about the priorities of the collective rather than judgments with an interpersonal focus. The extent to which this latter role is developed appears to depend, among other things, on opportunities to acquire political knowledge. As regards the processes by which capacities for moral judgment more generally are developed in the individual, I argue that these are social mediated, on contrast to the constructivist view that has been the preferred developmental account of these phenomena.

Lecture proposée

Emler, N. & St. James, A. (2004). Moral judgment and moral reasoning: A social psychological perspective. *New Review of Social Psychology*, 3, 112-120.